Promoting Academic Integrity to Advance Character Development: A Strategic Planning Session

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Don McCabe

- Professor of Management & Global Business – Rutgers Business School

- 20 years of research on issues of student academic honesty- primarily at college level but also has worked with high schools (beginning in 1999)

- 23 years in corporate world followed by 20 years at Rutgers
David Wangaard

- Director, School for Ethical Education (SEE)
- Previously a biologist with USFWS, math teacher, then a high school principal in Alaska
- Significant involvement in student extracurriculars – track coach, sponsor of student councils, student led community service projects, student foreign travel, etc.
- Recognizes how ethics and character are promoted in a variety of learning environments
- Current work is study/implementation of academic integrity programs – working w/ Jason Stephens @ UConn; funded by The Templeton Foundation
Objectives

- Introduce SEE’s conceptual model developed to support the implementation of an academic-integrity program. (The primary strategy is the organization of an Academic Integrity Committee or AIC).

- Draft literature-based steps to implement a strategic plan promoting academic integrity.

- Connect to an academic integrity network—(http://www.ethicsed.org/programs/integrity-works/ain.htm).

- Respect the voice of students.
Conceptual Model to advance Academic Integrity

**Commitments & Committees**
Honor Pledges & Honor Councils

**Core Values**
- Respect, Trust,
- Honesty,
- Responsibility &
- Effort

**Achieving with Integrity**

**Curriculum**
- Mastery Oriented Teaching & Learning,
- Pedagogical Caring & Fair Testing

**Community**
- Shared Responsibility of Students,
- Teachers, Parents, Administrators
Implementing a strategic plan

- Define academic integrity
- Identify stakeholders and recruitment plan for AIC
- Draft AIC mission
- Identify core values in support of AI
- Draft a code / pledge
- Identify curricular modifications
- Identify an evaluation plan
Your first task

- Pick a ‘partner’ at your table – preferably someone you don’t know
- Go to last page in notes to record an interview of your partner (3 min each)
- Follow directions in note packet for interview
- When requested, introduce your partner to the workshop.
Form a team

☐ With your interview partner, join one other pair of workshop participants to form a team

☐ Or team up with your existing school team

☐ In your team, identify –

1. A team facilitator
2. A team time keeper
First team task

Develop a definition of academic integrity (or revise the following one from Langley High School, McLean VA).

Academic Integrity can be defined by honest academic work where (1) the ideas and the writing of others are properly cited; (2) students submit their own work for tests and assignments without unauthorized assistance; (3) students do not provide unauthorized assistance to others; and (4) students report their research or accomplishments accurately.
Community approaches to promoting academic integrity –
Some support from the literature (a very brief sampling)
Additional references & abstracts -- http://www.ethicsed.org/programs/integrity-works/pdf/ai_abstracts.pdf

McCabe & Trevino (multiple papers)
Provide extensive empirical support for the impact of community approaches such as honor codes. Argue significant, if not complete, student involvement is a critical component, at least at the college level. Bowers (1964) observed a similar relationship. Note, however, in the absence of strong administrative support for a student-run system (e.g., orientation activities, supporting student judicial findings, etc.), its power erodes. The peer environment which develops is absolutely critical.

Bien & Bien (1994)
Show how Washington Episcopal School attempted to create a “moral community based upon fairness, caring, and participation.” Establishing a participatory democracy was a key component of the process. (Kohlberg?)
Academic Integrity Committee (AIC)

- See workbook
  - Identify stakeholders
  - Strategies to recruit
  - Draft AIC mission statement
  - Executive committee roles
  - Suggestions for successful meetings
Core Values

☐ See workbook
☐ Identify core values
☐ Define core values
☐ Publish core values
Identifying core values

- There is a growing literature which shows academic integrity can be increased when the school culture explicitly promotes core values resisting academic dishonesty. The clear identification of such values provides an important cognitive link to develop ethical arguments that advance academic integrity. Students are more likely to affirm the practices of academic integrity when they understand the goal of achieving fairness and equity. Ethical/moral attributions to decisions about academic integrity help students resist cheating behaviors.

- The all too common decision to do nothing is not really a viable option.
But whose values?

- Although it is ultimately the responsibility of the school board and administration to articulate such core values it is my strong personal belief that the ideal way to do this at the high school level is through an Academic Integrity Committee (AIC), which includes students – re: the students are the ones that really know what’s going on and why! We cannot dictate values to them and expect them to adhere to those values unless they accept them.
The value of student involvement

- Not only do we need students to help us understand what’s really going on and how to change it, but we need their buy-in. They, and all members of the AIC, can act as an agent of the school administration to review, clarify and advance the school’s core values as they link to the principles of academic integrity.
The value of student involvement

☐ My best decision? – Insisting, in the face of modest resistance, that students be included in Center for Academic Integrity (CAI), and its leadership

☐ For example, drafting the *Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity* (honesty, trust, fairness, responsibility, and respect) benefitted greatly from student involvement as have most CAI programs—see [http://www.academicintegrity.org/](http://www.academicintegrity.org/)
Core values for your code?

- **Respect** for others and the learning process.
- **Trust** in others to act with academic honesty as a positive community-building force in the school.
- **Responsibility** as recognized by all to demonstrate their best effort to prepare & complete academic tasks.
- **Fairness and equity** so that every student experiences an academic environment that is free from injustices caused by any form of intellectual dishonesty, and
- **Integrity** of all members of the school community as demonstrated by a commitment to academic honesty and support of our quest for honest learning.

*Drawn from synthesis of HS codes with core from Langley HS, McLean, VA.*
Conceptual Model

**Commitments & Committees**
Honor Pledges & Honor Councils

**Core Values**
Respect, Trust, Honesty, Responsibility & Effort

**Achieving with Integrity**

**Curriculum**
Mastery Oriented Teaching & Learning, Pedagogical Caring & Fair Testing

**Community**
Shared Responsibility of Students, Teachers, Parents, Administrators
Community approaches
Some ‘good’ examples at the college level

Honor Codes: UVA, Washington & Lee, Rice, Byrn Mawr

Modified Codes: Maryland, UC-Davis, Brigham Young

No (Explicit) Code: Carleton, Macalester, some schools with strong religious affiliations
Impact of codes in college

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Self-reported cheating
Impact of codes in high school

Self-reported cheating - 2001

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Self-selection or impact of code?
Catholic School in Midwest

☐ Surveyed in spring 2006.

☐ ‘Introduced’ honor code in fall 2006.

☐ Re-surveyed in spring 2008 - ~ 2 years.

☐ Every measure of cheating declined with two exceptions – handing in work done by parents and using an unpermitted electronic device to cheat on a test/exam. But...
Typical upperclassmen comments

- It’s a waste of time and effort, even though kids & teachers sign the Honor Code, there is still cheating.
- The students who cheat will cheat whether they sign their name at the bottom of the paper or not.
- By junior year students are sick of spending a week talking about it. We aren’t going to change.
- Some students cheat because schools make them sign some Honor Code and it aggravates them so they cheat to feel higher up.
- We are too old to be taught not to cheat. Reality is this appeasing the administration and nothing else.
Typical upperclassmen comments

☐ The Honor Code is a great tool to help students remember honesty & integrity.

☐ I believe our Honor Code Committee works hard to promote not only academic honesty but life long moral integrity.

☐ Some kids will cheat. Some kids will not. Signing some statement will not make the cheaters not cheat, and it is unnecessary for those who don’t already. Plus, no one won’t not sign it, just because of the hassle that would follow.

☐ In our society the pressure to get good grades is higher than the pressures of honesty.
The bottom line

☐ You can’t impose a code, although the short term impact may be positive. Codes are becoming a harder ‘sell’ to students. It’s hard work.

☐ Genuine student participation is almost a must.

☐ Pledges are an essential reminder and symbol, but not a ‘cure-all’.
Sample Honor Codes & Pledges

See workbook—examples from-

See workbook with examples from-
http://www.ethicsed.org/programs/integrity-works/pdf/HonorPledgeExamples.pdf
Team Assignment

Draft an Honor Code and/or pledge

(See work sheet with examples in notes.)

Selected teams will be asked to share their work
Identifying teacher strategies to pursue in strategic plan

See workshop notes based on ‘Hot Topics’ session moderated by David Wangaard & Larry Nucci at 2008 CEP Forum:
http://www.ethicsed.org/programs/integrity-works/pdf/FinalHottopicquestionsandresponses.pdf
Team Assignment

☐ Prioritize strategies you want to develop in your strategic plan and complete worksheet to recognize some implementation steps.

☐ Selected teams share strategies.
Establishing a baseline

- Web surveys have become the most popular approach
- Proven tools include Microsoft FrontPage, Survey Monkey, and Snap Systems
- Example: SEE’s Academic Motivation & Integrity Survey, an academic integrity survey for students in grades 7-12
  http://www.ethicsed.org/programs/integrity-works/
What is **AMIS?**

The Academic Motivation & Integrity Survey (AMIS) is designed to provide school leaders information and analysis of student perceptions, beliefs and behaviors related to academic integrity in their school. Analysis of a completed AMIS creates a baseline of data for future comparison and meaningful information to guide the school community in strategies to advance academic integrity and resist cheating. AMIS is an assessment instrument for The School for Ethical Education’s Integrity Works! program, which is a school intervention designed to promote academic integrity in middle and high schools.
Why AMIS?

There are a number of reasons why the AMIS is a good choice for your school. Here are two reasons:

• Cheating is endemic in US secondary schools. Current research indicates that 90% or more students report some cheating behavior during each school year. The AMIS can provide a detailed picture of the extent and nature of problem at your school.

• Students in our research overwhelming voice support for their school leaders to implement strategies to reduce cheating and promote academic integrity. The AMIS can inform this process and its effects in a research-driven, evidence-based manner.
Sample AMIS pages
Team Assignment

☐ Need to build in evaluation as part of your strategic plan.

☐ Assignment - Complete worksheet page identifying evaluation strategies you may want to implement.
Closure Exercise

☐ Think about the most important point of this session for you?

☐ Depending on time, share some selected responses.

☐ Complete CEP evaluation form
Resources

CEP - Academic Integrity Network:
http://www.ethicsed.org_programs/integrity-works/ain.htm

CAI – Center for Academic Integrity:
http://www.academicintegrity.org/

SEE’s Integrity Works! website:
http://www.ethicsed.org_programs/integrity-works/