

Editorial 4 (2)

Editorial Volume 4, Issue 2

As 2008 draws to a close, I am pleased to publish Volume 4(2) of the *International Journal for Educational Integrity*. Having attended the 3rd *International Plagiarism Conference* at Northumbria University in the UK in June, and recently joined the Advisory Board of the Center for Academic Integrity in the USA, I have gained the sense that there is increasing global interest in the broad field of educational integrity. In parallel with that interest has been an increased number of submissions to the IJEI, and an overall improvement in the quality of those submissions. I am delighted to report that the *International Journal for Educational Integrity* has been assessed by the European Science Foundation (Standing Committee for the Humanities) as a category 'B' in the ERIH Initial List for 'Pedagogical and Educational Research', and is currently being considered for a change of category to 'A', for confirmation in early 2009.

The Asia-Pacific Forum on Educational Integrity (<http://apfei.edu.au>), the organisation which publishes the IJEI, is currently seeking members, both institutional and individual.

Benefits of membership include:

- Access to the APFEI website and discussion list;
- Opportunities to contribute to the APFEI wiki/repository of resources;
- Discounted individual membership;
- Collaboration with the Center for Academic Integrity (Clemson University, USA, and plagiarismadvice.org (Northumbria University, UK));
- 15% discount on bi-annual APFEI conference registration to all delegates with individual or institutional membership;
- Networking opportunities with key researchers in the field, including mentoring to publish in the IJEI;
- Reputational benefit in being associated with the first organisation in the region specifically devoted to issues of educational integrity; and
- Access to key researchers/speakers/professional developers to conduct seminars and training.

The membership application form follows this Editorial.

As in previous issues, Volume 4(2) brings together a range of scholars from around the world, each offering a unique perspective on the topic. Kay Fielden and Donald Joyce from Unitec in New Zealand, set the scene by offering an analysis of 125 papers on academic integrity by Australasian authors, published since 1998. Fielden and Joyce use a multi-stakeholder, multi-level theoretical framework to demonstrate that there was a dominant positivist mindset adopted by the authors in the sample, and that academic staff researchers provide the dominant stakeholder view, most often about student behaviour.

It is perhaps not surprising, therefore, that the other three papers in the issue are all written by academic researchers and all deal with student behaviour. Amanda

Maxwell, Guy Curtis and Lucia Vardanega from the University of Western Sydney in Australia, investigate the perceived seriousness and understanding of plagiarism by local and Asian international students studying at two Australian universities. Based on a sample of 267 undergraduate students from varying disciplinary backgrounds, and using self-report questionnaires, the study challenges commonly held assumptions about cultural differences. No distinction was found between the two groups in terms of perceived seriousness and understanding of plagiarism. This study confirms the findings from other research which indicates that most students demonstrate some difficulty understanding what constitutes plagiarism, and that an educative framework is needed for all students, regardless of cultural or linguistic background.

Vidar Gynnild, from the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, and Patricia Gotschalk, from Michigan Technological University in Houghton, report on an institutional study of academic integrity based on reported incidents from 2001-2006, and a campus-wide survey administered in 2008. Although the findings demonstrated that academic dishonesty was widespread, 40% of the academic staff who responded to the survey stated that they had taken no steps to address a suspected breach of academic integrity, due to insufficient proof. Other key findings relating to student breaches of academic integrity indicated that there are cultural and gender differences, as well as differences between schools (disciplines) and levels of study. International students were over-represented in integrity charges, and the most frequent offence generally was collusion. Like many other researchers in the field, Gynnild and Gotschalk conclude that a holistic approach which balances the “punitive and educational aspects of policies” is both the challenge and the goal.

The issue concludes with an insightful piece by Sarah Roberts-Cady from Fort Lewis College in Colorado. Roberts-Cady makes the case that while most colleges and universities have adopted two main strategies to address academic integrity – behaviour modification and character development – what is also needed is a program of instruction which teaches students to think critically about values. Roberts-Cady asserts that critical thinking is not only an important element of rationality, but integral to being a morally responsible person. Given the emphasis on critical thinking in higher education, Roberts-Cady concludes that “critical thinking about honesty” is where we need to direct our attention in our daily efforts to address issues of academic integrity.

I trust you enjoy the current issue of the *International Journal for Educational Integrity* and encourage you to submit a paper for review, either through the automatic tracking system, or directly to me at tracey.bretag@unisa.edu.au. The next issue is scheduled to be published in April/May 2009.

Tracey Bretag, Editor

Reviewers for this issue:

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