

Launching an Institutional Academic Integrity Campaign

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Abstract

The University of Manitoba launched its first institution-wide academic integrity campaign in Fall 2016. The aim of the campaign is to promote a positive educational message of academic integrity that is inclusive of all university members, including faculty, students, and staff. In this article I share points to consider for practitioners who wish to implement promotional academic integrity strategies in their institutions.

Keywords: academic integrity, promotion, marketing, institutional, campaign, communications, Canada

Background

In Fall 2016, the University of Manitoba launched its first academic integrity campaign: Be Honest, Be Real, Be You – Show Your Integrity. The campaign was representative of an institution-wide academic integrity initiative spearheaded by the Academic Integrity Advisory Committee (AIAC), a group composed of students, administrative, and academic staff that reports to the Vice-Provost (Students) and Vice-Provost (Academic). The AIAC and its project-based working groups identifies ways in which faculty and students can be supported and encouraged through resources and educational initiatives, and investigates and makes recommendations regarding policies, regulations, and procedures. The activities of the AIAC are guided by a change management model which describes building a culture of academic integrity based on Promotion, Engagement, Education, Empowerment and Reinforcement (PEEER) (Prosci, 2015).

Although several administrative units, academic departments, and individual faculty members are engaged in work related to academic integrity, there was an identified need to coordinate and unify these efforts with a consistent message to students and staff about the importance of academic integrity and available resources and supports. In the summer and fall of 2015, two dedicated roles were created in order to advance academic integrity efforts: 1) Faculty Specialist (Academic Integrity & Copyright), hired through the Centre for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning, and 2) Academic Integrity Coordinator, hired through the Student Advocacy Office.

Based on my experience coordinating the launch and development of the academic integrity campaign, I have identified the following points of consideration for practitioners seeking to implement a promotional initiative at their own institution.

Do your research

When I was hired as the Academic Integrity Coordinator, my first step was to conduct a review of the literature. While research on academic integrity is limited, I was able to find research in the psychology and management literature that could be applied to our promotional efforts. In particular, I drew on two specific concepts:

- Positive organizational behaviour (Luthans, 2002): A perspective that shifts the focus away from the negative in order to focus on the strengths of individuals in an organization. Research has shown that this approach can have an effect both on how people feel about themselves and on how they operate within an organization (e.g., work ethic, identity).
- Sense of autonomy (Deci & Ryan, 2000): Research suggests that if people feel as though they are in control of what happens, they are more likely to engage in constructive behaviour that helps them succeed.

I also reviewed academic integrity campaigns from other institutions. Although several institutions had a webpage of policy information and resources, many did not appear to have an active academic integrity campaign. Those institutions with an academic integrity campaign tended to focus on students, and on avoiding both the discipline process and negative behaviours.

The campaign that most resonated with our approach was the University of Waterloo's (n.d.) "Work. Study. Play." campaign. Reviewing what other Canadian institutions had done was not only helpful for our own conceptual thinking, but also provided an example of the tone we hoped to capture with the campaign, which included the following:

- Positive, not punitive
- Inclusive of the entire University community (not just students)
- Authentic and approachable
- Empowering

Establish your goals and communicate them clearly

Because this campaign would draw on resources and expertise from several units across campus, it was important for all those involved to have a unified vision. I realized quickly that there were differing perceptions of academic integrity and how it should be promoted. It was vital to the success of the campaign that we define our goals and messaging in concrete terms. Once we were clear on exactly what we hoped to communicate, we were able to overcome misunderstandings and move towards a campaign that truly reflected our approach. With a broad audience in mind, we identified the following goals for the campaign:

- Identify academic integrity as an institutional priority.
- Promote academic integrity as a responsibility of all University members.
- Emphasize that integrity is important in all areas of life.

- Direct audience to resources, supports & events.

Building and maintaining partnerships is key

The biggest step in launching this campaign was creating a positive collaborative relationship with partners across campus. Not only did we solicit feedback on the design and messaging of the campaign, but we also worked closely with the University's Marketing and Communications Office. This office had the resources and skills to create quality promotional materials that would have wider reach, however developing a design proved challenging for a number of reasons. First, the campaign had a broad target audience, whereas most communications at the University were targeted to specific groups. Further, the initiative engaged partners across several administrative units, posing difficulties in establishing who "owned" the project. Lastly, the campaign proposed a significant shift in tone with regards to academic integrity messaging, and was required to fit within the University's visual identity. It became evident in the initial planning stages that the project needed representation from another unit besides Student Advocacy, and so the Centre for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning became a partner in the development of the campaign.

The primary working relationship was that between myself, who maintained communication across partners, solicited feedback on materials, provided copy support, and approved drafts, and the Marketing and Communications representative. The Director of Student Advocacy and Accessibility also provided support and direction on an ongoing basis, while the Centre for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning Faculty Specialist provided feedback from the faculty perspective.

Consider all components of the campaign – off and on campus

The campaign included a number of traditional promotional materials: posters, postcards, social media graphics and banners, and a stamp for all AI resources. However, it also included the launch of an academic integrity website (University of Manitoba, 2017) to act as a centralized hub for resources, branded swag and prizes for outreach events, and a series of video interviews with university members. We requested some modest funds to support the campaign.

Along with promotional materials, we asked staff and students across campus to write articles on different topics related to academic integrity for UM Today, the University's campus news source (Stoesz, 2017; Archibald, 2017; Morris, 2017). We also launched Academic Integrity Month in October, a themed event that involved multiple campus partners engaged in promoting academic integrity, such as the Libraries, Academic Learning Centre, and International Centre. See appendices 1-3 for examples of the campaign materials.

Be aware of the challenges of academic integrity messaging

For practitioners aiming to promote academic integrity, there are a number of issues to be considered in the design of a campaign. Most notably, academic integrity efforts often do not reach the intended audience. The challenge remains how to reach those faculty, staff and students who are either unaware or do not understand the relevance. Furthermore, for many there is a strong association between academic integrity and cheating behaviours, and this is often regarded as a student issue. These factors, among others, present a barrier to meaningful conversation and underscore the importance of creating a message that resonates across multiple audiences.

Recognize that a campaign is only one piece of the puzzle

While a campaign is one step in promoting the importance and relevance of academic integrity, awareness alone does not change behaviour or build a culture of integrity. We have seen a number of successes as a result of our current strategy, such as a positive response from the University community, an increase in familiarity and use of academic integrity policy language, and greater opportunities for collaboration. Ultimately however, we view the campaign as one piece in an evolving initiative that will be re-evaluated as we continue to learn about how to meaningfully engage the university community.

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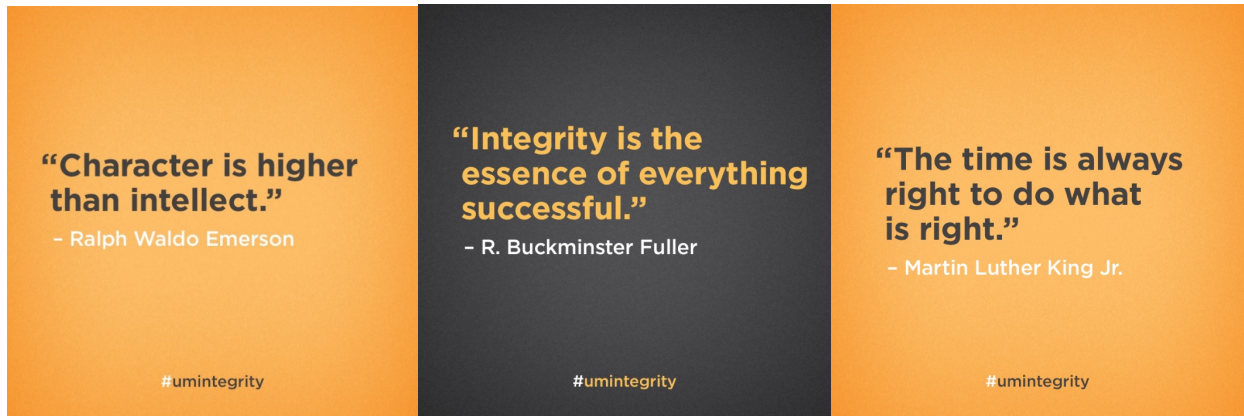
Appendix 1

Academic Integrity Campaign Poster and Postcard



Appendix 2

Academic Integrity Social Media Graphics



Appendix 3

Academic Integrity Month Poster

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY MONTH
OCTOBER 2017

Check out this month's workshops and events to help you build skills and knowledge to succeed with integrity at the U of M.

WEEK ONE
OCTOBER 2-6

Citing & Referencing
Events by UM Libraries

Endnote? Zotero? Mendeley? Learn the ins and outs of citing and which tools are best for you.

WEEK TWO
OCTOBER 10-13

Mental Health & Academic Success
Events by Student Advocacy & UMSU

Keep an eye out for interactive events on mental health and how prioritizing wellbeing can help you achieve academic success.

WEEK THREE
OCTOBER 16-20

Academic Culture
Events by the Centre for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning & the International Centre

Does something seem different? This week features sessions for international students on the academic culture of the university.

WEEK FOUR
OCTOBER 23-27

Appropriate Collaboration
Events by the Academic Learning Centre

Working together is an important part of your university experience—learn what is appropriate vs. inappropriate.

WEEK FIVE
OCTOBER 30-31

Integrity In Research & Teaching
Events by the Centre for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning & Libraries

This week features workshops for researchers and instructors on predatory publishing, picking the right review and fostering integrity in the classroom.

SHOW YOUR INTEGRITY
umanitoba.ca/academicintegrity

To learn more and register, visit
umanitoba.ca/academicintegrity/month
[#umintegrity](https://twitter.com/umintegrity)



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