The International Center for Academic Integrity (ICAI) Canadian Consortium

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Abstract

Academic integrity serves as a critical foundation for learning in post-secondary institutions. However, educational organizations continuously face challenges that threaten efforts to uphold and promote academic integrity. While global collaborations focused on policies, procedures, activities, and research dedicated to academic integrity are valuable, it is equally important to recognize the unique contexts of groups of educational organizations, which are influenced by things like organizational culture, missions, geography, priorities, and specialties, to name a few. Consortia that meet the specific needs of groups of organizations play a crucial role in this endeavour. This article will highlight one such consortium that is working to establish a Canadian presence in academic integrity and is affiliated with the International Center for Academic Integrity (ICAI).

Keywords

academic integrity, Canadian Consortium, ICAI Canada, Canada

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Introduction

The evolving landscape of education has been dramatically affected by generative artificial intelligence (genAI). The availability and responsiveness of genAI have created opportunities and challenges to student learning and the need for those in academia to respond in a manner that recognizes its impact on the integrity of teaching and learning. GenAI, however, is just one pressing issue that warrants consideration as we work to continue to strengthen our commitment to learning, researching, and teaching in post-secondary environments anchored within the values of academic integrity. Contract cheating, inadequate organizational policies, gaps in equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging, are additional issues that threaten our abilities to promote academic integrity effectively. These threats are not unique to individual educational organizations, and a more unified national approach to promoting academic integrity in Canada has become necessary.

It is worthwhile to consider the historical context of academic integrity as we discuss our Canadian perspectives. Academic integrity became a unified endeavour through the work of Dr. Don McCabe and the establishment of the Center for Academic Integrity (CAI) in 1992 (International Center for Academic Integrity, n.d.), later becoming the International Center for Academic Integrity (ICAI) in 2010 (Fishman, 2024). ICAI created opportunities to focus on building and strengthening learning cultures of honesty and integrity (International Center for Academic Integrity, n.d., para 3). It was through the ICAI that the six core values of academic integrity were identified (honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, courage)

and efforts were made to "predict, describe, and respond to trends and issues related to academic integrity standards and practice" (International Center for Academic Integrity, n.d., para 4). The leadership established through ICAI was important, but it became apparent that subtle considerations based on organizations' geography, culture, legislation, and quality assurance requirements required local, regional, and national organizations to collaborate and complement the work of ICAI. These considerations resulted in the creation of several consortia that are intended to address the unique needs of organizations in different geographical locations, while still sharing an affiliation with ICAI. To that end, the Canadian Consortium was formed in 2014 as an affiliate to the ICAI. One of the founders of the Canadian Consortium provided a detailed account of our history and a valuable perspective on our Canadian experience so far, in her article titled *Academic Integrity across the Canadian Landscape* (McKenzie, 2018).

This article describes our current Canadian Consortium structure and introduces the reader to our intended mission. Additionally, we introduce our executive team and provincial representatives in the hope that readers will connect with them to share ideas about future initiatives they would like this group to champion.

The Genesis of the Canadian Consortium Originally founded by Amanda McKenzie (University of Wa-terloo), Jo Hinchliffe (retired, Simon Fraser University), and Troy Brooks (formerly at Brock University), the first meet-ing of the Canadian Consortium took place in 2014 at the

ICAI conference in Jacksonville, Florida, United States (US), launched as a regional consortium of the ICAI at the time, the group has been referred to as a national consortium since 2021. All regional and national consortia, including the Canadian Consortium, are scheduled to meet in their individual groups the day before each annual ICAI conference. The Canadian Consortium Day, when the Canadian group assembles, is also referred to as the ICAI-Canada Day.

During the remotely-held 2021 ICAI conference, the annual ICAI-Canada Day took place online and included breakout sessions on assorted topics. One of the breakout sessions focused on the future of the Canadian Consortium where participants reflected on the value of this day for Canadians and shared their thoughts regarding how the consortium should evolve. The participants shared that attending the ICAI-Canada Day has always been rewarding, and a cherished part of the ICAI conference. Attendees have frequently echoed this sentiment throughout the years. The 2021 Canada Day breakout session group members also noted that the way academic integrity is implemented within our Canadian institutions tends to differ from the US and other nations. For example, Canadian institutions do not usually include honour codes, which may be attributed to our historical and cultural differences (Eaton & Christensen Hughes, 2022; Eerkes, 2010). Specifically, there is a "tendency to value communitarian ideas and civic engagement" (Eerkes, 2010, p. 110) in Canada. Academic integrity work in the US is also often positioned within student conduct areas, whereas in Canada, academic integrity matters are often overseen by departments that focus on student support (Vogt & Eaton, 2022, p. 24). This uniqueness to Canadian educational organizations fuels the need to connect with colleagues who are also working within the Canadian educational landscape. Participants at the 2021 ICAI-Canada Day discussed how to continue and expand this connection so Canadians learning, working, researching, and leading in Canadian educational organizations could continue to benefit throughout the year. Thus, the Canadian Consortium, referred to as ICAI Canada, was established.

Establishing our Purpose and Goals

Initial meetings to plan the evolution of the Canadian Consortium/ICAI Canada took place throughout 2021 and 2022. These meetings included individuals who had expressed an interest in establishing a new cross-Canadian network, either during the breakout session at the ICAI's 2021 Canada Day, or through other discussions. During these preliminary meetings, group members discussed the scope of this new network, including its overall purpose and goals. Decisions were made that the basis of ICAI Canada would be to draw on current research in the field to offer resources, support, and professional development opportunities to Canadian universities, colleges, and other types of institutions that are working towards building a culture of integrity. Given that Canada is a bilingual nation, efforts were made to include bilingual

board members. The complement of bilingual members will strengthen efforts to ensure English and French in any materials and resources offered. Additionally, ICAI Canada seeks to connect Canadian institutions to the ICAI, introducing them to the work and benefits of international networking. As a Canadian consortium, we have posted a statement on the use of genAI and other resources. These postings can be viewed on the Canadian National Consortium website.

Purpose and Goals

The purpose of the Canadian Consortium has been finalized as "an educational and evidence-informed resource for Canadian universities, colleges, and other educational institutions working to create cultures of integrity" (Canadian National Consortium (2024)). To support the purpose, the group generated goals, including:

- Develop and offer education and professional development opportunities to local practitioners;

- Support practitioner's day-to-day efforts at their own institutions;

- Disseminate evidence-informed practices from international and other national groups to the region;

- Provide academic integrity resources, including connections to the ICAI; and

- Introduce regional universities, colleges, and other educational institutions to the work and benefits of ICAI (Canadian National Consortium, 2024).

To learn more detailed information about ICAI Canada's purpose, goals, governance, and terms of reference please visit the **ICAI Canada website**.

Governance and Membership

ICAI Canada functions as a branch of the ICAI and is responsible to the ICAI Board of Directors. For governance of ICAI Canada, an advisory committee was established consisting of three elected members that form the ICAI Canada Executive. For the first term (2023-2025) these members are Jennie Miron, Chair (Humber Polytechnic); Angela Clark, Vice-Chair (York University); and Leeanne Morrow, Secretary (University of Calgary). During the spring and summer of 2023, this advisory committee circulated a call for submissions of interest through academic integrity provincial listservs for various appointed positions, including an Event Coordinator and a Communications Coordinator, as well as provincial advisors. The advisory committee members for the 2023-2025 term include Allyson Miller, Event Coordinator (Toronto Metropolitan University); and Rachel Gorjup, Communications Coordinator (University of Toronto Mississauga). Provincial Advisors include Ainsley Rouse (British Columbia); Garrett Beatty (Alberta); Susan Bens (Saskatchewan); Josh Seeland (Manitoba); Laura Facciolo (Ontario); Martine Peters (Quebec); Cynthia Potvin (New

Brunswick); Bob Mann (Nova Scotia); Paul MacLeod (Prince Edward Island); and Wendy Rodgers (Newfoundland and Labrador).

The goal has been to appoint advisors from each province and territory who have an interest in academic integrity matters within their geographic areas. Although there is good representation from across Canada, advisors are still needed in Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut to date. Everyone who is in either an executive role or an appointed position must be a member of ICAI. Given that ICAI Canada is unfunded, all positions are strictly voluntary. As well, membership to ICAI-Canada is open to individuals affiliated with any Canadian university, college, or other type of educational institution. In addition to the elected and appointed positions, ICAI Canada does have a provision to establish subcommittees or working groups from time-to-time to contribute to different projects that are identified. Membership to ICAI is not a requirement to belong to ICAI Canada, however, there are a number of benefits including conference fee discounts, access to member forums, webinars, tools, and resources.

Call to Action

The work ahead is exciting. To be true to our purpose and goals, we invite all who work within academic and educational institutions across Canada to share ideas and suggestions for the way forward.

What do you think our priority activities should include?

How do you see these activities coming to life?

To capture your ideas and thoughts we invite you to share by completing a short survey by clicking this **[link]**.

If you would like a member of the executive committee to contact you, please provide your name and contact information in the survey form.

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