Academic Integrity among University Journalism Students

An Action Research Project to Study the Impact of Online Educational Modules on Student Cheating

by

Jennifer Keller

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

Approved April 2021 by the
Graduate Supervisory Committee:

Danah Henriksen, Chair
Bill Silcock
Steven VanderStaay

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

May 2021

ABSTRACT

Academic integrity among college students continues to be a problem at colleges and universities. This is particularly important for journalism students where ethical issues in the profession are critical, especially in an era of "fake news" and distrust in the media. While most journalism students study professional ethics, they do not necessarily make the connection between their future careers and their academic career. In fact, at Western Washington University (Western) a recent exploration into academic dishonesty revealed that violations were increasing, and that journalism was one of the top three majors where violations occurred (based on percent of majors). To address this problem of practice, an online academic integrity resource – specific to journalism – was developed to see whether it could increase students' knowledge as it relates to academic integrity and decrease violations. The mixed methods action research (MMAR) study took place during summer and fall quarter at Western Washington University, a state university located in Bellingham, Washington. Participants included students who were pre-majors, majors, and minors in the three tracks of journalism: news-editorial, public relations, and visual journalism. They were given multiple opportunities to self-enroll in the Resource for Ethical Academic Development (READ) Canvas course for academic integrity. Self-efficacy theory and social learning theory provided a framework for the study. Data was collected through pre- and post-innovation surveys as well as qualitative interviews. Quantitative results suggest that there is work yet to do in order to educate students about academic integrity and potential consequences of behavior. Qualitative results suggest that one avenue may be through an online resource that provides concise and comprehensive information, models behavior relevant to the student's own

discipline, and is easily accessible. It also suggests that a culture change from a systemic emphasis on grades to a focus on growth and individual learning may be beneficial.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my husband, Mark, whose support and enthusiasm allowed me to believe in myself and this project. I am eternally grateful for his companionship on all our adventures – past, present and future.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost, I owe a huge debt of gratitude to my committee chair, Dr. Danah Henriksen. Her continued faith and encouragement throughout the process made it infinitely better and less stressful. I cannot find words enough to express how much her mentorship meant.

Second, I want to thank the fellow members of my cohort in our program. It's odd to think that we never met in person and yet their insights, support, and friendship were critical to my success. I will forever be grateful for our shared journey that included Dean Elsa, the importance of "snacks and stuffies," critical friends, GroupMe memes, infinite "you got this" messages. A particular shout-out to my friend, fellow LSC member, chapter co-author, sounding board – Amy Collins Montalbano – who made this journey much more enjoyable.

A word of thanks to my committee members – Dr. Steve VanderStaay at Western and Dr. Bill Silcock at ASU's Walter Cronkite School of Journalism. Their keen observations and feedback strengthened my work and my commitment to it. I am honored they both took the time and effort to support me throughout this process.

A special thank you to the amazing Western students (now alumni) – Logan Portteus, Hailey Palmer, James Egaran – whose investigative project for their capstone reporting class led me to my problem of practice. Needless to say, without their research and reporting, I might not have found my path forward. Also, a huge hug and thank you to Melinda Assink in our Provost's office who not only provided me with all-important university data but also endless support on this journey.

Finally, I need to thank my husband, Mark, for encouraging me to pursue my dream and finally complete my doctorate – all while teaching and chairing a department. He's had the patience of a saint (or at least a sailor) to put up with the craziness for the past three years I know that without his support and help, I would never have reached this milestone. A slightly lesser thank you to Jake and Elwood – my "boys." Their attention was appreciated – although not always timely or as helpful as they probably believed it to be.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

CHAPTER Page

CHAPTER Page

CHAPTER Page

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER 1

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AMONG JOURNALISM STUDENTS

This dissertation focuses on an action research project aimed at reducing academic dishonesty violations among journalism students at a medium-size public university in Washington state. This chapter will provide the national context related to academic dishonesty both in terms of higher education and, specifically, journalism/mass communications education. It will then discuss the action research project's situational context, initial information collected that helped in developing the innovation, and the proposed online resource to be tested.

National Context

It is the day before a paper is due and the student has yet to finish the assignment. This assignment is worth a hefty portion of the grade for the class and turning it in late is not an option. The student quickly searches the internet, finds the right information to complete the paper, and submits it to the professor – without properly citing the sources. Even with anti-plagiarism software, the chances of getting caught are slimmer than the chances of earning a zero for failure to turn in the paper.

Although the above situation may seem rare, current statistics show that many students cheat and many either do not think they will be caught or do not think it is a big deal. According to the International Center for Academic Integrity, approximately 40 percent of undergraduate students say they have cheated on a test, and nearly two-thirds (62%) have cheated on a written assignment ("Statistics," n.d.). These incidents include

copying or paraphrasing sentences from written works or online sites without proper citation, falsifying bibliographies, and copying from other students. The issue of student dishonesty is not only a serious concern in academic circles, but in more general magazines. According to an article by Derek Newton (2019) in Forbes, "Cheating in college is pervasive. Whether it's plagiarism, paying for custom assignments, improperly accessing and using academic resources or something else entirely, no college, no subject, no teacher is immune to it." Ashworth et al (2003) explain that one factor for a possible rise in plagiarism is a growth in group work and the potential ambiguity that brings over "ownership."

In the search for solutions to this problem, anti-plagiarism software has become a billion-dollar industry and, over the past decade, these software programs have become more popular on campuses. The programs, such as TurnItIn.com and VeriCite, compare text within papers to other sources for similarities. Those papers can be either published articles or other student papers. Although one might think this would dissuade students from cheating, a study by Youmans (2011) found that knowing their assignment would be checked by anti-plagiarism software such as TurnItIn did not affect the percentage of students who cheated. Other researchers looked at using TurnItIn as a teaching tool but still found that while writing might improve, citation skills did not (Rolfe, 2011). Identifying the best way to improve academic integrity – whether it is through anti-plagiarism software or another method – is an important focus for academic researchers. "Academic dishonesty doesn't start in higher education, but most faculty and many students feel something needs to be done to put on the brakes. The question is what. If we

can't make the point to our students, what will these ethics (or lack thereof) bring to our larger world" (Aaron & Roche, 2013-2014, p. 162).

For journalism students, in any focus, ethics is a critical subject for their future careers. Most journalism schools include a variety of journalism-related programs including news-editorial, broadcasting, public relations, visual journalism, multimedia, audience engagement, and social media. Many of the issues that occur in the classroom are reflected in those professions. Journalism students need to understand ethics so that they maintain their journalistic integrity and trustworthiness of information, and do not repeat the sins of some professionals currently in the field. As Lampert (2004) pointed out reporters like Jack Kelley with USA Today and Jayson Blair with the New York Times, as well as photojournalists like Brian Walski for the Los Angeles Times, have been fired for plagiarism, story fabrications, and photo manipulations. The oldest code of ethics in this industry is the Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) code, which includes the requirements to "seek truth and report it" and to "be accountable and transparent" (retrieved from https://www.spj.org/ethicscode.asp). Both of these include references to proper citation of information, including where it was obtained. The codes of ethics for Radio Television Digital News Association (https://www.rtdna.org/content/rtdna_code_of_ethics), the Public Relations Society of America (https://www.prsa.org/about/ethics/prsa-code-of-ethics), and the National Press Photographer's Association (https://nppa.org/code-ethics) are similar.

Shipley (2009) notes that a concern about honesty in the profession led to the development of journalism programs at the university level. Further, "ethical and moral development of journalists has been taught in some journalism schools for at least half a

century, long before the topic of applied ethics for professionals became fashionable in universities in the early 1980s" (p. 40). In an era of "fake news" and public excoriation of journalists, it is even more important for professionals in the field to maintain ethical standards. When journalism programs first began, very few of them offered media ethics courses. However, about one-quarter were offering them in the late 1970s, half by the early 1990s, and nearly two-thirds (61%) as of 2002 (Shipley, 2009, p. 41). According to Reid on the online career site of the *Houston Chronicle*, today all journalism programs require a course in law and ethics, although they are not always separate classes. However, despite a focus on professional ethics in journalism and public relations programs, students in those programs are no less likely to plagiarize, fabricate information, or commit other forms of academic dishonesty.

A study by Auger (2013) found that approximately 80 percent of public relations students surveyed self-reported cheating, with "unethical collaboration" as the most prevalent type. In addition, the study found no significant relationship between the importance students placed on the values stated in the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) code of ethics (such as honesty, loyalty, etc.) and their likelihood to cheat or types of cheating. In a study of journalism students over a three-year period, Conway & Groshek (2009) found that journalism students place a higher importance on professional ethics than they do academic integrity. In addition, they found that students felt plagiarism and fabrication "should be punished – but only severely in the case of professional journalists, not fellow students. Thus, it is quite clear that students are far more concerned about professional journalists behaving badly than they are about students failing to meet fundamental ethical standards" (p. 470).

It is important to understand whether there is a dichotomy between students' understanding of professional ethics and the connection to academic integrity. If we train our students about professional ethical standards, why do they fail to follow the ethical standards of the university? Is an apparent increase in cheating truly an increase, or do software programs such as TurnItIn enable more instances to be unearthed? Finally, how do we improve academic integrity among our journalism students? These broader questions circle around journalism education and point to issues that must be addressed by the field. This action research study will seek to address such concerns around journalism students and ethics in training and practice within a situated context at Western Washington University.

Situational Context

Western Washington University (Western) in Bellingham, Washington, is one of five state universities in the Washington state system. Approximately 16,000 students are enrolled in more than 160 majors and programs. Western has a primary focus on undergraduate education, with only 5% of students enrolled in a graduate program. In recent years, academic dishonesty reports have been increasing on campus. As an associate professor and chair of the journalism department, these problems of academic integrity piqued my interest in determining what could be done to reverse the trend.

Further, as I began focusing on my research proposal, I read a series of articles researched and written by students in our capstone news-editorial class: Advanced Reporting. For their senior project, a group of three journalism students at Western, Egaran, Portteus, and Palmer (2018) undertook an in-depth reporting inquiry looking into

academic dishonesty rates at Western University for their capstone advanced reporting class. They collected data from public records requests, interviews with the Provost's office, and information on enrollment gathered from the associate director of institutional research. The final three-part series, each authored by a different reporter, was published in both *The Western Front* (the university's newspaper) and the associated students' publication, *The AS Review*.

Portteus (2018) found that the number of academic dishonesty cases at Western has increased dramatically between 2012 and 2018. Prior to 2012, there were typically fewer than 50 reported violations per year on average across the entire university. Since 2012, the incidents have significantly increased, with an average of 100 cases per year. Penalties for academic dishonesty can range from a zero on an assignment, to a zero in the class, to suspension or expulsion from the university. In terms of types of academic dishonesty, of the 515 cases reported from 2012-2017, the top five types of cheating were plagiarism, cheated on test, unauthorized collaboration, submitted another student's work and use unauthorized resources. (Egaran, 2017). Most recent numbers from the Provost's office show there were 126 incidents reported in the 2017-18 academic year.

Palmer (2018) reported that the three departments with the highest rate of academic dishonesty reports from 2000-2017, by percentage of students in the major, were finance and marketing, computer science, and journalism. In the journalism department, all our students – both majors and minors – are required to take a mass media ethics course. The importance of professional ethics is also built into every course we teach, and students are required to discuss the importance of ethics in their application to

the major. While we added that component to ensure students were actively thinking about ethics, we are not allowed to deny access to the major if a student has been found guilty of plagiarism or another academic honesty issue per university policy.

As a professor of journalism and public relations, I am very cognizant of academic dishonesty and issues within my own classes. However, as chair, one of my primary responsibilities is to act as a first round of appeals for students written up for academic integrity issues within the department. Sometimes the professor has determined that the incident is minor and the penalty is simply a lower grade on the assignment. Some incidents result in a zero for the assignment and, rarely, failure in the class. No matter how harsh the penalty, our faculty write up every incident if there is, indeed, some sort of grade modification or penalty. The reason for this is that if a faculty member decides to give the student a failing grade on the assignment, but not report them, then there is no record of the incident and, consequently, no reason for lowering the student's grade. It is as if the incident doesn't exist. In other words, if a student received a zero on an assignment because he or she plagiarized, but the incident was not reported, then there is no proof of plagiarism. Therefore, if a student chooses to appeal the grade itself, they can't be given a zero. Filing the official report also gives the students an official appeals procedure if they think the penalty was too harsh or that they did not commit academic dishonesty. Without the report, there is no chance for the student to appeal. While one would think the student would be happy not to have an official report turned in, the department did have a student who appealed and had to be given a higher grade because there was no report. This is why the university has a very strict policy on academic dishonesty issues resulting in penalties.

There could be many reasons for a spike in academic dishonesty reports at Western. Portteus (2018) examines the change in academic technology such as plagiarism detection services as a possibility. His research shows that prior to 2012, the university had a built-in software through Blackboard. When the university moved to Canvas in 2012, that program had no built-in plagiarism detection software. Therefore, the university added TurnItIn, and this past year moved to VeriCite. While software may not be a reason for an increase in reports, the spike occurred after the university moved to Canvas and TurnItIn. However, the director of Academic Technology and User Services asserts there is no evidence that professors are using TurnItIn anymore (or less) frequently than the previous Blackboard service (Portteus, 2018).

Initial cycles of action research

In order to understand how much our students knew about academic dishonesty issues, as well as the academic integrity policy, I conducted a short survey of journalism students as part of an initial cycle of research in this area. The anonymous survey was conducted online in Spring 2019, with 64 journalism students participating. With 325 students in the department, this represents a 19.5% response rate. The survey pointed to a few key areas for further exploration in the innovation. For instance, only about half of students say they are "extremely confident" they know enough not to commit an academic dishonesty violation, with the rest being "fairly confident" or "neutral." However, when it came to understanding what constituted academic dishonesty there were areas they did not perceive as cheating, but which are considered to be by the department and university. At the top of that list was unauthorized collaboration and self-

plagiarism, or submitting one's own work from one class for an assignment in another. In addition, students did not know or understand the process for filing academic honesty violations, including their rights to appeals at various stages in the process.

In addition, as part of another prior action research cycle, I conducted qualitative interviews with chairs of other departments at Western to learn their perspectives on academic dishonesty issues and their adherence to the academic honesty policy as compared to journalism. Chairs were selected for the interviews because they are the first rung in the appeal process. Therefore, they know about academic honesty violations within their department and are well versed in the department's policies and procedures. The sample included chairs across the university and in departments with both higher and lower numbers of academic honesty violation reports. In total, I interviewed five chairs from three different colleges – the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, the College of Science and Engineering, and the College of Business and Economics. Four of the chairs were male, one was female. All chairs are tenured professors in their departments and have been at Western between 10 and 17 years. In addition, all have been chairs of their respective departments for at least three years, so they have seen academic honesty violations over the span of several terms.

The goal for these interviews was to help in developing my innovation. Most chairs believe the majority of violations within their departments are due to a lack of understanding by the students rather than intentional cheating. The idea that most plagiarism is inadvertent because students are unaware of proper citation methods is consistent with the literature. Although this research is limited in scope, it seems to

support the idea that the academic dishonesty issues we face at Western Washington University are similar issues to those at other universities. This makes the focus of this study particularly resonant with challenges in journalism education more broadly. In addition, most faculty believe that inadvertent plagiarism is less severe and that professors should be doing more to educate our students. This supports my prior cycles of action research up to this point, as well as this dissertation innovation proposal.

My goal through this research is to implement and investigate an innovation that makes students more aware of (a) what constitutes academic dishonesty and (b) how to properly cite sources or ensure that they review citations with professors prior to finalizing an assignment in order to reduce inadvertent cheating. Finally, to address intentional cheating, I aim to decrease this by increasing knowledge and the perception that cheating is wrong based on a framework of social learning, which suggests that people learn from watching others' behaviors as well as their own.

Purpose of the Study

Whatever the underlying reason for the spike in academic dishonesty reports at Western – be it new technology, adherence to policy, or a lack of education about what constitutes cheating – the important point is that students are committing academic dishonesty and, from the survey and interiews, it may be due to lack of information rather than purposeful intent. The goal for me is to increase students' ethical literacy and, thereby, decrease the number of academic honesty violations within our department. I feel this is particularly important for students who will face the same issues in their professional careers. Understanding plagiarism or the ethics of self-plagiarism is

important in journalism and public relations. So, if students lack knowledge about what constitutes cheating and the appropriate actions to take, how do I empower them with the knowledge and resources they need? The purpose of this study is to determine whether localized knowledge in the form of online content for journalism students, could positively impact academic integrity.

Innovation

In order to develop an educational tool that would successfully reach our students, as part of a prior cycle of research, I held a focus group comprised of six students within the department. The group included four students who prefer she/her pronouns and two preferring he/him. They also included students in different stages of the major – from students who had just declared as pre-majors to students who were graduating the next month. An invitation was sent to all our journalism students via the department's Canvas site and students self-selected to participate. A key theme that arose from the focus group was a lack of resources regarding academic dishonesty. Students said they want to maintain academic integrity, but they are not always sure what they are supposed to do or where to go for information. One student asked whether there was an academic integrity FAQ somewhere and others wondered the same thing (there is not at the moment). They also all said that it would be helpful if professors established at the beginning of each course what the guidelines are specifically for that class, as well as the department. They suggested some sort of "onboarding section where we talk about the journalism department standards." All agreed that knowing the details of when things cross the line

would be helpful and, in particular, some sort of reference they could go when ethical/moral questions arise.

In terms of specific best practices for the resource, students had three key tips that will inform the innovation:

1) *Real world context* is helpful. They like to see stories or cases based on actual scenarios that they can explore, with a discussion of how someone made a decision. This is true for both professional ethics and academic integrity issues.
2) *Personalizing the content* makes them pay more attention. Having different professors share their own experiences would provide a connection for future interactions.
3) Allow the resource to *evolve as new issues, questions, or technologies come into play*. Offering a discussion board or a messaging system where students could ask questions and new content could be added if needed.

Overall, students said they would like to have "legitimate toolbox for how to interpret situations on your own, along with real world scenarios."

Based on this feedback, I developed the READ program – Resource for Ethical Academic Development – an online Canvas course for journalism students. Providing an online course that students could self-enroll in enabled all students in the major to access the resource at any time, from any place. Unlike ethics training in classes, students do not have to reach out to individual professors, and this autonomy and privacy in seeking and getting answers could spur students to research more questions on this topic. It is possible that students may shy away from asking a professor, with the concern that either (a) the

professor will then view the student's work skeptically or (b) the professor will not respond quickly. All students were sent the link to the new site through email and a link on the department's Canvas site. In addition, our department manager and program coordinator provided a link to students as soon as they signed up as a pre-major, without having to wait for a specific course or training time. The online resource innovation is described in more detail in Chapter 3. In addition, as part of the ethics section for their major application, students were directed to the site as a resource to help them address the importance of professional ethics.

The primary goal of this action research project is to positively impact academic integrity within the journalism department. While much research has been done on this topic, focusing on a variety of methods including anti-plagiarism software, a specific educational resource has not been studied for journalism students. In addition, since professional ethics is a critical subject for journalism students, the innovation is also designed to connect academic integrity with professional ethics. The goal is to focus on the innovation's impact on academic integrity among journalism students at Western.

Research Questions

This study was conducted to investigate three research questions related to academic integrity among journalism students. They are:

RQ1: What effects do online resources that explain and clarify academic dishonesty in ways relevant to students' specific professional focus have on student cheating?

RQ2: How does a departmental resource for academic integrity, in addition to the university-wide one, affect student knowledge of academic integrity policies and procedures?

RQ3: What impact does an innovation designed to establish a connection between professional ethics and academic integrity have on student behavior around academic dishonesty?

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES AND RESEARCH GUIDING THE PROJECT

This study is guided by three key areas of focus in the literature – all of which are reviewed as follows in Chapter 2. The chapter begins with a general review of the literature focused on two core areas. The first area of focus is on academic dishonesty among students in higher education broadly and potential ways to improve academic integrity. Most of the current studies focus specifically on plagiarism, although there are other forms of academic dishonesty. A subsection of this discussion covers the current body of literature related to anti-plagiarism software, such as Turnitin. The second area of the literature covered here is on academic integrity as it relates to journalism/public relations students and future professional ethics. Finally, in this chapter, I cover two theoretical frameworks that guide this study and are relevant in the framing of this research project: social learning theory and self-efficacy theory. This chapter concludes with an examination of those theories, along with related studies using those frameworks.

Studies on Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism in Higher Education

Concerns around academic integrity crisscross the landscape of higher education, and research in this area is not limited to journalism. As noted in chapter one, nearly two-thirds of American students admit to cheating in some form or another (retrieved from https://academicintegrity.org/statistics/), which implies serious concerns around academic dishonesty and academic integrity in U.S. higher education broadly. There are many instances of cheating at university, either on a test or a paper. For example, Aaron and

Roche (2013-14) point to an incident at Harvard where nearly half the class allegedly cheated on a take-home final, and half of those students were forced to withdraw from Harvard (p. 165). Student cheating is not new, but it appears to be increasing. “It has been with us for at least decades, but has increased in recent years perhaps related to the impact of technology” (Aaron & Roche, 2013-14, p. 162). Academic dishonesty includes a variety of transgressions from copying on a test to falsifying data, however the bulk of the literature focuses on plagiarism. In this there are obvious concerns for journalism education, but research literature looks at this issue across contexts.

“The term plagiarism is usually used to refer to the theft of words or ideas, beyond what would normally be regarded as general knowledge,” (Park, 2003, p. 472). Plagiarism can include both using information from an outside source without citation and also using one’s own work without proper reference. Reasons for plagiarism are varied but it is clear from the studies that many students cheat or plagiarize intentionally. “Whilst intentionality might be difficult to establish or prove, there is no doubt that some plagiarism is accidental or inadvertent. Such unintentional plagiarism occurs when a student fails to adopt (perhaps because they do not know) proper protocols for referring to academic material” (Park, 2003, p. 476). MacLennan’s findings (2018) seem to verify this aspect of plagiarism. In her study on student perceptions related to avoiding plagiarism she found that students had misconceptions about what constituted originality and did not necessarily understand when citations were required. In addition, although students in MacLennan’s (2018) study felt that penalties for plagiarism were important, they also felt that leniency was important when plagiarism was inadvertent. MacLennan

stresses that to help students avoid inadvertent plagiarism there is a need – and a desire from students – for improved instruction. In particular, in her study, students stressed a need for instruction about when and how to properly reference and cite materials, as well as how to synthesize information Price (2002) brings up additional challenges in terms of students' understanding of what constitutes plagiarism, which is collaborative learning. In her study, Price (2002) notes that although collaborative learning has been shown to be beneficial as a pedagogical technique, in terms of plagiarism it may confuse students because they may not understand who the author is what constitutes their own words when working as a team.

Elander et al (2010) conducted an intervention aimed at decreasing unintentional plagiarism by improving students' authorial identity. The study showed that students' authorial identity improved during the course of instruction as measured by pre- and post-intervention questionnaires. Although the study showed an increase in confidence and attitude toward avoiding plagiarism, those did not "translate into significant reductions in staff perceptions of student writing behaviours, or reductions in the numbers of students suspected of plagiarism or referred for disciplinary measures associated with plagiarism" (p. 168). Voelker et al (2012) specifically studied students' understanding of academic dishonesty to learn what they know about plagiarism, their roles and responsibilities, and if and where there are knowledge gaps. They found that although students generally understand what plagiarism is, there are three very specific knowledge gaps common to all students – graduate, undergraduate, online, or in face-to-face classes. According to their research study, students are often unaware that they can plagiarize themselves and

tend to believe that they can avoid plagiarism entirely by citing and references. Therefore, their understanding of the mechanisms for using tables and figures was severely lacking (Voelker et al., 2012). In addition, they found that online students appear to be less likely to commit academic dishonesty than those in face-to-face classes, perhaps because "at the risk of redundancy, online students are more likely to be comfortable working in an online medium" (p. 40).

Technology has also been linked to possible increases in academic dishonesty. In several studies (Chang et al, 2015; Evering & Moormon, 2002; Hansen, 2003; Sprajc et al, 2017), the impact of advances in technology on possible student plagiarism is examined, since information is more accessible yet determining the proper original source can be challenging. This issue also emerged during my Cycle 0 research at Western. As part of my initial background research, I interviewed five chairs in three different colleges at Western Washington University about incidents of cheating in their department and their department policy for reporting any violations. The chairs' departments were in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, the College of Science and Engineering, and the College of Business and Economics. All chairs were tenured professors in their departments and have been at Western between 10 and 17 years. In addition, all have been chairs of their respective departments for at least three years, so they have seen academic honesty violations over the span of several terms.

One theme that emerged was technology. Across departments chairs felt that technology might make cheating easier or at least seem less important to students. One professor stated that "more and more often we see plagiarism involving technology [such as] using smart phones in exams to look things up or photographing materials that they

should not have photographed, like tests." Another mentioned that students are smart with the technology and may use something like a smart watch during a test, which can be harder to spot. Beyond using technology as a means for cheating, some also attributed student lack of awareness about plagiarism to technology. As one chair stated, "Students aren't really aware. They feel comfortable taking stuff from the Internet and using it in their personal life – so they see it as easier to just do so in an academic environment as well." This points to the need to educate students about what constitutes cheating as it relates to the availability and ease of finding information online. Could online resources be helpful in educating students – and in catching cases of plagiarism?

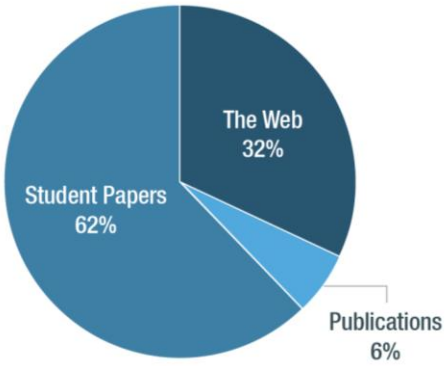
Anti-Plagiarism Software and its Impact on Plagiarism

In addition, technology has added another dimension to academic integrity – that being – anti-plagiarism software. This was another theme that came through in my previous cycle interviews, as many departments use some type of anti-plagiarism software in their departments. According to Turner (2014), although there are several anti-plagiarism software programs, Turnitin is the biggest and is used by nearly half of all institutions of higher education in the U.S. According to Turnitin, the software does not check for plagiarism, per se, but checks a student's work for similarities with other documents and sources. Their database includes "billions of web pages: both current and archived content from the internet, a repository of works students have submitted to Turnitin in the past, and a collection of documents, which comprises thousands of periodicals, journals, and publications" (retrieved from https://guides.turnitin.com/). Turnitin then produces a Similarity Report that shows the percent of the document that is

similar to other sources. A correctly cited paper could still have a high score, as the service does not check for that. The professor or student must review highlighted areas to ensure all are correctly cited.

Figure 1

Turnitin's Content Matches 2013



Note: Reprinted from *Turnitin and the debate over anti-plagiarism software*, by Turner, C. All Things Considered, NPR. Retrieved from https://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2014/08/25/340112848/turnitin-and-the-high-tech-plagiarism-debate. Copyright 2014 by NPR.

Although Turnitin and other software programs are used extensively, there is a debate about their effectiveness and whether they should be used at all. According to Bruton & Childers (2016), there are often objections based on the premise that plagiarism detection programs are not especially nuanced tools (but often blunt instruments) that may potentially damage the teacher-student relationship. Their study, which focused on faculty attitudes towards plagiarism and the use of Turnitin software, found that faculty did not have the objections noted above. They stated that "only rarely did interviewees express the sorts of political, pedagogical or ethical objections that are common in the academic literature. Even participants who did not use the software regularly expressed

no reservations about policing plagiarism in general" (p. 322). Instead, faculty were concerned that the university was not doing enough to promote the software and police student plagiarism more strictly.

Youmans (2011) focused on student perception of Turnitin as a potential deterrent to plagiarism. He examined whether students who were warned that their papers would be submitted through Turnitin would be less likely to plagiarize than those who were not warned. All students in the study had also been through a first-year writing course that taught them about plagiarism and proper citation. However, all participants identified as having committed plagiarism were in the 'warned' condition and committed plagiarism despite awareness that the software would check their papers. In addition, Rolfe (2011) focused on potential positive impacts of Turnitin as a tool to reduce student plagiarism. In this case, students submitted initial drafts of their papers through Turnitin. Following instructions on how to use the originality reports, students could review those and revise their papers prior to submitting a final draft. The goal was to provide students with more information about what might constitute academic dishonesty and allow them to learn from that without penalty. This was compared to an earlier cohort who were not allowed to revise after submitting the papers. The study showed that although students felt their writing was improved and many did revise their papers, this did not translate to actual improvement in terms of plagiarism. Rolfe therefore noted that using Turnitin in this way did not impact the ways that students used referencing and citation. In fact, citation skills got worse, perhaps due to students not understanding the original reports or the purpose in using them. She also noted that other studies incorporating face-to-face feedback along with the originality report were more promising.

In general, most of the research shows that use of anti-plagiarism software does not seem to deter plagiarism whether used as a either a carrot (Rolfe) or a stick (Youmans). This potentially signals a need to go deeper into better education and development of academic honesty norms for students – rather than expecting technology tools to provide a solution.

Academic Dishonesty Among Journalism & Public Relations Majors

Of particular interest for this study are plagiarism and other academic dishonesty issues committed by journalism and public relations students. As pointed out in chapter one, professional ethics are extremely important in the journalism field and yet journalism students do not necessarily see the connection, or do not view academic dishonesty to be as serious an offense as professional ethics violations. Shipley (2009) explored journalism student views on cheating both at the university and in the profession. The study found that students do recognize that cheating as a professional journalist in almost any capacity is a serious issue, although they were more lenient in terms of what constitutes a serious infraction in the classroom. However, the study did indicate that those students who do consider academic cheating a serious problem and believe in stronger penalties ultimately bring these views to their professional careers. Shipley (2009) feels this result bodes well for their professional integrity as working journalists and communicators later on.

As noted above, Conway and Groshek (2009) concur that journalism students view professional ethical violations as more serious than academic ones. In a follow-up study, Groshek and Conway (2012) collected data from more than 5,000 students over a

period of more than four years. There findings showed that students understanding of professional ethics, and a desire for stricter penalties, improves throughout their time in the program. They found that while students certainly enter the program with relatively well-developed beliefs about media ethics, their academic training helped further strengthen their conceptions of ethical conduct for professionals in the media. The only areas where increases in concern about professional plagiarism were not significant were in photojournalism and online journalism (Groshek and Conway, 2012). This suggests that students need more education in those areas – which appears particularly true in the program at Western Washington University. Similarly, Auger (2013) examined perceptions of public relations students with regard to academic integrity as well as the PRSA code of ethics. She found that students' professional values did not impact their behavior, however student behavior was strongly correlated to the perceived behavior of their peers. It is thus concerning that students emphasize the value of a professional code of ethics yet behave in waves that are unethical. This begs the question of what guides their behavior (Auger 2013).

Stone (2005) pointed to another issue for student journalists – ending up with a more public plagiarism record. For students in most classes, their cheating is only exposed to the faculty member and, perhaps, an academic honesty board. It does not follow them, typically, beyond their graduation date. Stone states that student journalists take a greater risk when cheating. She states, "as a result of the Internet, online journalism, and blogs, those who write for publication, even undergraduate publications, live in a world where the midnight sun is always up, the microphone is always on, and

the curtains are never down. We cannot limit the consequences to our neophyte journalism students even in the present moment" (para. 9-10). Thus, a student journalist who plagiarizes in a publication, and the dishonesty is not discovered prior to publication, faces the same risks that professional journalists do if caught. Stone continues, pointing out that often, similar to professional journalists, these students are then barred from working for the campus publication, thus derailing a future career. Therefore, helping journalism students understand consequences beyond the traditional classroom experience, is extremely important.

Theoretical Perspectives Guiding the Research

Stemming off of this literature, and based on problem framing described in chapter one, it is clear that more evidence-based research is needed to address issues of academic dishonesty among journalism students. This action research study aims to do this, based on two theoretical foundations: social learning theory and self-efficacy theory. Each of these theories is discussed in turn as follows, along with relevant studies using that theoretical framework as a basis.

Social learning theory

Social learning theory provides one possible framing to illuminate Auger's question above about what is guiding students' behavior. It is therefore one of the theoretical frameworks for this paper. Students are persuaded more by what they learn from their peers than what they learn from other sources. Social learning theory was developed by Albert Bandura at Stanford in the early 1970s. He posited that behavior was not solely driven by internal forces, such as needs, but also by external, social factors. "In

the social learning system, new patterns of behavior can be acquired through direct experience or by observing the behavior of others" (Bandura, 1971, p. 3). It is not only observation of behavior, however, that can influence a person's own actions. Rather, it also includes consequences of behavior. Bandura (1971) states, "Traditional theories of learning generally depict behavior as the product of directly experienced response consequences. In actuality, virtually all learning phenomena resulting from direct experiences can occur on a vicarious basis through observation of other people's behavior and its consequences for them" (p. 2). In terms of education, this is predominantly seen through a lens of peer influence. This does not necessarily mean the norms of a peer group, although it may, but it also means observing consequences for actions taken by peers and modeling one's own behavior based on perceived repercussions or lack thereof.

In terms of plagiarism and student cheating, many studies have focused on peer influence as it relates to likelihood of a student to cheat. Conway & Groshek (2009) noted that social norms theory can also be used to explain academic ethical behavior. In essence, when students think their peers are cheating and getting away with it, it is more likely that they will try to cheat. The researchers noted that existing findings have demonstrated that students tend to overestimate how much their classmates are cheating. In her study, Auger (2013) found that more than 75% of the public relations majors in the university she studied had violated the honor code. She noted that the number of students who believe their peers cheat extensively was concerning, particularly when we consider how research has demonstrated the influence of peers on behavior. Fish & Hura (2013) found the same in their own research related to student perceptions of plagiarism and

found their results supported studies that showed students overestimate cheating by others. This then can result in students feeling it is all right to cheat because everyone does it. Fish and Hura (2013) go on to note that students who overestimate the amount of plagiarism by classmates may view plagiarism as normal, and, therefore, may plagiarize in order to complete an assignment they find challenging. In particular, they may be more likely view using another author's ideas or text phrases as being less serious. With social learning theory, peer influence can also be a way to model desired behavior. Honny (2010) reviewed several studies related to academic integrity. She states that in Bowers' landmark survey he concluded "that one of the important deterrents to violations was peer disapproval. He suggested that putting the primary responsibility for dealing with violations in the hands of student representatives as in the process of honor code systems" (p. 12).

Batane (2010) used social learning and social cognition theory to frame his study focused on fighting plagiarism among university students in Botswana. In the study, Batane focuses not only on use of Turnitin but whether peer influence has an impact on student plagiarism. In their results, they found that "Students also reported that plagiarism cases in the university were not taken very seriously as they often see most of their colleagues get away with this kind of cheating. This tempts them to also engage in the behaviour. As one student asked, 'why should you sweat to write a paper properly while someone just copies and gets a higher mark than you?'" (p. 7). Similarly, Power (2009) found in her study about student perceptions of plagiarism that students focus more on the moral code of their society (peers) rather than that of their professors or the

university. She noted that students reported taking plagiarism less seriously than they believe their professors do and often have their own sense of morality surrounding plagiarism, which does not align with their perception of their professors'. Many students have major misunderstandings of plagiarism and this is particularly true around issues of paraphrasing and original ideas.

Understanding that students – and most people – learn from behaviors they observe in society or among their peers, we can use social learning theory to develop models of appropriate behavior. When teaching public relations students about social learning theory, I explain that one way to use it for an organization is to promote the "employee of the month" or a customer who received a benefit based on behavior we hope our consumers or employees will model. For the innovation, this will include providing examples of professional behavior that is exemplary in terms of integrity. These cases will provide a model for future behavior based on current behavior at the university. Conversely, showing how certain behaviors can lead to unexpected (and unwanted) outcomes – such as inadvertent plagiarism and a zero on an assignment – can provide examples of behavior students should not follow. In this case, they are learning which behaviors could negatively impact them as a student as well as their future career.

One way I will do this in the innovation is to provide real examples and show how different behaviors led to different outcomes. An example is an interactive case study where students can choose different paths at different times. When they choose one path or behavior, it will then let them know what outcome (or outcomes) that behavior could lead to. They then have the option to go back and choose a different path/behavior and see what happens next if they take a different course of action.

Self-efficacy theory

Additionally, beyond learning from others' behaviors, there is also the question about how confident a person is in their own ability to do well. The self-efficacy theory according to Bandura, relates to this area of behavior. "Perceived self-efficacy is defined as people's beliefs about their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives. Self-efficacy beliefs determine how people feel, think, motivate themselves and behave" (Bandura, 1994, p. 2). Bandura points to four primary sources of self-efficacy, which include mastery experiences, social models, social motivation, and physiological state. Social modeling ties into Bandura's social learning theory, described above, which provides one key framework for this research method. Of the other three, Bandura states that the most effective way to improve self-efficacy is through what he terms "mastery experiences" or building confidence through successes. Therefore, this research model will focus on how to use mastery experiences to improve self-efficacy and, hopefully, reduce academic dishonesty.

Self-efficacy in terms of mastery relates to how confident a person is that they can master a task. As it relates to student achievement, Schunk and Mullen (2012) define self-efficacy for students as their belief in their own abilities to successfully learn information and complete tasks and assignments, which can impact learning. High or low levels of self-efficacy or confidence can impact everything from how much effort people put into a task, how long they stick with it, how much they challenge themselves, and how they react to setbacks (Schunk and Mullen, 2012).

In terms of academic dishonesty, exploring how confident students are in their abilities to avoid plagiarism and other forms of cheating could help focus education on

areas where students are less confident. In other words, improving their self-efficacy in terms of academic integrity may decrease academic dishonesty violations. Ogilvie and Stewart (2010) note that students with lower self-efficacy in terms of academics are more likely to cheat in order to successfully complete an assignment or task. Murdock and Anderman (2006) reviewed the literature for possible behaviors and theories that could increase incidents of student cheating. One conclusion they came to was that it there is a preponderance of evidence that self-efficacy beliefs and perceived outcome expectations are directly related to student cheating.

Some studies have directly looked at different possible factors and how they might impact student cheating. In two studies, one research question focused on how students' academic self-efficacy might contribute to their likelihood of cheating (Ogilvie & Stewart, 2010; Saulsbury et al, 2011). In both of these studies, research found that students with low self-efficacy had a higher likelihood of cheating. In addition, Ogilvie and Stewart (2010) found that sanctions or other deterrents had no impact on intent to plagiarize for those with low self-efficacy. However, they did significantly impact intentions among students who had stronger self-efficacy (defined as moderate and high academic self-efficacy students in the study). Results from another study "suggest that a developmental cascade exists between student achievement and later emotional engagement via self-efficacy" (Olivier et al, 2019, p. 336). In other words, if students perform well in a subject area then they are likely to continue to perceive themselves as doing well in that area, and enjoy it, later in their academic career.

This research falls in line with Bandura's (1994) discussion of sources of self-efficacy, particularly related to mastery experiences. He notes that people who have

success in an experience develop a strong sense of efficacy, while failures make it harder for people to develop strong self-efficacy. Using a framework of self-efficacy this points to the idea of educating students when there are no consequences in order to help them develop high self-efficacy as it relates to academic integrity. This could then ensure that they continue to feel confident, which also may mean they are less likely to commit intentional plagiarism since deterrents would impact their likelihood to participate in errant behavior such as plagiarism or other forms of cheating. Of course, confidence is only one piece – they also have to actually have mastery of the information.

In a survey I conducted during Cycle 1 of a small sample of journalism students, most students said they felt "fairly" or "extremely confident" that they knew enough not to commit academic dishonesty. However, they also showed a lack of education as it related to group work and proper citation. This could then lead to unintentional academic honesty violations as they have some confidence but lack mastery of important information. My proposed innovation is designed to educate students early in their academic careers on all aspects of potential cheating so that they don't commit unintentional plagiarism.

The research also points to links between self-efficacy and social learning theories. In assessing their own self-efficacy, students tend to look at peers who they perceive as being similar to themselves – in terms of ability, potential, area of study, background, etc. One issue can be for students who are in a high-ability course but don't see themselves as being as knowledgeable or confident as their peers. Students are more likely to cheat if they feel this is the only way to keep up with their peers and appear competent (Murdock & Anderman, 2006). In addition, Murdock and Anderman (2006) point out that self-

efficacy is very task specific. So, a student may have high self-efficacy for one type of task (writing a story) but not for another (taking a test). Therefore, they would be more likely to cheat on a test, in this example, than to plagiarize in a story. In addition, as Pajares (1996) also argues, because self-efficacy is specific, rather than general, we can only predict based on certain tasks. Pajares notes that helping students recognize where they have knowledge and where they lack it will help them develop their own cognitive strategies for success and improve self-efficacy. This will inform the innovation by developing specific modules for different tasks, so students can focus on areas where they lack confidence. For example, some students may understand self-plagiarism while others do not. Developing a module that speaks directly to this type of dishonesty – and various scenarios that could fall under it – will help those who lack knowledge in this area develop it. For those who do have that knowledge, it can provide a review for them or they can simply skip that module and look to one that focuses on an area of academic dishonesty where they lack knowledge (such as proper citation of paraphrased sources). Employing a variety of learning tools for each different type of cheating could improve self-efficacy, rather than simply providing a broad overview of academic dishonesty and ethics.

Implications for the Study

Current statistics and studies show that academic dishonesty continues to be a problem among college students. Factors such as peer influence and student confidence may play significant factors in a student's behavior, particularly as it relates to cheating.

Social learning theory and self-efficacy theory will provide a theoretical framework for this action research project aimed at improving academic integrity.

Several research studies have pointed to inadvertent plagiarism and a lack of proper education as an underlying factor in academic dishonesty (Elander et al, 2010; MacLellan, 2018; Park, 2003; Price, 2002, Voelker et al, 2012). In addition, researchers show a disconnect for journalism and public relations students in their perceptions of professional ethics versus their own academic integrity (Auger, 2013; Conway & Groshek, 2009; Groshek & Conway, 2012); Shipley, 2009). Based on this research, future innovations will need to focus on better education for students as it relates to plagiarism and other academic dishonesty issues. In addition, for journalism and public relations students, it will be important to show the connection between current academic violations and potential professional ethics issues in the future. If an educational innovation is successful in decreasing the number of academic honesty violations, that module could then be shared with and adapted for other departments or programs.

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

Chapter 3 will explain the methodology of this action research project. Prior to the discussion of methodology, I will first briefly summarize the purpose of the study and the use of action research. Next, I will explain the setting, participants, and role of the researcher, followed by a description of the innovation to be used, and the instruments and data collection procedures. Finally, I will outline the procedure and timetable for implementation and data collection.

The purpose of this action research study was to explore whether providing journalism students with a discipline-specific resource on academic integrity and ethics would reduce the number of academic honesty violations. Research described in previous chapters shows that while student cheating is pervasive, much of it is unintentional. Previous cycles of action research show that journalism students at Western Washington University believe they understand what constitutes cheating, yet do not appear to actually understand all the nuances – particularly as they relate to self-plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration. The READ Program (Resource for Ethical Academic Development) was developed to provide students with an online resource for academic integrity and professional ethics.

The READ Program used action research as the foundation for the study. Mertler (2017) analyzed several sources that define action research and, while it is many things, at its foundation it is a process for incorporating change in a collaborative manner. Action research is a purposeful approach that allows us to test hypotheses related to educational improvement (Mertler 2017). In this project, I worked with colleagues to develop the

innovation in a manner that incorporates successful practices for teaching ethics and covers the variety of types of student cheating seen in the journalism department.

To reiterate, from Chapter 1, the action research project is designed to answer three research questions using this innovation:

RQ1: What effects do online resources that explain and clarify academic dishonesty in ways relevant to students' specific professional focus have on student cheating?

RQ2: How does a departmental resource for academic integrity, in addition to the university-wide one, affect student knowledge of academic integrity policies and procedures?

RQ3: What impact does an innovation designed to establish a connection between professional ethics and academic integrity have on student behavior around academic dishonesty?

Setting, Participants, and Role of the Researcher

Setting

This action research project was conducted at Western Washington University (Western) in Bellingham, WA, during spring, summer, and fall quarters of 2020. Western is a state university with a student population of approximately 16,000 students. The study is specifically focused on the journalism department, where I serve as chair and associate professor. The journalism program is an undergraduate degree only, as are the majority of majors at Western. There are more than 300 students in the journalism program focused on one of three tracks: news-editorial, public relations, or visual journalism. Both the news-editorial and public relations programs have associated

minors; the visual journalism does not. Approximately 85 students are in one of the two minors, with more public relations minors than news-editorial. In terms of majors/pre-majors, public relations has the most, with nearly 100 students, while both news-editorial and visual journalism have approximately 75 majors/pre-majors.

At Western, all journalism students, no matter the track, must take both newswriting and work as a staff reporter for the student newspaper, *The Western Front*, in order to declare as a major. In addition, students must receive a B- or better in both courses. All students are also required to take both a mass media law course and a separate mass media ethics course, as well as editing, an internship, and a senior seminar course. There are specific courses required for different tracks – for example, public relations students must take a series of four PR-specific courses – with some crossover electives to allow students to strengthen skills in another area such as feature writing or photojournalism. There is one large 100-level introductory class, but a majority of courses are capped between 18 and 30 students. Almost all courses are upper division, with 400-level courses reserved for declared majors only.

Participants

Participants included students currently enrolled in the journalism program as either a pre-major, major, or minor. In order to declare as a pre-major, students must meet certain GPA requirements and then must meet with their assigned adviser and develop a plan of study prior to the paperwork being submitted. They are then enrolled in the department Canvas site. To become a major, they must, again, meet academic prerequisites and must also write a letter of application, which includes a section on the

importance of ethics. Both of these conditions were important for the innovation. Minors need only meet the GPA requirement and enroll. All students were provided access to the innovation through links from the department Canvas site, emails when they sign up as a pre-major, links from course Canvas sites. In addition, when students applied for the major it was recommended that they review the READ program as part of the ethics section of their letter. Finally, those who had exit interviews in summer and fall were asked an additional question related to the READ program on their interview sheet. The innovation is a separate Canvas site that students may self-enroll in, allowing students who do not wish to participate the ability to opt out.

Role of the researcher

In this action research project, I was a subjective observer/researcher and acted as both researcher and practitioner. First, as a faculty member, I am motivated to decrease academic dishonesty violations I see among my students. How can I provide them with better tools and information, so they don't unintentionally commit a violation? Second, as chair of the department, I am in a unique position to see the breadth of issues we have across the various courses. Since I am the first step in any appeals process, I am notified when any faculty member files an academic dishonesty report. This allows me to understand the broader scope of the issue across diverse courses. This is important because some courses are more memorization and test heavy (such as media law) while others are more about practical skills and project development (such as the capstone reporting course or my own capstone public relations course). In addition, when a faculty member is questioning whether something constitutes academic dishonesty and should be reported, I am usually the person they turn to for advice and policy.

I worked with selected colleagues with an expertise in ethics education and academic honesty violations to develop the innovation. I also gained buy-in from colleagues to include a reference to the new READ program in the advising sessions with pre-majors, on their syllabi, and as a resource for the ethics section of the major application. As researcher, it was my primary role to collect and analyze the data, including a pre- and post-innovation survey, content analysis of the exit interviews, and interviews with students. I was the only researcher with access to the data.

As participant/observer, I included the information in my own advising sessions and on my syllabi. Also, as chair, I meet with every student for their exit interview two quarters prior to graduation, which provides me another touchpoint for discussing student opinion about the innovation.

Innovation

The Resource for Ethical Academic Development (READ) Program was designed as an online resource for journalism students on academic and professional ethics issues. It included modules relating to Western's academic integrity policy and procedures, FAQs and other resources including what constitutes academic dishonesty and how to avoid it, a section to test oneself, and professional media ethics and how that connects to academic integrity.

Currently, the department of journalism maintains a Canvas site for all students in the journalism program, which includes majors, pre-majors, and minors in one of three tracks: news-editorial, public relations, and visual journalism. When students sign up as a pre-major or minor, they are enrolled in the Canvas course. The "Journalism Majors"

Canvas course includes modules in different categories that might be important to our majors. Topics for the modules include the major application process, internship information (including internship opportunities), advising materials, professors' office hours and syllabi, links to important sites within Western, professors' recent publications, and upcoming events. Within the "Important Links" section there is a link to Western's plagiarism resources, but that is the only information within the site dedicated to academic integrity. The content for the site is managed by our department manager and program coordinator. It also serves as a listserv for our students so we can send important announcement about major application or scholarship deadlines, events, and so on. Faculty send information to post to either the manager or coordinator and they add it to the site. As chair, I also oversee whether information provided is appropriate for the site (particularly with internship opportunities).

In order to ensure the information was not buried in the myriad of resources provided on the department's site, the innovation was designed as its own Canvas site that students could self-enroll in. A snapshot of the program as seen on the Canvas dashboard is below.

Figure 2

The Canvas site as it appears on a student's dashboard

A link to self-enroll is included as a pinned announcement in the department Canvas site. It was also shared by faculty in their course Canvas sites both as a link on the syllabus and a pinned announcement. In addition, when students sign up as a pre-major they are sent an email with important information, which includes the link to self-enroll in the READ program. Finally, with the pandemic beginning in spring 2020, everything moved online. As part of this, I worked with our department manager to develop a Virtual Office for the department. A link to the READ program is included on the Virtual Office home site.

Figure 3

The Journalism Department virtual office

Note: The link to the READ academic integrity Canvas course is highlighted.

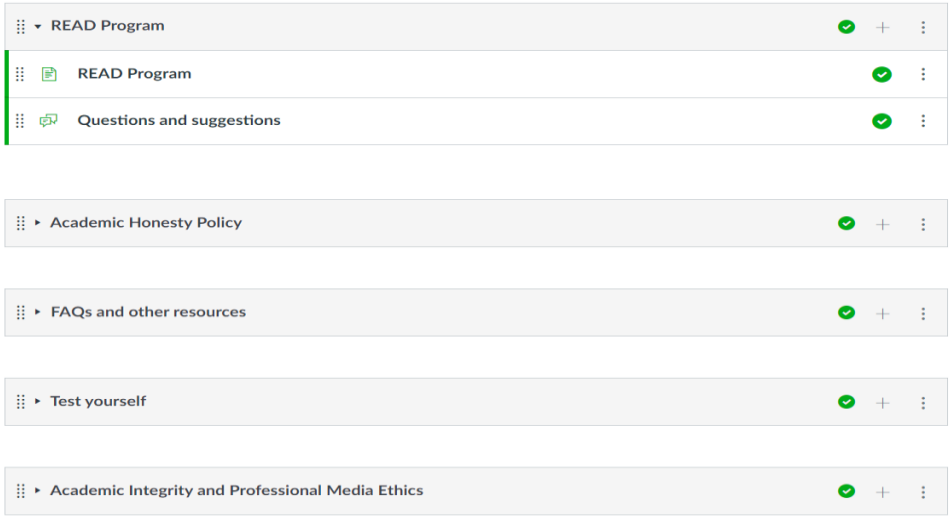
Since the READ program was being shared by all professors, and included as a question on the exit interviews, the faculty approved it through a vote at a faculty meeting. Additionally, they had a chance to review the site prior to it being sent to the students to provide any feedback.

I worked with our Center for Instructional Innovation & Assessment (CIAA) to gain insights as I developed the innovation. It was through this collaboration - and

working with our Academic Technology User Services (ATUS) department - that the final innovation was its own, separate, Canvas site, rather than simply a set of modules in the general department site. They recommended that a separate site would (a) ensure students could opt out if they desired and (b) the information itself was less likely to get lost in the sea of modules within our department site. As discussed in Chapter 1, the goal of the innovation was to follow three basic tenets suggested by a focus group of students in a prior research cycle: (1) Provide real world context; (2) personalize the content; and (3) ensure the resource can evolve as new issues, questions, or technologies arise. The personalization aspect did have to be revised as COVID-19 changed the ability to develop certain parts for the course.

Figure 4

READ program modules



Real world context

In order to provide real world context, the READ course includes actual scenarios that occurred both in professional settings (related to professional ethics) or in academic

settings within our department (related to academic integrity). There were no names or other specific information that will allow students to be able to trace the scenarios to specific students or a specific class. Although the scenario may point out that it occurred in our mass media law class, for example, it did not include any information that would enable someone to trace the specific quarter or professor for that particular class, thereby narrowing in on specific students enrolled at that time. These scenarios included what happened as well as how the student could have ensured they did not violate the academic honesty policy. These were both given as examples and used in a "test yourself" section where students were given a situation, three options for resolving it, and then the results of their choice explained.

For example, in one scenario a student was enrolled in the newspaper staff course and wrote a story they really liked for the paper. The story was graded by the professor but not chosen for publication by the editors. The next quarter, the student is enrolled in the reporting course and has to do a profile assignment. The story they wrote for the newspaper was mainly a profile and, since it was not published, they want to use it for the reporting class. In the scenario review, there are three options to choose from: (1) turn in the original story to their professor - after all it was never published; (2) talk to their reporting professor about it; (3) decide they aren't sure whether it would be dishonest and do a completely new story. Obviously, the third option ensures there is not academic dishonesty violation and the first is a clear violation since it was graded by another professor already. However, the idea is also for students to understand that option 2 is the best one because the professor might be able to give them a way to continue with a story they like but add to it in order to meet the requirements for the reporting class.

Personalize the content

This principle needed to be reconsidered due to the COVID pandemic. One of the original goals was to include audio and video from individual professors sharing anecdotes from their professional experience because students felt the connected more to the issue and the professor when it was something the professor had actually experienced in the field. At Western, one requirement for our faculty is that we have all worked as professionals in the field – whether as reporters, editors, public relations professionals, photojournalists, etc., so we have good, factual stories to share. I planned to work with a visual journalism student to develop video and audio recordings of faculty for these anecdotes to personalize the content more by allowing faculty to speak "directly" to the students. However, with the pandemic we were unable to do video easily and maintain social distancing. In addition, faculty and students had to make a last-minute shift and move all courses entirely online. As Western is on the quarter system, the pandemic hit at the end of winter quarter, so all spring quarter classes had to be moved to remote teaching with only a few weeks preparation. Therefore, it was not feasible to ask more of my faculty or students during that time.

However, students also said they felt more connected when the content was interactive, which made it more personal to them. I developed some "choose your own adventure" scenarios similar to the one described above. These related to both professional ethics and academic integrity. In those scenarios, as explained, the student is taken to a probable outcome based on the action they choose. They can then return and make a different choice and see how the outcome would be different.

Evolution of the resource

In addition to modules related to each of the different areas, there is also a place for discussion and to ask a question if the student cannot easily find an answer for their specific question or issue. Since it is an online resource, controlled by the department, we will be able to add content if we see repeated requests for certain information. We will also be able to adapt the resource should the university change instructor software again. There is both a discussion board to ask questions and, if students prefer to remain completely anonymous, a survey link to a Qualtrics text entry where they can post their question or suggestion.

The innovation is designed to be accessed by students any time they might have a question or need to seek information related to academic integrity. Since all journalism majors and minors are given access to the site, they can log on anytime they are seeking information related to the academic integrity within the major and the department. Other than the journalism department site, there is only the university-wide academic integrity resource page that our site links to, which does not provide a place for questions nor is it specific to the discipline. Along with discipline-specific scenarios and information, it also provides simple, direct information about what constitutes academic dishonesty and what the academic integrity policy and procedures are at Western. As part of this I developed a flowchart of the process for academic dishonesty violations to make it easier for students to follow. Students are informed about the READ program when they sign up for the pre-major and during their initial advising session. Our department manager and program coordinator, who handle initial advising and enrollment into the pre-major, instituted this in summer quarter. In addition, professors are able to direct students to the resource at the

beginning of each quarter through their syllabi and as a course announcement. When students apply to the major, they are directed to use the READ program as a resource for their discussion of ethics. Given that students may not know or think to access a resource like this without prompting, the faculty will build in redundancies in providing the information to direct students to this resource at multiple times. Finally, a question was added to the exit interview to determine (a) whether the student had accessed the READ program and (b) if so, whether they had any suggestions or comments. This is fitting for the exit interview as typical questions relate to what they liked most about the program and what they would change if they were able to do so.

Instrument and Data Sources

In this action research project, I used a mixed methods approach for my research. A combination of a quantitative survey and qualitative interviews should provide a richer set of data with which to assess the impact of the innovation.

Quantitative - student survey

For the quantitative portion, I distributed a survey during spring quarter prior to the launch of the READ program. For the past decade, Donald McCabe of Rutgers University has been conducting surveys for the International Center for Academic Integrity ("Statistics"). During that time, it was used to collect data from more than 150,000 college students at more than 150 universities and colleges in the United States. I decided this would be a trustworthy source given the longevity of this research and the fact that the reports from the surveys are widely used and reported on at educational institutions across the country. The University of San Francisco (USF) adapted this

instrument for a survey of both students and faculty in 2008 and that adaptation was the template for my survey ("USF Academic Integrity Survey," 2008). The online survey provided anonymity to our students and sought to ascertain their current knowledge and level of confidence related to academic integrity at Western and within the department. The innovation was active for students during summer and fall quarters 2020. The survey was sent to students again at the beginning of winter quarter 2021 to determine whether any broad changes can be seen in terms of their confidence and knowledge.

The survey included a total of 15 questions, which included a mix of Likert scale choices and simple selection. The first few questions focused on the academic integrity policy at Western, asking questions related to how important an academic integrity policy is and how much they knew about the policy itself. The second set of questions focused on what types of violations were committed at Western (in their opinion) and how serious those were. The last set of questions focused on their own academic integrity, including how confident they were that they had the resources to not commit an unintentional violation. A copy of the survey is included as Appendix A.

Semi-structured interviews

In addition to the survey, I conducted interviews to determine students' opinions of the READ program and their approach to using it. This was a semi-structured interview with students from across the major conducted in January 2021. I sought a representation from different tracks and from majors, pre-majors, and minors. The semi-structured interviews focused on student opinions of the READ program, their level of use of the program, and their overall assessment of the quality of the resource. While the survey instrument focuses on student knowledge and opinions related to academic

integrity at Western, the semi-structured interviews focus on additional information about the innovation itself. I designed the questions to supplement the survey and provide more in-depth analysis of students' reactions to the READ program and whether it had any impact on their academic integrity. I will also use it as an assessment of the innovation tool so I can revise and improve the READ program for future students. It was designed to begin with these specific questions but then ask additional follow-up questions based on student response. The general organization of the protocol follows the outline suggested by Creswell and Creswell (2018). The interview protocol is attached as Appendix B.

Exit interviews

In terms of exit interviews, all students must meet with me, as chair, two quarters prior to their graduation. The timing coincides with the registrar's requirement that they turn in their major evaluation form for graduation at that time. By combining the two, it ensures that students will, in fact, come to the exit interview in order to get their signed major evaluation form. Turning it in late necessitates an additional fee and failure to turn it in to the registrar delays graduation. For the exit interview with the chair, students are sent an exit interview questionnaire and they must bring the completed instrument with them to the meeting. For this study, I added a question related to the READ program to the questionnaire. An example of the current Exit Interview form, with the highlighted addition, is attached as Appendix C.

All of the instruments, consent forms, recruitment emails, and the innovation description were reviewed by the Institutional Review Board at Arizona State University. Following review, the protocol was determined to be exempt pursuant to Federal

Regulations on 45CFR46. Western Washington University's IRB signed an Institutional Review Board (IRB) Authorization Agreement agreeing to the IRB at ASU providing review and continuing oversight. Arizona State's IRB document, along with the institutional agreement, are attached as Appendix D.

Data Collection

Quantitative data collection

I distributed the pre-innovation survey during the middle of spring quarter – at the end of April 2020. The online Qualtrics survey link was sent to students enrolled in our Canvas Journalism Majors, Pre-Majors, and Minors courses, which includes students in all three of our tracks - news-editorial, public relations, and visual journalism. It was live from April 28, 2020, until May 5, 2020, and reminders were sent twice during that time. We have slightly more than 300 students enrolled at this time. For the pre-innovation survey, a total of 75 students began the survey, with 65 completing it. Although this is slightly lower than previous surveys within the department (which typically garner around 100 responses) the response rate is good given the circumstances. The COVID-19 pandemic led to all our courses being moved to an entirely remote learning modality at the start of spring quarter. This left many students scrambling to deal with technology issues and other potential impacts to graduation and course success.

I sent a second survey, containing the same questions, in January 2021 at the beginning of winter quarter. The READ program had then been active for most of summer quarter and all of fall quarter. I waited until the beginning of winter quarter, rather than the end of fall, in the hopes of improving student response. Students tend to be

more distracted with finals and registration issues at the end of a quarter. This survey was live between January 13, 2021, and January 29, 2021. I collected 98 responses during that time, with 73 completing the survey. Table 1 shows a comparison of demographics for both surveys.

Table 1

Demographics for Pre-Innovation and Post-Innovation Surveys

Demographic	Pre-Innovation Survey Percent of respondents	Post-Innovation Survey Percent of respondents
He/him	26.2%	28.6%
She/her	63.1%	62.9%
They/them	3.1%	4.3%
Other/prefer not to answer	7.7%	4.3%
Pre-major	50.8%	41.4%
Major	46.2%	11.4%
Minor	3.1%	10.0%
Other/unsure of status	0.0%	37.1%
News-editorial	26.2%	23.2%
Public relations	40.0%	20.3%
Visual journalism	26.2%	11.6%
Environmental journalism	7.7%	4.3%
Undeclared as to track	0.0%	40.6%

Given the timing of the two surveys, it is not surprising the difference in unsure of status/undeclared track between pre- and post-innovation surveys. The pre-innovation survey was distributed in spring quarter. Most of our students graduate in spring and are also likely to be declared as official pre-majors and majors at that point. The post-innovation survey was distributed at the beginning of winter quarter. We get a lot of transfer students and freshmen in fall quarter who are journalism interest but have not yet chosen a specific track or declared their official pre-major. In addition, winter and spring major applications had not yet been processed so some students might not yet have known where they stood between pre-major and major.

Qualitative data collection

For the semi-structured interviews, I sent out a call via our Canvas sites for student interviewees in early January 2021. Students were able to self-select in this process. In addition, I asked faculty teaching our courses that reach across tracks to send out a request. My goal was to have at least 10 student interviews with representatives across all tracks and including pre-majors, minors and majors. I conducted eight semi-structured interviews with students related to academic integrity and, specifically, the READ Canvas site. According to Creswell (1998) this is a reasonable and standard number for a small group of focused qualitative data collection. Six of the students prefer she/her pronouns and two prefer he/him pronouns. In terms of status in the major, four were majors, two were declared pre-majors, and two were journalism interest. Finally, three students were on the public relations track, three were on the visual journalism track, and two were on the news-editorial track.

The interviews took approximately 20 minutes and were recorded using Zoom - audio only. I then coded them to search for patterns or "meaning units" that help to explain participants' perspectives and experiences (Moustakas, 1994; Saldaña, 2015). using MAXQDA.

Exit interviews are conducted during the academic year and every student must meet with the chair two quarters prior to graduation to get their major evaluation, which they must turn in to the registrar's office. We have an exit interview questionnaire that we send out for students to complete prior to the interview. Fall quarter is my busiest for exit interviews as it includes students who plan to graduate the following spring. Although we do have commencement every quarter (including summer), spring commencement is the largest by far. I also met with a few students during summer quarter who planned to graduate primarily at the end of winter quarter 2021. In total, I met with 37 students during that time. When they met me for the exit interview, I gained consent to use the written portion of their exit interview that pertains to the READ program. I ensured no student's name or other identifying information was on the exit interview questionnaire prior to saving the answer to that one question. Of the 37 students, 25 submitted an exit interview questionnaire and 10 of those had accessed the READ program. This is not surprising given that these are all seniors graduating within one to two quarters.

Data analysis

I analyzed the results from both pre- and post-innovation surveys using SPSS software. I downloaded the CSV files from Qualtrics and then converted them to SPSS statistical data. Since all my questions were either yes/no or Likert-scale, my values were all ordinal. In addition, the same sample did not take the pre- and post-innovation

surveys. Therefore, there were many analyses that would not make sense in comparing the data. I ran frequency data for both tests and then compared the frequencies between pre-innovation and post-innovation to see whether knowledge has improved and as well as whether opinion about what constitutes serious academic dishonesty violations has changed. In addition, I conducted crosstabs for the three demographics to compare whether there was a difference based on gender preference, major track or status in the major (majors versus minors versus pre-majors). In addition, although one doesn't typically calculate the mean for Likert-scale questions, I used the mean to see whether there was any shift toward more positive or negative between the pre-test and post-test. Using the mean, I was able to conduct t-tests for those Likert questions.

One threat to the validity of the survey I need to be cognizant of is pretest sensitization. It is possible that the second survey responses improve because students learned from the first one (Smith & Glass, 1987). However, I believe that threat will be less of an issue due to changes in the major population between the pre-innovation survey and the post-innovation survey. We had 56 students graduate and 49 new students join the department as pre-majors between the pre-test in April 2020 and the post-test in January 2021.

For the semi-structured interviews and exit interviews, I used inductive analysis to make observations, look for patterns, and form some conclusions based on emergent themes (Mertler 2017). The goal was to determine whether there are certain aspects of the READ program that are more beneficial than others, whether they feel the resource has helped them improve in terms of academic integrity, and what might be improved. I followed the steps laid out by Creswell and Guetterman (2019) for interview analysis,

including creating a digital recording, transcribing the recording, and then analyzing the interviews and applications for emergent themes. Hand analysis can be time-consuming and qualitative computer software such as HyperResearch or MAXQDA are both faster and facilitate relating different codes (Basit, 2003; Creswell & Creswell, 2018), so I chose to use MAXQDA to analyze the qualitative data.

For the semi-structured interviews, I first coded the interviews using structural coding. According to Namey et al (2008), structural codes are appropriate for semi-structured interviews and although question-based, rather than theme-based, are then "helpful for pulling together related data for development of data-driven thematic codes" (p.141). I developed basic structural codes related to the question categories of the interviews: (a) what is integrity/dishonesty, (b) what are impacts on integrity (c) what are challenges to students, and (d) what are opinions/ways to improve? These broad categories were each their own color, with subsections based on specific responses in the same color.

Table 2

Structural code categories and related sub-codes

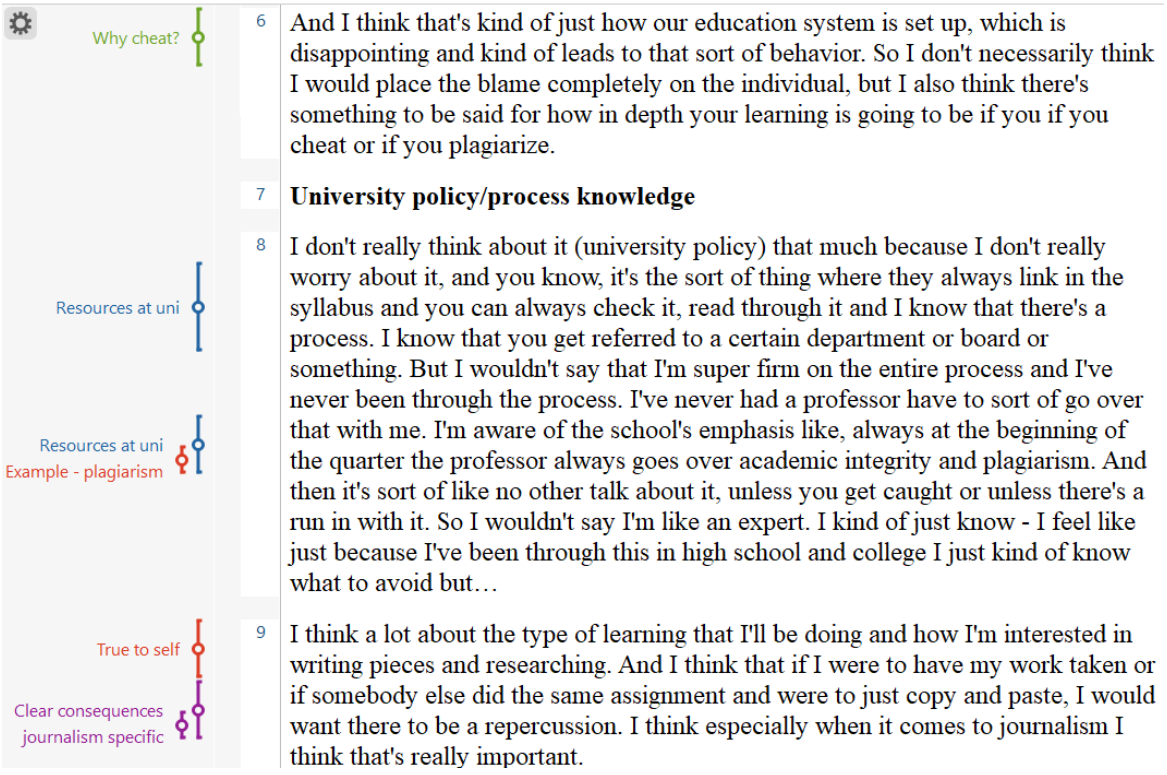
Structural coding question	Related sub-codes
What is integrity/dishonesty?	True to self Example – plagiarism Other example - dishonesty
What are impacts on integrity?	Reputation – future issues Resources at university Student rights

What are challenges to students?	Why cheat? Habit forming – in profession
What are responses/ ways to improve?	Innovation asset Recommend training Same page – equality Journalism specific Clear consequences

An example of the structural coding is seen below in Figure 5.

Figure 5

Structural coding snapshot



I then set the interviews aside for a week. Following this, I reviewed the structural categories I developed and worked to develop themes from them. This process began

with developing a code cloud to see which of the structural codes were most frequently seen.

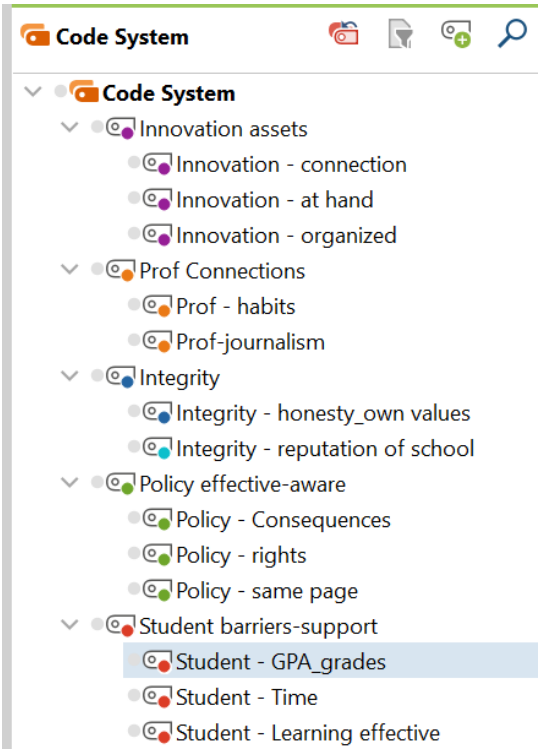
Figure 6

Code cloud for structural coding

Saldana (2016) notes themeing can be especially helpful when initial coding results in broad categories or short phrases and seeing bigger patterns is elusive. The idea of thematic analysis is to focus on "identifying and describing both implicit and explicit ideas," which, when applied to the data helps compare frequencies of themes or topics within the data set (Namey et al, 2008, p. 138). When developing themes, I looked more broadly at what each structural code might mean in terms of the research. For example, in Figure 6 above, "why cheat" is the most prominent code and resources at the university was one of the next major codes. This led to the theme of student barriers and support. Following re-coding using themeing, I developed five major themes with related components: integrity importance, policy effectiveness and awareness, student barriers and support, professional connections, and innovation assets. Figure 7 shows the new themes and components following thematic coding that were used in reporting the final qualitative results in Chapter 4 and relating them to the research questions.

Figure 7

Thematic codes



For the exit interview question related to the READ program, each was only a sentence or two, specifically asking for feedback on the innovation, so coding it did not make sense. However, I ran it through MAXQDA's word cloud visualization to see whether any words or themes emerged. Those were then compared to the themes from the semi-structured interviews and the overall research questions.

Procedure

The process took place primarily in 2020, with some final data collection in early 2021. An overview of the project timeline is in Table 3 below.

Table 3

Timeline for the Study

Month(s) – 2020/2021	Action Taken
February - March 2020	Develop READ program modules and topics Meet with fellow faculty to develop scenarios and FAQs
April - May 2020	Complete READ program development Send out pre-innovation survey via Canvas
June-July 2020	Launch READ program Conduct initial exit interviews
August – September 2020	READ program continues
October - November 2020	Collect second round of major applications Conduct second round of exit interviews
January 2021	Conduct semi-structured interviews Send out post-innovation survey

The innovation itself was primarily developed during spring quarter 2020 (between April and May). Prior to final development, I met with three faculty members who regularly teach our ethics and law classes and have extensive experience with incidents of academic dishonesty within the department during winter quarter 2020. At this time, I also met with our CIAA representative for assistance in developing a self-

enrolling Canvas course with a variety of modules. Although I had intended to also work with a visual journalism student to create video and/or audio files featuring anecdotes and scenarios from our faculty to provide the personal context, this piece could not be accomplished due to the pandemic.

The pre-survey was sent to journalism students via a link on our Canvas site between April 28 and May 5, 2020. A total of 76 students participated, which equates to roughly one-quarter of our students. Of those who began the survey, 65 students completed it. The innovation launched in July during summer quarter and was available during summer, fall, and winter quarters. In each quarter, faculty members posted a link to self-enroll in the Canvas Academic Integrity site on their course home pages. Our department manager and program coordinator also included a note about the resource and a link in every follow-up email after registering a student as a pre-major in the program. A link to the site was also made available on the department's Virtual Office, which was created during summer quarter as we moved to entirely remote learning.

The exit interviews were gathered primarily during fall quarter, which is the busiest time for those. A few students also met with me and submitted their questionnaire during summer quarter.

The post-innovation survey was distributed to students on January 12, 2021, and the call for interviews was sent on January 13, 2021. The survey closed on January 29, 2020. A total of 98 students began the survey and 73 completed it. Semi-structured interviews with eight students were held in January.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Chapter 4 will analyze the data and report the results of this action research project to determine whether the research questions were answered. The research questions are:

RQ1: What effects do online resources that explain and clarify academic dishonesty in ways relevant to students' specific professional focus have on student cheating?

RQ2: How does a departmental resource for academic integrity, in addition to the university-wide one, affect student knowledge of academic integrity policies and procedures?

RQ3: What impact does an innovation designed to establish a connection between professional ethics and academic integrity have on student behavior around academic dishonesty?

Prior to analyzing the quantitative and qualitative data, I will look at the broader results including number of violations and student enrollment in the innovation. Next, I will take each research question in turn, presenting the quantitative data reporting frequencies for both pre- and post-surveys and comparisons where necessary. I will also examine crosstab data for both to determine any patterns demographically. Following discussion of the quantitative data, I will present the qualitative data, including the themes and assertions that emerged, and how those may answer the research questions.

General Results

The innovation was developed as a Canvas course that students could self-enroll in, allowing them the opportunity to opt-in, rather than opt-out. Between summer and fall quarters, a total of 77 students enrolled in the course. Of those who had visited the site, students spent an average of 45 minutes and 64 students completed at least one of the two quizzes.

In addition, the goal was to potentially decrease the number of academic honesty violations in the department. For the university as a whole, academic honesty violations have been increasing. The winter and spring quarters prior to the innovation both had the highest number of violations of any previous winter or spring quarter. In summer 2020, there were 64 academic honesty violations. The previous high for any summer quarter going back to 2013 was 11. Many of the ones in 2020, however, are likely from the new math placement test. In fall 2020 there were 75 official academic honesty violations. This is slightly above fall 2019, which had 72, but significantly above all other fall quarters which averaged 39 violations, the highest being 57 in fall 2018. However, in summer and fall 2020, no journalism students were written up for an academic honesty violation. I cannot say with certainty that this decrease is due to the innovation, but it is important to note that while violations across campus have been increasing, the violation count for my department decreased during this time period. The innovation was the only new element introduced into this journalism education environment, which suggests a practical significance for potential improvements in reducing academic honesty violations due to the innovation.

RQ1: What effects do online resources that explain and clarify academic dishonesty in ways relevant to students' specific professional focus have on student cheating?

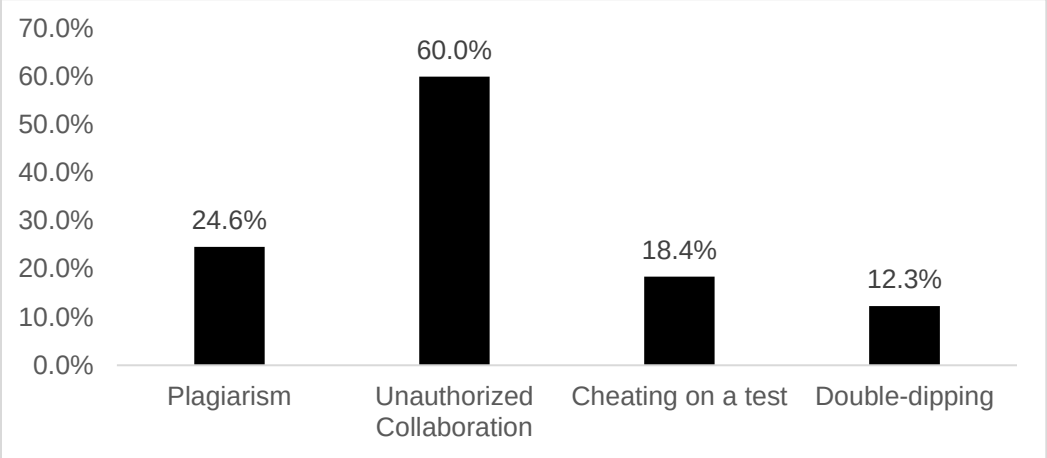
Results are presented in four segments as they relate to RQ1. First, quantitative results are presented as follows: frequencies for pre- and post-innovation surveys, a comparison as needed, and crosstab data from both surveys as warranted to look for patterns. Then qualitative results relating to RQ1 are presented.

Results for Quantitative Data

Pre-innovation survey frequencies. In terms of what kind of cheating occurs, students reported believing unauthorized collaboration occurs often or very often more than other types of cheating, with 60% of students responding this way. Plagiarism was second with approximately one-quarter of students (24.6%) saying it occurred very often or often. This question relates to a question about how often students have seen students committing different violations, with unauthorized collaboration being seen the most by students. Half of the students surveyed said they had seen someone collaborating without authorization 2 or more times in the past year. For all other types of cheating two-thirds or more had never seen it. Combined responses for percent of students believing a violation occurs very often/often are shown in Figure 8.

Figure 8

Student perception about which types of cheating occur often/very often



When looking at the actual numbers provided by the university, plagiarism and cheating on a test both have the greatest number of violations, while unauthorized collaboration and double-dipping (or self-plagiarism) instances are small by comparison. In the last academic year, looking at violations by students at Western, of the 135 total violations, 50 were plagiarism and 33 were cheating on a test – accounting for 61.4% of all violations. Unauthorized collaboration, while the next highest, amounts to half the number of instances as cheating on a test, with 15 occurrences.

It is interesting to note that students believed certain actions occur more often if they have seen them committed more often, as with unauthorized collaboration. As noted in chapter 2, social learning theory espouses that students learn from behaviors they witness and reactions to that behavior. If students see unauthorized collaboration happening more than they see cheating on a test or plagiarizing, then they believe it happens more often. In the journalism department itself, however, there are fewer tests and therefore fewer opportunities for students to cheat on an exam. Plagiarism occurs

most often within the department – and the university – but it is behavior unlikely to be witnessed by other students.

Students were also asked their opinion of how serious different types of activities are in terms of academic dishonesty. It contained nine items to rate on a 3-point scale from "not a violation" to "minor violation – warning only" to "major violation requiring a penalty." Actions included things such as buying a paper online, failing to cite sources, self-plagiarism, and so on. Some of the actions, such as creating a quote or source, are violations that are more specific to journalism. Table 4 shows the response frequency for the *seriousness of violation* construct in the survey.

Table 4

Survey Response Frequencies (Seriousness of Violation Construct) (n = 64)

n = 64 Item	3 Violation Requiring Penalty	2 Minor Violation - Warning	1 Not a Violation
Submitting a paper purchased online	93.8%	6.2%	0%
Copying information from internet or electronic source without full citation.	20.0%	75.4%	4.6%
Creating a quote or made-up source in story or paper	84.6%	15.4%	0%
Taking interview quotes from a video without acknowledging actual source –	64.6%	35.4%	0%

representing as own interview			
Submitting work done for one course to fulfill requirement in another without permission	38.5%	55.4%	6.2%
Paraphrasing in new words without citing original source for idea	20.0%	67.7%	12.3%
Collaborating with others on required assignment without instructor approval	9.2%	72.3%	18.5%
Searching web for answers to “closed book” quiz	36.9%	49.2%	13.8%
Obtaining questions for a test from previous student	64.6%	30.8%	4.6%

Following social learning, their perception of how a student’s behavior is treated also plays a role in their perception of the behavior. They see students collaborating without authorization, but most believe it is a minor violation only. This could be related to not seeing a student disciplined for such actions. In addition, social learning relies not only on modeling behavior based on what they see but also social norms for a peer group (Conway & Groshek, 2009). Violations that might impact other students in their peer group – obtaining a test for another student, buying a paper online, creating sources for a

story that could be printed in the student paper – are perceived as more serious than actions such as self-plagiarism or collaboration.

Most students said they would be unlikely or very unlikely to report someone else for cheating, particularly a close friend. They also believed a typical student is unlikely to report someone. In terms of their confidence level in not committing a violation, all students said they were either fairly (49.2%) or extremely (50.8%) confident in their abilities. It is interesting that in terms of self-efficacy, students believe they have the expertise to avoid a violation, yet this may be confidence to avoid those violations they see as serious, which don't include the most frequent violations such as plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and double-dipping or self-plagiarism.

Post-innovation survey frequencies. In terms of types of cheating, about one-third (35.7%) said unauthorized collaboration occurred often/very often and one-quarter (26%) said cheating on a test occurred often/very often. Around 10% of students felt plagiarism (11%) and double-dipping (8.2%) occurred often/very often. That represents a significant drop from the pre-test survey in terms of how frequently students believe these actions are occurring, except for cheating on a test. This will be discussed further in the pre-post comparison.

As it relates to how often students have seen each type of cheating within the past year, 80% or more said they had never seen anyone plagiarize or double dip. In terms of unauthorized collaboration, 15.1% said they had seen it one time, 27.4% had seen 2-3 instances of it, and 12.3% had seen 4 or more instances of unauthorized collaboration in the past year. Numbers were somewhat similar for cheating on a test, with 19.2% seeing

it one time, 17.8% seeing it 2-3 times, and 10.2% seeing 4 or more instances of a student cheating on a test.

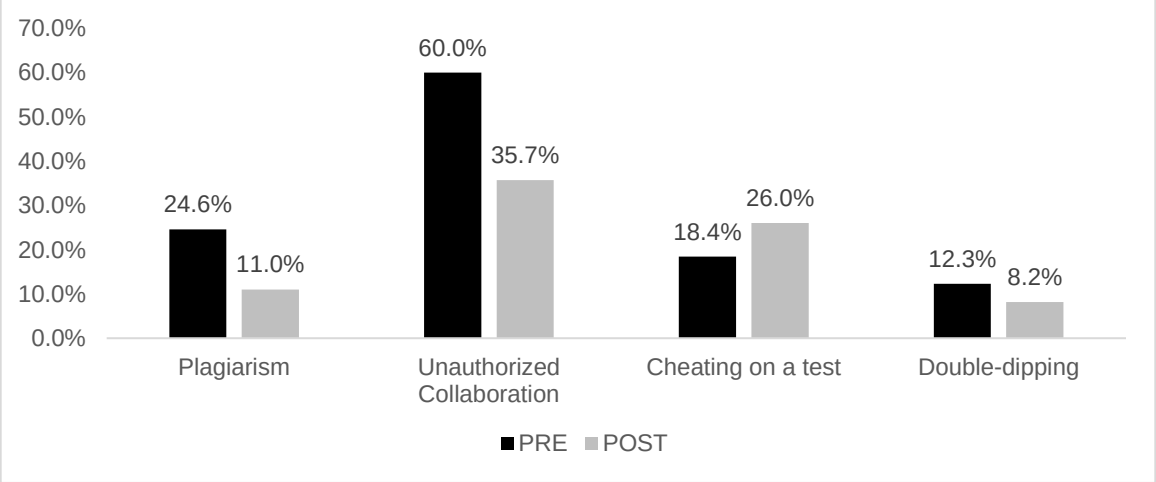
In terms of how serious a violation different types of cheating are, 90% of students felt buying a paper online was a serious violation requiring a penalty. Two-thirds of respondents felt obtaining a copy of a test from someone who had taken it already was a serious violation. Around half of students felt that looking up answers to a "closed book" online quiz, creating quotes/sources, and using a video without citing it were serious penalties, with an equal number believing they were minor violations requiring a warning only. Nearly three-quarters of students (71.2%) felt using an online source without citing it was a minor violation, with 17.8% believing it was a serious violation and 11% feeling it was not a violation at all. Two-thirds (64.4%) felt paraphrasing without citing was a minor violation while nearly a quarter (23.3%) believed it was not a violation at all. In terms of double-dipping, or self-plagiarism, 55.6% believe it is a minor penalty, 29.2% a serious violation, and 15.3% not a violation. Finally, 61.6% of students believe unauthorized collaboration is a minor violation, 20.5% that it is a serious violation, and 17.8% that it is not a violation at all.

When asked about reporting someone they saw cheating, just 2.7% said they were likely to do so if the person was a close friend, with the rest being unlikely or very unlikely. Approximately one-third of students would be likely/very likely to report someone who was not a close friend, while one-quarter of students felt someone else (not them) would be likely to report another student. As far as their confidence in not committing a violation themselves, all students were either fairly (58.9%) or extremely (41.1%) confident in their ability to maintain academic integrity.

Pre-Post Comparisons. In reviewing the data, the question about how often students felt certain violations occurred at Western was the only one to show a significant change. In the pre-innovation survey, a higher percentage of students felt plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and double-dipping/self-plagiarism occurred often or very often than respondents to the post-innovation survey. Only cheating on a test increased in terms of percent of students believing it occurred often or very often.

Figure 9

Frequency of occurrence comparison: pre-innovation survey and post-innovation survey



Note: Black = pre-innovation survey (n=65); gray = post-innovation survey (n=73)

Given that a higher percentage of respondents in the post-innovation survey were at a stage earlier in the major – more pre-majors and journalism interest than majors – this is not necessarily surprising. Underclassmen taking more general university requirements are more likely to be taking tests and taking classes with more students enrolled in each section. Almost all journalism courses have lower enrollment caps (20-30 students) and are more writing intensive rather than reliant on tests and quizzes.

To further compare pre- and post- innovation data, I conducted an independent-samples *t* test. Here, the questions using a Likert scale were analyzed for the mean in order to see whether there was a shift either positive (more likely/agree) or negative (less likely/disagree). As the scales were ordinal data, the means here were used solely to determine whether there was a shift of any possible significance. For most of the questions although there were some differences, the p values were not significant when the comparison was done.

However, one question did show a significance when the independent t test was used to compare the mean pre-innovation score with the man post-innovation score. This related to the question about how frequently students felt different types of academic dishonesty occur at Western.

Table 5

Independent Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Plagiarism Frequency	PreInnov_Score	1.95	65	0.799	.099
	PostInnov_Score	1.68	73	0.743	.087
Collaboration Frequency	PreInnov_Score	2.60	65	0.915	.114
	PostInnov_Score	2.23	73	0.950	.111
Cheat on Test Frequency	PreInnov_Score	1.74	65	0.871	.108
	PostInnov_Score	1.86	73	1.045	.122
Double-Dip Frequency	PreInnov_Score	1.60	65	0.915	.114
	PostInnov_Score	1.29	73	0.808	.095

Independent samples test

		Independent Sample Differences						
					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference			
		t	df	Sig (2-tailed)	Lower	Upper	Mean diff	Std. Error Dif.
Plag. Freq	PreInnov_Score - PostInnov_Score	2.048	136	.042	.009	.529	.267	.131
Collab. Freq	PreInnov_Score - PostInnov_Score	2.305	136	.023	.008	.530	.367	.159
Test cheat Freq	PreInnov_Score - PostInnov_Score	-.755	136	.451	-.451	.202	-.125	.165
Plag. Freq	PreInnov_Score - PostInnov_Score	2.130	136	.035	.022	.602	.312	.147

***p<.05**

For plagiarism, the mean on the pre-innovation survey was 1.95 (*SD* = 0.799), and the mean on the post-innovation survey was 1.68 (*SD* = 0.743). A significant decrease from pre-test to post-test was found ($t = 2.048$; $p < .05$). For unauthorized collaboration, the mean on the pre-innovation survey was 2.60 (*SD* = 0.915), and the mean on the post-innovation survey was 2.23 (*SD* = 0.743). A significant change from pre-test to post-test was found ($t = 2.305$; $p < .05$). For double dipping, or self-plagiarism, the mean on the pre-innovation survey was 1.60 (SD = 0.915) and on the post-innovation survey the mean was 1.29 (SD = 0.808). A significant change from pre-innovation to post-innovation was found ($t = 2.130$; $p < .05$). The only situation that did not have a significant difference ($p > .05$) was frequency of cheating on a test. In this case, higher number relates to a higher frequency, with 0 being “never” and 4 being “very often.” Therefore, a decrease in the

mean shows students post-innovation felt those actions occurred less frequently than students in the pre-innovation sample.

Demographic crosstabs. I analyzed answers comparing gender, status, and track for each research question to see whether there were any differences. For gender, I only looked at those who prefer she/her pronouns and he/him pronouns as the numbers for the other categories were too small to be a valid representation. In status, I only compared majors to pre-majors as they made up almost all the respondents. Finally, for track, I compared those in news-editorial, public relations, and visual journalism. Only a few respondents were environmental journalism.

In the post-innovation survey, as discussed in Chapter 3, we had many students who were unsure of major status. Those students are more likely to be early in their academic career, so more in line with those in pre-major status in the pre-innovation survey. We also had many students responding to the post-innovation survey who were unsure of which track they planned to major, while there were no students undecided as to track in the pre-innovation survey. As explained previously, this is likely due to time of the year resulting in more students still early in their majors after fall quarter while most students had chosen a track by the middle of spring quarter. This was the biggest change in terms of demographics between the two surveys and any significant change in answers is more likely to be due to status than it is to track or gender preference. In the comparisons following, I looked at demographic differences seen in the pre-innovation survey that were echoed in the post-innovation survey as being most likely to be indicated by that demographic rather than influenced by respondents who were just beginning their academic career.

How frequently students believed certain types of academic dishonesty occur was the one question that had significant differences between the pre- and post-innovation surveys. In both surveys, approximately half of those preferring she/her said plagiarism occurred often compared to one-third of those preferring he/him. In terms of unauthorized collaboration, those preferring she/her were more likely to say it occurs often than those preferring he/him while those preferring he/him were more likely to say sometimes than those preferring she/her pronouns. In both surveys almost all students who believed students never cheat on a test preferred he/him pronouns, while those preferring she/her are far more likely to say it occurs often than those preferring he/him pronouns. Finally, in terms of self-plagiarism or double-dipping, those preferring he/him pronouns are far more likely to say it never occurred. In general, based on these responses, it is possible those preferring she/her pronouns notice behavior more so than those preferring he/him pronouns.

Status in the major did not really seem to impact the frequency with which students felt different types of cheating occurred except that only pre-majors said double-dipping never occurred. This is likely due to the fact that they have not advanced far enough in the major to have a course that follows on another course and could tempt a student to double-dip (as in reporting and advanced reporting). As it relates to track, those in public relations are much more likely to believe cheating on a test occurs often as those in the other tracks. This may be due to the fact that the introductory public relations course has more exams/quizzes than some earlier courses in the other major tracks.

When asked how frequently they had seen other students commit certain types of dishonesty within the past year, those preferring she/her pronouns were more likely to

have seen cheating on a test occur than those preferring he/him. On both surveys, more than two-thirds of those preferring he/him said they had never seen someone cheat on a test, while nearly 20% of those preferring she/her had seen it two or three times. There were no other real differences related to gender in terms of how often they had witnessed certain types of behavior in the past year across both surveys.

In terms of status, pre-majors were more likely to say they had witnessed someone cheating on a test 4-5 times in the past year than majors. There were no other real differences related to status in the major. Those in public relations were more likely to have seen someone cheat on a test once or 4-5 times than those in news-editorial and visual journalism. There were no other major differences based on track.

When looking at how serious different violations were, those preferring she/her pronouns were more likely to say unauthorized collaboration was not a violation than those preferring he/him pronouns. Finally, while one-third of those preferring she/her felt obtaining a copy of a test from a former student was a minor violation compared to one-quarter of those preferring he/him.

When comparing pre-majors and majors, pre-majors are more likely to say that obtaining questions for a test from someone who took the course before is a serious violation than majors. In terms of area of study, students majoring in both news-editorial and visual journalism were more likely to say they believe creating a source/quote is a serious penalty compared to public relations majors. There were no other differences based on status or track that remained constant between surveys.

When asked the likelihood of reporting someone for a violation – they themselves, likelihood another student would do so, likelihood they would if the person

was a close friend – there was only one difference that remained consistent across surveys: pre-majors were more likely to say they believe another student would report someone for a violation than majors are.

There are no differences based on demographics related to how confident a student is in their ability to avoid academic dishonesty.

RQ1 summary. Overall, the online resource did not appear to have an impact on student cheating based on the pre- and post-innovation surveys. However, those results did show the critical need to educate students about academic dishonesty in ways relevant to them. In particular, the results point to the fact that students do not know what constitutes academic dishonesty despite their confidence that they can avoid it. In addition, plagiarism is the most frequent violation, yet students state it occurs less frequently than violations such as unauthorized collaboration. As noted, this may be due to social learning and the ability to "see" collaborating but not plagiarizing. Additional results about the impact were discovered in the qualitative data.

RQ2: How does a departmental resource for academic integrity, in addition to the university-wide one, affect student knowledge of academic integrity policies and procedures?

Results for Quantitative Data

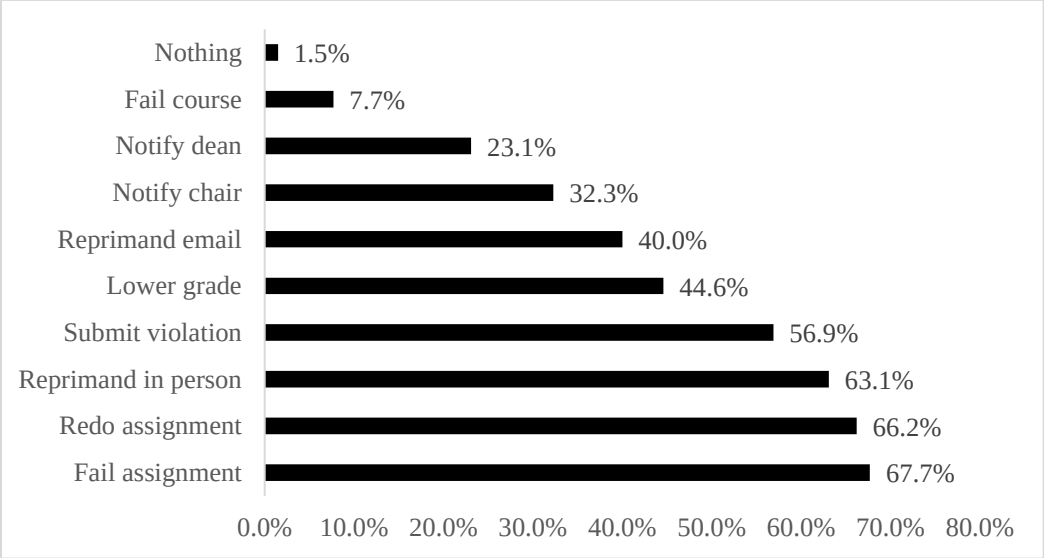
Pre-innovation survey frequencies. In terms of student opinion related to the university academic honesty policy – including strict penalties, faculty and student understanding the policies, support for the policy, and its effectiveness – across the board students either agreed or strongly agreed with all these statements. More than 75% of students agreed or strongly agreed with each of these. The one area that is highest in

terms of not knowing/disagreeing is in the effectiveness of the policy. All student respondents said they had been informed about the academic integrity policy at Western. In terms of where students receive information about the policy, most students said they heard about it from a faculty member/syllabus (95.4%), followed by orientation (42.2%), other students (29.2%), and the university MyWestern page (24.6%). All other options had less than 10% of students saying that is where they got information.

When asked what the penalty should be if a professor discovered a serious violation had occurred, a majority of students (more than half) felt appropriate responses could include reprimanding the student in person, failing the student on the assignment, having them redo the assignment, and submitting a violation report. Approximately 40% also felt reprimanding the student by email or lowering the student's grade on the assignment was appropriate. One-third felt the department chair should be notified while one-quarter felt the dean of the college should be. The results are shown in Figure 10.

Figure 10

Student perception of actions a professor should take for a serious violation



These results suggest that students are interested in educating students about academic integrity rather than penalizing them for it. While they do still believe a student should fail the assignment if a serious violation occurs, a majority also feel the student should be allowed to redo the assignment and discuss the incident in person. Slightly more than half believe an official report should be submitted. In addition, very few believe the incident should be reported up the chain of command to the department chair or the dean. This also shows students do not understand the actual policy. Per the policy, if a student's grade is impacted due to academic dishonesty in any way, then an official report must be submitted and the chair is also notified. The primary reason for this is to allow for an appeals process, which protects both professors and students. Without a report filed, signaling a reason for a lowered grade, then a student could grieve the grade as without cause – and win. Although most students wouldn't do this, the process also allows the student an official appeal process prior to any decision by an academic integrity board.

Post-innovation survey frequencies. In terms of student opinion related to university policy and procedures, around 90% of students agree/strongly agree that the university has strict penalties, both faculty and students understand the policy, and students support the policy. Three-quarters of students agree or strongly agree that the policies are effective, while 10.6% disagree and 13.6% do not know. Almost all students (94%) said they had been informed about the university's academic integrity policy. Most students (83.8%) said they learned about the policy from faculty or a course syllabus while half heard about it in orientation, and 39.7% through MyWestern. No other channel (adviser, academic integrity dept or website, other students, administration) had more

than 16% of students who heard about the policy in that manner. One thing to note here is that in both the pre- and post-innovation surveys, there are a wide variety of places where students receive information about academic integrity. Although a majority in both cases received information from a professor, there is nothing that guarantees that every professor is providing the same information. Some may have their own written statement, while others may simply link to the university's academic integrity web page. Therefore, this further adds to the importance of both providing more resources and developing a consistent resource for students.

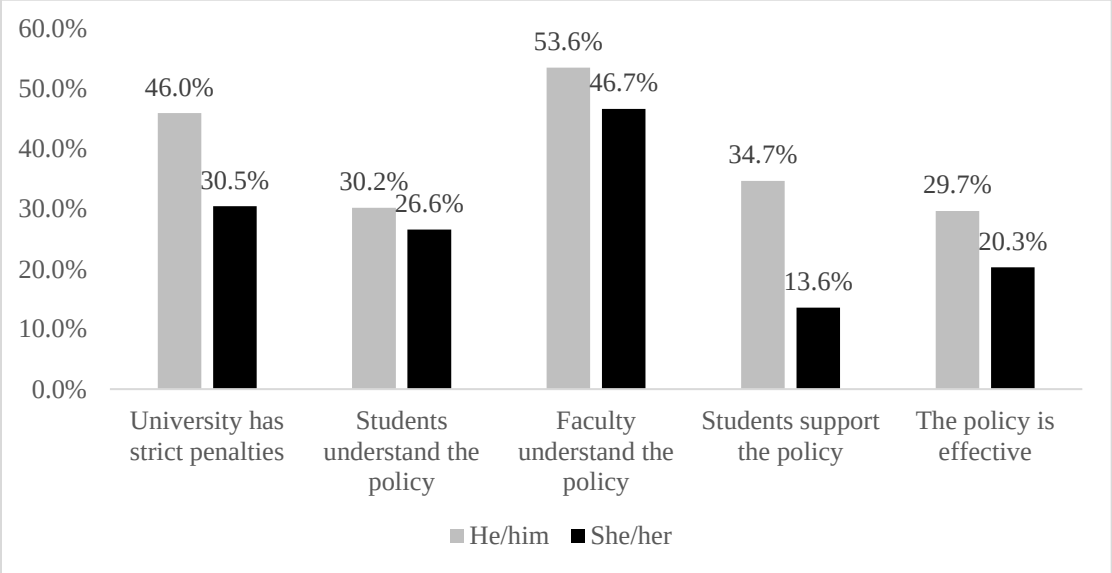
If a student does commit a serious violation, 71.2% of students believe the student should redo the assignment. Approximately half feel an appropriate response would be to reprimand the student by email, lower their grade on the assignment, fail them for the assignment, and/or submit a violation report. About 40% believe a student should be reprimanded in person and one-quarter feel the incident should be reported to the chair of the department. No other course of action had more than 10% of students believing it was appropriate.

Demographic crosstabs. On the question looking at opinions/beliefs related to the academic honesty policy and process, there were a few noticeable differences. In terms of gender, although a majority of all students said they agreed or strongly agreed with the statements, those preferring he/him pronouns were more likely in most instances to say "strongly agree" than those preferring she/her pronouns. One possible reason for this may relate to self-efficacy. There are studies that show, regardless of a student's actual ability, males may be more likely to say they are confident in an ability whether they possess it or not (Pajares, 2002; Noddings, 1996; Wigfield et al, 1996). Therefore, a

male might report they understand the policy and then extrapolate to state that others do as well. Figure 11 shows the average for strongly agree between the pre-innovation survey and the post-innovation survey. The only instance where those preferring she/her pronouns had a higher percentage stating "strongly agree" to a statement than those preferring he/him pronouns was the post-innovation question on student understanding of the policy.

Figure 11

Strongly agree with each statement – Penalties and Policies average for both surveys



Note: Gray = he/him (n=37); black = she/her (n=85)

In terms of status, there were no real differences. However, in looking at track, those in the news-editorial sequence were more likely to say "strongly agree" that the university had strict penalties, students support the policy, and it is effective than the other tracks. Also, only those in the public relations track or visual journalism disagreed that students support the policy. It is possible as news-editorial students have reported on the issue that they are more aware of the policy itself. Although both public relations and

visual journalism students are required to report for the student newspaper, news-editorial students must enroll more than once.

In looking at resources where students get their academic integrity information from there were not many differences. Those preferring she/her pronouns were more likely to have used MyWestern to receive information. There were no major differences as it relates to status, although majors were slightly more likely to get academic integrity information MyWestern than pre-majors. Finally, as it relates to track, there were no consistent differences.

There were no consistent patterns for gender except that those preferring he/him pronouns are more likely to say a student should be reported to the department chair or the dean than those preferring she/her pronouns. In terms of status, majors are more likely to suggest a student should redo the assignment than pre-majors. There were no other significant differences based on status. In terms of differences based on a student's track, visual journalism majors are more likely to say they believe a student should be reprimanded by email compared to those in the other tracks. Public relations students are approximately twice as likely to say they believe a student's grade should be lowered on the assignment than students in the other tracks.

RQ2 summary. As with RQ1, the quantitative data does not show a significant impact a department-related site has in terms of student knowledge about academic integrity compared with a university one. However, the data does point to the importance of clear, easily accessible resources related to academic integrity. Students get their information from a variety of sources, most frequently their professor. Students do not understand the process but do believe it should be more about education rather than

repercussions. Additional information about possible impacts of a department source for academic integrity will be reviewed in the qualitative results.

RQ3: What impact does an innovation designed to establish a connection between professional ethics and academic integrity have on student behavior around academic dishonesty?

Results for Quantitative Data

Pre-innovation survey frequencies. Across the board, students believe a professional journalist's actions should be taken more seriously than a student's actions when it comes to issues such as not citing sources correctly, creating quotes or sources, and double-dipping.

Post-Innovation Survey Frequencies. In comparing students to professional journalists as it relates to the same actions, students again felt that a professional taking any of the actions was more serious than a student doing so. Table 6 below compares responses for extremely seriously as it relates to students and professional journalists in the pre- and post-surveys.

Table 6

Violation perceived to be extremely serious: student versus professional

Item	Pre-Innovation Survey Percent of respondents	Post-Innovation Survey Percent of respondents
Student not cite properly	15.4%	1.4%
Journalist not cite properly	70.8%	64.4%
Student create quote	80.0%	37.0%
Journalist create quote	96.9%	94.5%
Student double-dip	23.1%	23.3%
Journalist double-dip	72.3%	65.8%

Although students still rate journalists as committing a more serious violation than a student, there were a couple of changes between pre- and post-innovation surveys. A significantly lower percentage of respondents in the post-innovation survey said that students failing to cite properly was extremely serious than those in the pre-innovation survey (1.5% compared to 15.4%). There was also a significant decrease in the percent of respondents stating students creating a quote is extremely serious between pre- (80%) and post-(37%) surveys. This could be because students did not learn from the innovation the seriousness of the behavior for a student. On the other hand, as the post-innovation respondents were more likely to be journalism interest only, they may not yet have possessed as much knowledge as those who were already pre-majors and majors. Overall, the findings are consistent with the research noted earlier in the dissertation. Students understand the importance of ethical behavior for professional journalists yet do not necessarily connect that with their own academic integrity.

Demographic crosstabs. When comparing student behavior with similar behavior by a journalist, those preferring he/him are more likely to say improper citation and creating quotes/sources by a student is extremely serious. Those preferring she/her are more likely to say double-dipping by a journalist is extremely serious. There are no other differences based on demographics.

RQ3 summary. The results from the quantitative data suggest that students have not made the connection between actions taken as a student and those as a professional journalist. They understand the seriousness of such actions once in a professional capacity but don't see those same actions as serious if committed by a student. Further discussion related to RQ3 is included in the qualitative results.

Results for Qualitative Data

The results for qualitative data were based on the semi-structured interviews and exit interview question related to the innovation. The semi-structured interviews ranged from 449 words to 1195 words, averaging 867 words per interview. The combined exit interviews totaled 482 words.

In analyzing the semi-structured interviews, 12 category codes were developed during the initial structured coding phase. Using "themeing" (Saldaña, 2016), these categories were then grouped into themes reflective of the initial coding and research question. This resulted in 5 major themes, which were: integrity importance, policy effectiveness and awareness, student barriers and support, professional connections, innovation assets. The exit interviews were then also analyzed for relation to these themes. Table 7 presents the themes, the related components, and assertions derived from the analysis process.

Table 7

Themes, Related Components, and Assertions

Theme	Related components	Assertions
Integrity importance	Maintaining own values and being honest Reputation of school	Students understand the importance of integrity in terms of reputation and being true to themselves.
Policy effectiveness and awareness	Clear consequences are needed Student rights are important Must be on the same page	All students need a clear, base-level knowledge of their rights and the consequences of behavior.

Student barriers and support	Systemic educational focus on GPA and grades Lack of time Learning effectiveness	Professors need to emphasize learning and improvement rather than grades in terms of importance.
Professional connections	Particular importance in journalism Development of bad habits	Integrity is especially important as a journalist and bad habits now could turn in to bad habits later.
Innovation assets	Resource at hand Well-organized Direct connection	Having a resource that students can turn to when they need it – and is top of mind via Canvas – is better than the once per quarter syllabus discussion.

Theme: Integrity Importance

The assertion is that students do understand the importance of academic integrity and the need for it. The interviews with eight students provided insights into their opinions related to academic integrity. The components that comprise this theme and led to this assertion are: (a) integrity for students relates to being authentic and true to their values; and (b) academic integrity is important for the broader university in order to maintain the reputation of the institution and the degrees that students emerge with.

Maintaining student values. When asked what academic integrity meant, 5 of the 8 students said it had to do with being true to yourself and your own values. One student said that while everybody has different values, academic integrity means being "true to your values and your work ethic." Several students used the word "authentic" when describing their own work as it relates to academic integrity. For example, a student described academic integrity as "an authentic way of learning that isn't inhibited by

utilizing the work of others or taking shortcuts." Two more students echoed this describing integrity as "genuinely providing your own work" and "doing your work to the best of your ability."

Reputation of the institution. A few of the students also equated the importance of academic integrity with the broader reputation of the university. They said that academic integrity of a university leads to a good reputation and this is important for students, so they are also perceived as reputable. One student stated that universities have a reputation "and if the product isn't sound and isn't accurate and has issues on the academic integrity level, then that university's pushing something that's not right." Another noted that if students at an institution cheat, then they "might have gotten a degree but don't really understand the field," which can impact employers' views of the degree itself.

Theme: Policy Effectiveness and Awareness

The assertion that comes from this theme is that in order for a policy to be effective, all students need a clear, base-level knowledge of their rights and the consequences of behavior. The components of this theme are: (a) consequences must be specific and clear; (b) along with consequences, students must know their rights; and (c) all students must be on the same page from the beginning.

Consequences. All students interviewed were adamant that students must know the consequences of their behavior. Without that knowledge, students may not recognize the importance of certain actions and the policy cannot be effective. Several mentioned that one issue for students was that specific consequences for violations were not clearly stated anywhere. As one student said, "I know that if you do it something bad happens,"

while another stated that there seem to be different degrees of strictness in terms of violations and professors' response, which makes it "kind of hard to keep track of sometimes as far as the punishment; not what [behavior] is wrong, but… [the response]." One student summed it up saying, "There are direct consequences for certain types of violation…you can't have an ambiguous policy about how that works."

Student rights. Although students believe there should be consequences for certain actions, they also believe students need to understand that they do have rights when it comes to reporting of a possible violation. One student stated that "it's important making sure that students understand that it IS an appeals-based process. And the reason for that is not to get them in greater trouble" but that students believe as soon as a violation is recorded it is permanent, whether or not the appeal is successful and "I think that's something you don't want students to think is the case." Others noted that they weren't aware of the process and that a report could be appealed. One mentioned that it would be important, up front, to have something that clearly stated, "this is what happens should you be suspected of an academic honesty violation and here are your rights."

Getting everyone on the same page. In terms of equity, students felt an important component of academic integrity and any policy is ensuring everyone is on the same page about what constitutes a violation and why it is important. At least half the students interviewed mentioned the importance of having a universally-known policy that can help hold students and professor accountable. One student noted, "if you give a blanket document, like an agreement between students and faculty members, it helps student just get on the same page as to what's expected of them." A few of the students

commented that one way to do this would be through a specific online training program that all students must take.

Western has online training programs for issues such as sexual harassment and some departments have training for their teaching assistants. One student noted that "it might be valuable at some point, especially for incoming students as freshman… [to have] a mandatory credit/no credit Canvas quiz type thing…which at least can kind of establish some sort of baseline where everyone's on the same page." Another student who had done online training for a teaching assistantship in another department felt the department "could make it a required thing for the journalism majors to go through it, understand it, and take a quiz on it. It would be graded but would be required."

Theme: Student barriers and support

Several barriers to maintaining academic integrity were reported by student, particularly the components of: (a) a systemic focus on grades and GPA as most important and (b) lack of time in a student's busy schedule. They also suggested ways to improve or support students, particularly through a focus on learning effectiveness. This led to the assertion that faculty and professors should find a way to motivate students by focusing on improvement in skills and knowledge rather than a simple grade.

Systemic focus on grades. One of the reasons some students gave for someone cheating was due to grade pressure. They said that students believe they need to get a certain grade or GPA and if they do not think they can do it without cheating, they might give in to the temptation. A couple of students noted that this focus on grades was a "campus culture" or the way "our education is set up." One student remarked that "people cheat for a reason and people plagiarize for a reason. And I think often it's

because they want to get a good grade, and everything is based off of grades and not personal growth and feedback." Another student noted that "a lot of the issue has to do with people prioritizing receiving a grade over receiving learning that they can apply to their lives and that's something that goes back to elementary school."

Lack of time. Almost every student noted that one reason a student might cheat is due to being overworked and feeling they do not have enough time for something. One student said, "a lot of the times I've seen people ponder the idea of committing a violation, even if they know [it's wrong], is when they're stressed and exhausted and they're 'I just need to get this done.'" Another student elaborated further saying,

> There's this whole time aspect. Kids aren't getting enough sleep; they have jobs; they have friends. They want to have a social life. They have three to four different classes at the same time. And it's a lot of pressure, I think, to try to produce quality work without skirting the rules every so often. And maybe it's just because those are my peers, but I understand that and whenever somebody gets caught or something…I definitely feel bad for those people because I see it as they're just trying to keep up.

Support by focusing on learning. In order to overcome these barriers, student suggested that the professors and the university could be empathetic and focus on learning outcomes rather than the importance of a grade. One student noted that in order to improve academic integrity "our current grading system might need to be fixed in order for this sort of thing to be fixed, so that people can really be learning with intrinsic motivations." Several students discussed the issue that if someone cheats, they aren't really learning the material but just working for a grade. One student commented that this may be "just kind of how our education system is set up, which is disappointing and kind of leads to that sort of behavior. So, I don't necessarily think I would place the blame completely on the individual, but I also think there's something to be said for how in

depth your learning is going to be if you cheat." Other students echoed the idea that the blame cannot be solely place on the individual. A few pointed out that situations are different and even in a case that may seem black-and-white there may be many other issues at play. One student said that, because there are complex situations, "it is important to have a compassionate policy."

Theme: Professional Connections

As this research project is focused specifically on journalism students, another assertion is the connection between academic integrity and professional ethics in the field. The components include (a) the ways that integrity is critical to the field and (b) the connection between behavior as a student and behavior as a professional. This led to the assertion that educating students on specific ways actions now could impact their future career is beneficial.

Integrity in journalism. As journalism majors, the students felt that integrity was particularly important for professional journalists. Some of the students used specific examples from their journalism courses to explain integrity, such as being unbiased and true to the story. One student discussed interviewing and the necessity of "being honest and letting someone's word be their word, not mine in any way influencing it." Six of the students, when asked about academic integrity in general, used the phrase "especially in journalism." One student said that "a solid 75% of the [negative] issues within the career field of journalism is essentially academic dishonesty issues, so we need to learn it now, so we don't have those really big failings as a field later." Another said, when asked about the innovation, that it would be "good to look at, and at least gather, the ethical

approach from a professional standpoint. That's mostly what I can think of in terms of being helpful."

Developing bad habits. One reason that students gave for needing academic integrity resources is because once a student cheats they may develop bad habits that continue into their professional career. As one student pointed out, some students may begin cheating on assignments they "may not have any personal investment in," which makes it easier to borrow from others. However, they point out that "making people think about the fact that this is a habit that I build and maybe it becomes a habitual thing to kind of borrow here and there to make it easier on yourself. In THIS profession, especially, that's probably not a good habit to get yourself into." This provides some insights for RQ3, whether an innovation designed to establish a connection between professional ethics and academic integrity has an impact on student behavior around academic dishonesty.

Theme: Innovation Assets

All students were asked their opinion of the innovation itself. The primary components were (a) being a resource they can return to, (b) organization, and (c) connecting through real examples. This led to the assertion that a good resource should be easy to find, simple to follow, and connect directly to the students.

Resource they can use whenever needed. When discussing university policies many students mentioned that what they knew about academic dishonesty came from brief discussions in class. As one student said, "always at the beginning of the quarter the professor goes over academic integrity and plagiarism and then it's sort of like no other talk about it unless you get caught." Another added that "in their syllabus buried

somewhere is information about what they would do if you get an academic honesty violation." So, when asked about the innovation itself, they appreciated that it was something they could go to whenever needed. As a few stated, they tend to be familiar with the general rules of plagiarism but not all the different scenarios. One student said, they enrolled in the innovation course "so if I had any questions, I could go check it out…so it's there if I need it and I know I can go find the information without having to dig through multiple layers of university web pages." Another summed up what many students meant saying,

> Obviously, everything isn't an isolated incident. So, there's a situation where I'm confused about this one assignment. Maybe I am like, is this okay, is this not okay? And for me, that's a sort of thing where I just would like to be able to reach out to a resource and just be – "what do I do in this situation?" instead of having to read through and try to apply it to the more general information. So, I like that about this site.

This ties into RQ2 about whether a departmental resource for academic integrity, in addition to the university-wide one, affects student knowledge of academic integrity policies and procedures.

Well-organized information. Almost all students mentioned that being well-organized was important for a good resource site. They need to be able to find the information quickly when they need it. Just having it be a Canvas course that appears on their dashboard was helpful to a few students. One student noted, "when I go on to my Canvas page I have all my classes set up and I'll go into them each day and make sure I'm following the modules and everything's up to date. So, I think having it as a Canvas class of its class is helpful because it keeps everything that might be otherwise a scattered document somewhere in some email or some Western official site." Students also

mentioned that the information was comprehensive and the modules easy to follow. As one student said, “it flows the same way that any other class would so it’s easy to navigate. When you look at the modules all of the resources are right there and you can collapse them.” They liked the home page and half the students also mentioned liking the examples where you could choose an action and see what the result would be. Finally, they felt having a resource where all the “nitpicky policies” were located in one place was valuable and provided an “extensive list of ways that you can seek help” as well.

Direct connection to major area. Finally, several students pointed out the benefits of having a site that was specific to their discipline, as well as providing information about university policy. This ties into RQ1, which asks, *What effects do online resources that explain and clarify academic dishonesty in ways relevant to students’ specific professional focus have on student cheating?* Students mentioned that there were some academic integrity issues, such as paraphrasing too directly, that they did not know about until they became a journalism major. The student said, “the more nitty-gritty journalism components of academic integrity I’m still learning what that means, not by doing, just by hearing.” Based on this, the student thought providing the examples in this context helps students understand those components. Another mentioned that “in the journalism major in general it’s a really important tool to have and it’s really important to know these rules.” A few students thought that this type of resource could be important in any major to provide students with more specific examples relevant to them. As one student noted, “I think it’s helpful to have that connection because I think academic integrity means different things, depending on what you’re doing or what kind of classes you’re taking or what you’re studying.” Another noted that “it’s good for

journalism majors but I think for everyone too. Having a little Canvas course or button that has those resources in it could be really handy."

Exit Interviews

The exit interviews focused only on opinions or reactions to the innovation itself, which ties into the theme of innovation assets. Prior to reviewing the exit interviews for similar theme components, I developed a word cloud in MAXQDA. That is below in Figure 12.

Figure 12

Exit Interview Word Cloud

The key words that stand out, besides "integrity" are "useful," "resource," "access," and "program" as they relate to the components of the innovation asset theme. Again, students echoed those in the semi-structured interviews regarding the utility of the resource and the ease of access for students. One student noted, "having all of the resources from the university and journalism department in one place was the most helpful element. It can be hard to find every policy or answer a question when the answers are all over the WWU website." This echoes statements above in terms of a department-related site. Similarly, another student commented that providing context related to journalism, specifically, was beneficial. Students also appreciated the quizzes

and scenarios. As students did in the semi-structured interviews, they liked that it was a resource they could access whenever needed. One student said it was "a good source to look to when I am working on projects" while another commented that "it was a useful resource that I could see myself looking back on over my last two quarters at Western.

Research Question Summary

RQ1 summary. RQ1 asked *"What effects do online resources that explain and clarify academic dishonesty in ways relevant to students' specific professional focus have on student cheating?"* The qualitative results point to the fact that students connect to the information if they feel it is relevant to them, specifically. In the interviews, when asked about academic integrity, students used examples specific to their journalism courses. In reviewing the innovation, they liked sections that provided examples specific to their course of study. This suggests that the innovation may have a positive impact on student cheating within the major but may yet need more time for further development and research.

RQ2 summary. RQ2 asked, *"How does a departmental resource for academic integrity, in addition to the university-wide one, affect student knowledge of academic integrity policies and procedures?"* In the interviews, students said that having something they could easily access, that was on their own Canvas dashboard, and was well-organized with all information in one place, was beneficial. Students stated that they were not always clear about what constituted academic integrity and the policy, which could be an issue. Further, they said it could be challenging to sift through university resources and various professors' syllabi to find information when needed. Given that lack of time was one barrier to student success in terms of maintaining academic

integrity, speeding up the process to find information when needed may help alleviate that particular barrier.

RQ3 summary. RQ3 asked, *"What impact does an innovation designed to establish a connection between professional ethics and academic integrity have on student behavior around academic dishonesty?"* Students noted throughout the interviews the importance of integrity in journalism as professionals. They also stated that learning bad habits now could negatively impact future actions. Overall, students seemed to state that establishing that connection could positively impact student behavior as it relates to academic integrity.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this action research study was to explore potential reasons for students committing academic dishonesty and explore resources to decrease those violations and improve their academic integrity. A capstone project by news-editorial students in our department focused a light on the fact that academic honesty violations at Western Washington University have been increasing. In addition, by percent of majors, journalism students were in the top three majors to commit these violations. As a professor in this area and department chair, I know our students must take a professional media ethics course. In fact, integrity within the journalism field is more important than ever in this era of fake news. Therefore, in an attempt to improve academic integrity within the department, I developed an online resource for students that was department specific, including examples of the types of violations committed within the department and connections to the broader professional field.

The innovation was developed on the twin theoretical pillars of social-learning and self-efficacy. If students learn from each other, could creating a more transparent educational system help them see the bigger picture? As noted in chapter 2, research shows that student overestimate the number of students who cheat with the added belief that they must be getting away with it. In addition, could the resource increase their confidence or self-efficacy as it relates to academic integrity, thereby improving integrity?

This study was framed by three research questions related to academic integrity among journalism students:

RQ1: What effects do online resources that explain and clarify academic dishonesty in ways relevant to students' specific professional focus have on student cheating?

RQ2: How does a departmental resource for academic integrity, in addition to the university-wide one, affect student knowledge of academic integrity policies and procedures?

RQ3: What impact does an innovation designed to establish a connection between professional ethics and academic integrity have on student behavior around academic dishonesty?

Focusing on these questions, I gathered and analyzed data collected from pre- and post-innovation surveys and semi-structured interviews. In this chapter, I discuss the relation of the study's quantitative and qualitative results to the research questions and theoretical perspectives. I then share limitations of the study, implications for both research and practice, personal lessons learned, and concluding thoughts.

Discussion of Findings

RQ1 - Academic Integrity Resource Specific to Major

Quantitative results do not point to a significant effect – positive or negative – of a major-specific online resource focusing on academic integrity. Student responses showed no major difference in terms of knowledge or awareness as it relates to what constitutes a violation, the consequences, and the most frequent types of violations. One interesting note is that student perception of how frequently certain violations occur – in particular citing "unauthorized collaboration" more than plagiarism or cheating on a test – supports Auger's (2013) previous study of public relations students who cited

unauthorized collaboration as the most prevalent type of cheating. In addition, while students were confident about their ability to maintain academic integrity, they did not view paraphrasing without citing to be as serious as not citing a direct quote. This relates to a study by McCabe et al (2001) that reviewed a decade of research on academic dishonesty. Their research found that student perceptions of cheating, particularly related to paraphrasing, had changed. They noted, "although most students understand that quoting someone's work word for word demands a citation, they seem to be less clear on the need to cite the presentation of someone else's ideas when the students present them in their own words" (McCabe et al, 2001, p. 221). So, two decades after their research, students are still ill-informed about some types of plagiarism.

In terms of qualitative results, however, the interviews do show a positive effect for an online major-related resource for academic integrity. In discussing innovation assets, students said the direct connection to their major was important to them. As noted in the results, they were looking for a resource related to "the more nitty-gritty journalism components" and mentioned how critical this tool was specifically for journalism students. In her work, which focused on cheating among public relations students, Auger (2013) came to the conclusion that "Perhaps education and clear explanation, with examples of cheating, could help to dissuade some students from unethical conduct" (p. 161). The qualitative interviews here support the idea that specific examples might help students avoid unintentional academic dishonesty. Beyond this, students felt it would be beneficial to students in other majors to have their own site with examples they can relate to as well.

Finally, although a direct causal link cannot be proved, the innovation was the only new resource introduced this year related to academic honesty. In addition, it was only available to journalism students who chose to enroll. Academic dishonesty violations increased across campus again this year. However, during the time period, there were no academic honesty violations in journalism. Journalism is a small department, with an average of about 4-5 violations per year, but the fact that we had none while total violations is increasing could be indicative of the resource being useful. The last two violations we had were reported in the summer, but were actually committed during spring quarter, prior to the new resource being launched. Given that journalism follows the university policy to the letter – writing up an official report for any offense which results in a grade penalty (thus to allow students the correct appeals process) – it is unusual that there wasn't a single report filed for summer or fall quarters.

RQ2 – Department Resource in Addition to University Resource

Again, the quantitative data did not point to a significant impact, positive or negative, of a department-specific resource on academic integrity. However, it did support the original hypothesis that a department resource could be beneficial. Student responses showed that they do not necessarily understand the policy and what constitutes a serious violation. In addition, they get information from a wide variety of sources, which may or may not be completely accurate. As mentioned in the Cycle 1 research, interviews with other chairs showed that they did not necessarily understand the strict guidelines for the policy. Therefore, faculty may not be presenting students with complete information, which is problematic given that most students get that information from their syllabi. A recent study by Burbidge & Hamer (2020) showed that while most

of the students they surveyed were aware there was a policy, approximately 20% did not know how their school shared that information and one-third of the teachers did not know how the information was shared. In addition, a study by Bretag et al (2014) of Australian university students found that while almost all students felt they had enough information to avoid academic dishonesty only about two-thirds said they had received enough support and training on the subject. Students at Western seem to be in alignment in that they know there is a policy, but they don't necessarily get enough training about academic integrity and the process.

Qualitative data, however, did support the benefits of a department-specific resource. They stated that having information all in one place, on their Canvas dashboard, negated the need to track down information "through multiple layers of university pages." In the interviews, students mentioned that the policy was vague and, as one student noted, sometimes all they know is that if you commit a violation "something bad happens" without understanding exactly what that was. Therefore, they stated the innovation was beneficial in providing clear information that they could access whenever needed. Students in a focus group study by Gullifer and Tyson (2010) similarly stated that they got general links from the university but "the onus is on the student to search for relevant information pertaining plagiarism" (p. 471). The students in that focus group acknowledged this could lead to confusion and even fear over accidentally committing a violation.

RQ3 – Connecting Academic Integrity with Professional Ethics

The quantitative results showed that students understood certain violations were serious when committed by a professional journalist, but not as serious if a student takes

the same action. This is similar to previous studies showing that found students believe professional violations are more serious than academic ones (Conway & Groshek, 2009; Auger, 2013; Shipley, 2009). The results from the surveys did not show a direct effect that making this connection could improve academic integrity. Also, although there is no evidence the innovation led to the change, students in the post-innovation survey were less likely to believe students creating quotes or failing to cite properly should be considered a serious violation than those taking the pre-innovation survey.

The qualitative results, again, showed a benefit for students in making the connection between professional ethics and current behaviors as a student. Students pointed out that bad habits acquired in college could lead to the same bad habits in a professional capacity, with more serious consequences. They did state the importance of integrity "especially in journalism," and through the interview discussed how better education now could lead to more ethical journalism later. In addition, although not necessarily recognized by students, those bad habits now could impact their future career. As discussed in Chapter 2, Stone (2005) pointed out that student journalists could have a more public plagiarism record if that plagiarism occurs while reporting for an undergraduate publication. In that case, as Stone notes, student journalists could face the same consequences as professional journalists. At Western, this could be particularly important, as reporting for the student newspaper is a required course, yet the editors are students. While there is a professor for the course, editorial decisions are made by the students. One hopes they would seek advice from their adviser, but it is not required, which could lead to errors in student stories that are published.

Theoretical Perspectives

Social learning theory. Some of the quantitative results point to the potential impact of social learning – and the impact of remote education on social learning itself. As noted in Chapter 2, social learning theory is based on the idea that people learn from those observing those around them. This includes not only observed behavior but the consequences for that behavior. As Auger (2013) noted in her study of public relations students, their behavior was strongly correlated to the behavior of their peers, not professional values. McCabe et al (2001) also note that although students may enter higher education confident they won't commit academic dishonesty, "if they observe cheating by 2nd-, 3rd-, and 4th-year students and see faculty who seem to ignore what appears to be obvious cheating, their idealistic view is likely to degenerate rather quickly" (p. 230).

In the surveys, when asked how frequently they thought certain violations occurred, students underestimated the frequency of plagiarism, cheating on a test, double-dipping, but overestimated the frequency for unauthorized collaboration. This could make sense given that students see other students working together but may be unlikely to see the other violations. In addition, for the post-innovation survey, the percent of students stating they thought violations occurred often/very often dropped even more from the pre-innovation survey, except for cheating on a test. The pre-innovation survey was administered in late April 2020, right after the pandemic began. This meant that most students had been learning in person except for a few weeks. The post-innovation survey was administered 9 months later, when students had been learning remotely for three quarters. It is possible, given that quizzes/tests were now online, that students had

witnessed a higher percentage of other students cheating via online methods as there is no proctor. So, it will be important to consider, moving forward, how social learning is impacted by technology and a remote learning environment.

In addition, in the qualitative interviews, when students talked about why students cheat, they mentioned seeing students in a situation where they were considering committing a violation. They see the additional pressures that might prove to be barriers to academic integrity such as lack of time and "being overworked." This indicates they do learn from their peers and, as discussed in terms of support for students, getting all students on the same page could be beneficial.

One recommendation to assist in getting students on the same page is instituting an honor code. There are several studies that suggest university honor codes lead to stronger ethics and fewer instances of academic dishonesty (McCabe & Trevino, 1993; McCabe et al, 2001; Pauli et al, 2014). Studies that don't find a direct correlation between honor codes and stronger academic integrity suggest other influences that impact the honor code itself. For example, Vandehey et al (2007) suggest that believing there will be consequences could impact behavior, "Specifically, knowing about an honor code is different than knowing the university or other students will follow through on the procedure set forth by the honor code" (p. 476). Others, such as Tatum et al (2018) suggest that an honor code is only effective if used with other measures including student-faculty rapport.

While all researchers admit honor codes aren't a complete solution, several studies (McCabe & Trevino, 1993; McCabe et al, 2001; McCabe et al 2002) found that they are a "social context" or social learning factor – as "academic dishonesty is most

strongly associated with the perceptions of peers' behavior. It is influenced to a lesser degree by the existence of a code, certainty of being reported, the perceived severity of penalties and, indirectly, by the understanding and acceptance of academic integrity policies" (McCabe & Trevino, 1993). In a later study, McCabe et al (2001) suggest that students with an honor code would think about how their cheating could violate the community trust, and thereby jeopardize their status. "The real power of honor codes may be in the desire of students to belong to such a community, and thus their general willingness to abide by its rules" (p. 231). This is a way that social learning could be beneficial, rather than harmful.

Self-efficacy theory. As discussed in Chapter 2, self-efficacy theory, as defined by Bandura (1994) states that how people perceive their own capabilities in an area influences how they think and behave. The more self-efficacy someone has, the more likely they are to believe they can do something and behave in that fashion. For example, a student who had low self-efficacy related to writing an academic paper that would earn a high grade might be more likely to cheat in order to do well. A study by Ogilvie and Stewart (2010) found that while some students may commit plagiarism less if they understand the consequences, this only related to students who already had a medium or high level of self-efficacy. Those with low self-efficacy, or lack of confidence in their ability, were more likely to engage in plagiarism whether or not they knew the consequences.

In terms of quantitative results, students say they are fairly confident or extremely confident in their ability to maintain academic integrity. Yet they do not actually understand all of the actions that could cause them to unintentionally commit a violation.

Therefore, although their perceived efficacy as it relates to academic integrity itself is high, improving it through education could be beneficial. Also, in the qualitative interviews, one of the main barriers students see to maintaining academic integrity is a systemic focus on grades and GPA. They state that students are likely to cheat if they are not confident they can get that grade or maintain their GPA without doing so. This is directly related to self-efficacy. While they may have high self-efficacy as it relates to integrity, they may have low self-efficacy as it relates to completing a specific project or paper. In those situations, if they prioritize "receiving a grade over receiving learning that they can apply to their lives" they are more likely to intentionally cheat.

Limitations

As with all research, there were limitations on this study. The key threats to validity for this research are sampling, experimenter effects, and history.

Sampling population

In terms of sampling, the pre- and post-innovation survey samples were not the same, nor was the post-innovation survey limited to only those students who had accessed the site. Therefore, it is difficult to draw conclusions about the impact of the innovation itself on student knowledge. Sample validity could also impact the results. As mentioned in Chapter 4, students taking the pre-innovation survey were predominantly majors and pre-majors who had been in the department for at least a year. However, many of the students taking the post-innovation survey were as yet undeclared in terms of track or pre-major. Therefore, they likely had less time within the department and the university.

Experimenter Effect

In some cases, experimenters themselves can motivate their research subjects to act in a certain way, which can make the results biased towards confirmation of the hypothesis (Simth & Glass, 1987). I have positive relationships with graduating seniors and public relations students, which could lead them to provide positive feedback during the exit interviews related to the innovation. As chair, I conduct exit interviews with all students two quarters prior to graduation and get to know many of them this way. I am also a professor in the public relations track and teach the capstone course. Both of these relationships may have influenced their opting into the interviews and their desire to provide positive feedback. On the other side, as chair of the department, I have responsibilities related to academic integrity. I am the first person a student appeals to if an alleged violation occurs and am made aware of any suspected violations. Therefore, students may have known me and seen me as someone with more authority over future behavior. It is possible that this influenced the students who elected to be interviewed or their feedback when interviewed.

History

According to Smith & Glass (1987), events that are not part of the independent variable, but occur during the same time period, can impact results in an unforeseen way. The COVID-19 pandemic was an unforeseen event, which happened just at the start of the innovation cycle. This meant that students and faculty were completely disrupted, both during the final stages of development of the innovation and during the data collection period. It led to some anticipated resources, such as video and audio anecdotes

from professors, designed to establish the personal context students said would be beneficial. In addition, learning changed from being entirely in person to entirely remote. This means that students were no longer in a classroom together nor in any situation where they might witness certain types of behavior that would constitute violations. This could be a reason for the fact that fewer students in the post-innovation stated certain behaviors, such as plagiarism or double-dipping, occurred frequently than those in the pre-innovation study. Working entirely remotely could impact social learning related to those behaviors.

Implications for Practice

Providing better academic integrity resources for students – and faculty – makes a great deal of sense. Although many issues of academic honesty are intentional, a review of previous studies and my own study point to a lack of awareness and knowledge as a factor for unintentional dishonesty violations. Providing more accessible, easy-to-follow resources could eliminate many of those, which will better serve our students. It will also better prepare them for their future careers, in any field, so they do not make mistakes later when it could cost them dearly.

One implication for practice comes out of the student interviews and their suggestion to provide training for all students related to academic integrity. I plan to work with the academic integrity office on campus to help develop a short training course for students, similar to other training courses they take following orientation. I have recently joined the Academic Integrity Board at their request and we are currently reviewing training students take following a violation. The current online course is out-of-date and

more “stick than carrot.” Students know there need to be clear consequences but also believe policies should be compassionate. Developing early training that emphasizes rewards of academic integrity, rather than punishments for violations, would be important. I have already broached the subject of a training course for all students at the beginning of their education and it has been well-received.

I also believe this study has implications beyond my own department and, even, my university. In the interviews, students mentioned that having a major-specific site for other areas of study could benefit even more students. Therefore, I can reach out at Western via chair training sessions and the Academic Integrity Board to determine other areas that might be interested. There are some pieces of the resource – such as the policy flowchart and general FAQs – that could be used by any department. It would then be a matter of using the site as a template and developing major-specific examples. In addition, I can reach out to other journalism programs via conferences to share the results and the resource with them.

Also, in discussing barriers, students stated the systemic focus on grades and GPA as an issue for students. This is an implication for practice across my university and at all institutes. Can we develop avenues to help students improve without such a fear of a grade that they think cheating is their best or only option? This is something that could be discussed at conferences with an aim toward providing real education and effective learning.

Finally, as suggested in the discussion related to social learning, could instituting an honor code for the department – or university – be a way to instill a sense of community and help students learn from each other in a positive manner? As suggested

by the research, an honor code isn't a solution in and of itself. But it might be beneficial if other social context factors, which involves getting students on the same page and ensuring they know and understand the policy – and the consequences of violating that policy – are also improved.

Implications for Research

One key area for future research is to do a broader study with a set sample for pre- and post-innovation surveys, and more qualitative data during the action research process. For example, introducing the academic integrity site during specific courses – with tests or quizzes at the beginning and end and journaling throughout could be beneficial. This could be particularly true with various educational areas and a longer period of time where students are engaged with the innovation. I would ask more specific questions directly related to knowledge students would be able to glean from the resource itself. One threat to validity in this instance would be that students learn from the first survey so the results on the second could be attributed to that. However, it would provide a specific set of responses that could be compared to see whether knowledge was gained and, if so, how much. The key would be to develop instruments that might mitigate that specific validity threat.

Another area of interest for journalism educators would be a more focused look into connecting professional ethics with academic integrity. The disconnect between students' understanding of professional ethics and the importance of following professional codes and their views related to academic integrity is an interesting phenomenon. Although in the qualitative interviews students seemed to recognize that

bad habits now could lead to bad habits later, this wasn't reflected in the quantitative data related to seriousness of professional violations versus student ones. This research would also build on research such as Conway & Groshek's study (2009) showing that students believe it is more important for professionals to maintain ethical behavior than for students to do so. It could be interesting to study whether a lack of understanding how academic dishonesty could translate into professional dishonesty impacts professional behavior later.

Finally, it would be interesting moving forward to determine whether a greater emphasis on remote learning, which has gained even more strength during the pandemic, impacts both students' perceptions of cheating as well as their actions.

Lessons Learned

I was a professional public relations practitioner for approximately 15 years and have now been on the academic side as a professor of journalism and public relations for about the same time. The past three years are the first time I have really been afforded the opportunity to delve into the research side of academic with this much focus. This has helped me develop as a scholar and educational leader.

In my professional career, I considered myself a "researcher." I was confident in analyzing survey results to develop strategic campaigns, provide information for employees or members, or develop an article about current trends. While this comfort-level with numbers was certainly beneficial, looking back I realize that I was just scratching the surface with my research and analysis. I may have had a general understanding of frequencies and a passing relationship with understanding the value of

research, but it was not fully realized. Through this project, I have learned much more about the possibilities one can explore with data, as well as considering the limitations and validity of choices, which I had not done before. In addition, I have come to appreciate that combining quantitative and qualitative data, through mixed methods research, can provide a more comprehensive view on issues and problems of practice, while offering a more nuanced view toward solutions. While I may have considered myself a "researcher" before, I was definitely not a research scholar. I believe that has changed through this study.

In addition, action research has opened up my eyes to new avenues for educational research that will help inform best practices at my own institution. As Mertler (2017) notes, "a main focus of action research is the improvement of classroom practice." As both a professor and chair of a department, developing sound, practical improvements to our curricula and our processes is a fundamental part of my role. We must continue to review, adapt, and change in order to remain relevant for our students, our faculty, and our profession. Action research provides an important avenue to reach those goals. In particular, the importance of reflecting at each stage and determining what else we could do, or how it could be better, will improve my own teaching and research. It is helpful as a research scholar to understand that even when the outcome is not necessarily as hypothesized, that does not mean it has no meaning or purpose toward future endeavors.

I have also learned more about leadership through this process – in particular the importance of appreciating those around you and working with them to implement successful change. According to Kouzes & Posner (2011), "the best thing that you can do to show others you respect them and consider them worthwhile is to reach out, listen, and

learn" (p. 70). As I worked to develop my action research project, much of it was shaped by listening to students, faculty colleagues, and fellow chairs. In fact, the original concept for the innovation was changed based on discussions with students in early cycles of research. In addition, I found that collaborating with others in different fields, involved in developing action research methods for their own problems of practice, generated better processes and new avenues for exploration for my own. Overall, fellow faculty were supportive with many of them assisting by providing information and examples for the innovation and reviewing the site. Students also seemed supportive. One student noted that academic integrity is a challenging issue with many facets, so starting with a singular focus on one of those is beneficial. Another commented, "I think in the journalism major in general it's a really important like tool to have and it's really important to know these rules. So, I'm grateful that you're doing this."

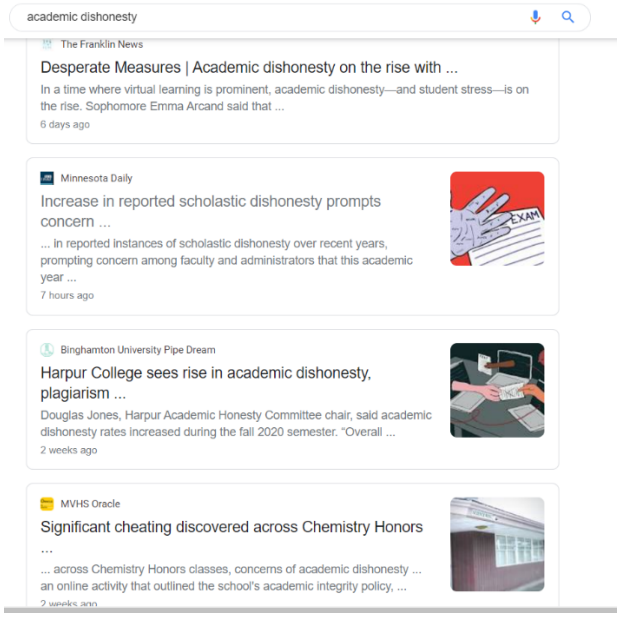
Finally, although I would not have chosen to conduct my action research project during a pandemic, it did help reinforce the importance of change in higher education. We need to always be ready to adapt and understand that just because this is "what we've always done" does not mean it will always work. I watched both students and faculty who tried to continue doing what they had always done even as the entire system of teaching and learning was changing from in person to remote, and new insecurities and fears were adding to the usual stress. It did not work. It could not work. So how do we change the culture from one that fears change one that embraces it? Perhaps, given the speed with which we have had to adapt and change this year, now may prove the best moment to empower faculty to reexamine their approach to change.

Conclusion

Academic dishonesty is not a new problem in education, but it does seem to be on the rise. A recent news search for stories about academic dishonesty found dozens of stories just from the past few weeks, mostly about a noticeable increase in violations. Headlines were similar to this one from the *Minnesota Daily*, “Increase in reported scholastic dishonesty prompts concern among UMN faculty, admin” (Ikramuddin. 2021). In an era where ethics and transparency are at increasing risk in all professions, it is important for universities to support their students and improve their academic integrity. Figure 13 shows just a few of the first page results that emerge in a Google search for this topic within news sources.

Figure 13

Google search results for academic dishonesty within news sources



Although the quantitative results of this particular study did not emphatically support a proposed solution, they did shed further light on issues related to academic

dishonesty. Students need to clearly understand what is considered dishonesty behavior and the consequences for engaging in such actions. They need to be on an equal page, perhaps through initial training for all students at the beginning of their academic careers. Information needs to be concise and clear across all platforms. Finally, universities need to consider ways to deemphasize grades and GPA as the "be all, end all" of a student's academic career and focus on the importance of learning skills that will enable them to succeed in the future. How can we help a student grow and really learn, so regardless of their initial grade, they all come away from a course and a degree with real, applicable learning?

The qualitative results did show that one way to help may be by providing resources that students can easily access and are relevant to the student's area of study. While basic information such as the policy, the process, and general types of dishonesty may be applicable across majors, additional information enabling a student to see themselves in a particular situation, may help connect the dots. I am excited to move forward in improving my own innovation and collaborating with others across campus – and in journalism programs elsewhere – to develop resources for their own students.

Finally, I am excited to pursue further research in this area, particularly on how technology is impacting academic dishonesty and how, perhaps we can use it for more positive changes. Certainly, conducting action research during a pandemic was challenging, but the disruptions and further reliance on remote learning did, potentially, shine a spotlight on certain issues. For example, the one question showing significantly different responses related to frequency with which students felt certain dishonesty behaviors occurred on campus. Much of the research suggests social learning is an

important framework for student cheating. In their study on academic integrity as it relates to Bandura's social learning or social cognitive theory, Burnett et al (2016) explain "People learn by observing the environment around them and processing what they see into their own behavior and thoughts" (p. 52). In other words, if students observe other students cheating, and getting away with it, they are more likely to cheat themselves. However, how does remote learning impact social learning? When working online, the environment has changed, and students "see" different behaviors than they might in a classroom. There are also, likely, fewer overheard conversations in the dining hall, student union, library, and so on. What is social learning in an online environment? How does this impact academic integrity and, for that matter, education in general? I am excited to see where those research questions may lead.

REFERENCES

Aaron, L. S. & Roche, C. M. (2013-2014). Stemming the tide of academic dishonesty in higher education: It takes a village. *Journal of Educational Technology Systems, 42*(2), 161-196.

Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 50*(1), 179-211.

Ashworth, P. Freewood, M. and Macdonald, R. (2003). The student lifeworld and the meanings of plagiarism. *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology, 34*(2), 257-278.

Auger, G.A. (2013). Missing citations, bulking biographies, and unethical collaboration: types of cheating among public relations majors. *Journalism & Mass Communication Educator, 68*(2), 150-165.

Bandura, A. (1971). *Social Learning Theory*. Morristown, NJ: General Learning Press.

Bandura, A. (1994). Self-efficacy. In V. S. Ramachaudran (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of human behavior* (Vol. 4, pp. 71-81). New York: Academic Press.

Basit, T. (2003). Manual or electronic? The role of coding in qualitative data analysis. *Educational research, 45*(2), 143-154.

Batane, T. (2010). Turning to Turnitin to fight plagiarism among university students. *Journal of Educational Technology & Society, 13*(2), 1-12.

Bretag, T., Mahumd, S., Wallace, M., Walker, R., McGowan, U., East, J., Green, M., Partridge, L., and James, C. (2014). 'Teach us how to do it properly!' An Australian academic integrity student survey. *Studies in Higher Education, 39*(7), 1150-1169.

Bruton, S. & Childers, D. (2016). The ethics and politics of policing plagiarism: a qualitative study of faculty views on student plagiarism and Turnitin®. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 41*(2), 316–330.

Burbidge, T., and Hamer, R. (2020). Academic honesty in the international baccalaureate diploma programme: Student, teacher, and school perspectives. *Journal of International Students, 10*(2), 265-285.

Burnett, A. J., Smith, T. M. E., and Wessel, M. T. (2016). Use of the social cognitive theory to frame university students' perceptions of cheating. *Journal of Academic Ethics, 14*, 49-69.

Chang, C. M., Chen, Y. L., Huang, Y., & Chou, C. (2015). Why do they become potential cyber-plagiarizers? Exploring the alternative thinking of copy-and-paste youth in Taiwan. *Computers and Education, 87*, 357-367.

Conway, M. & Groshek, J. (2009) Forgive me now, fire me later: Mass communication students' ethics gap concerning school and journalism. *Communication Education, 58(*4), 461-482.

Creswell, J.W. (1998). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Creswell, J. W. & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. (5th ed.) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Creswell, J. W. & Guetterman, T.C. (2019). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. (6th ed.) New York, NY: Pearson.

Cronan, T. P., Mullins, J. K., & Douglas, D. E. (2018). Further understanding factors that explain freshman business students' academic integrity intention and behavior: plagiarism and sharing homework. *Journal of Business Ethics, 147*(1), 197-220.

Davis, S. F. & Ludvigson, H. W. (1995). Additional data on academic dishonesty and a proposal for remediation. *Teaching of Psychology, 22*(2), 119-121.

Egaran, J. O. (2018, May 4). Academic dishonesty at Western: Is there a solution? *The Western Front*. Retrieved from http://www.westernfrontonline.com/2018/05/04/academic-dishonesty-at-western-is-there-a-solution/.

Elander, J., Pittam, G., Lusher, J., Fox, P. & Payne, N. (2010). Evaluation of an intervention to help students avoid unintentional plagiarism by improving their authorial identity. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education 35*(2), 157–171

Evering, L. C., &Moorman, G. (2012). Rethinking plagiarism in the digital age. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, 56(1), 35-44.

Fish, R. & Hura, G. (2013). Students' perceptions of plagiarism. *Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, 13*(5), 33-45.

Groshek, J. & Conway, M. (2012). The effectiveness of the pervasive method in ethics pedagogy: A longitudinal study of journalism and mass communication students. *Journalism, 14*(3), 330-347.

Gullifer, J., and G.A. Tyson. (2010). Exploring university students' perceptions of plagiarism: A focus group study. *Studies in Higher Education, 35*(4), 462–81.

Hansen, B. (2003). Combating plagiarism: Is the internet causing more students to plagiarize? *The Congressional Researcher, 13*(32), 773-796.

Honny, J. (2010, August). Academic integrity and its implications for practice. *Access.* 12-14.

Ikramuddin, H. (2021, March). Increase in reported scholastic dishonesty prompts concern among UMN faculty, admin. Retrieved from https://mndaily.com/266294/news/increase-in-reported-scholastic-dishonesty-prompts-concern-among-umn-faculty-admin.

Kouzes, J. M. & Posner, B. Z. (2011). *Credibility: How people gain and lose it; Why people demand it*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Lampert, L.D. (2004). Integrating discipline-based anti-plagiarism into the information literacy curriculum. *Reference Services Review, 32*(4), 347-355.

MacLennan, H. (2018). Student perceptions of plagiarism avoidance competencies: An action research case study. *Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, 18*(1), 58-74.

McCabe, D. K., & Trevino, L. K. (1993). Academic dishonesty: Honor codes and other contextual influences. *The Journal of Higher Education, 64*(5), 522-538.

McCabe, D. L., Trevino, L. K., and Butterfield, K. D. (2001). Cheating in academic institutions: A decade of research," *Ethics & Behavior, 11*(3), 219–232.

McCabe, D. L., Trevino, L. K., and Butterfield, K. D. (2002). Honor codes and other contextual influences: A replication and extension to modified honor code settings. *Research in Higher Education, 43*(3), 357-378.

Mertler, C. A. (2017). *Action research: Improving schools and empowering educators.* (5th ed.) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Murdock, T. B. and Anderman, E. M. (2006). Motivational perspectives on student cheating: Toward an integrated model of academic dishonesty. *Educational Psychologist, 41*(3), 129-145.

Namey, E., Guest, G., Thairu, L., & Johnson, L. (2008). Data reduction techniques for large qualitative data samples. In G. Guest & K.M. MacQueen (eds.), *Handbook for team-based qualitative research* (pp. 137-11). Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press.

Newton, Derek. (2019, August 31). Looking the other way on cheating in college. *Forbes*. Retrieved from

https://www.forbes.com/sites/dereknewton/2019/08/31/looking-the-other-way-on-cheating-in-college/#2ee08f9d392b.

Ogilvie, J. & Stewart, A. (2010). The integration of rational choice and self-efficacy theories: A situational analysis of student misconduct. *The Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology, 43*(1), 130-155.

Pajares, F. (1996). Self-efficacy beliefs in academic settings. *Review of Educational Research, 66*(4), 543-578.

Pajares, F. (2002). Gender and perceived self-efficacy in self-regulated learning. *Theory Into Practice, 41*(2), 116-125.

Palmer, H. M. (2018, April 26). Academic dishonesty reports on rise since 2002. *The AS Review*. Retrieved from https://wp.wwu.edu/theasreview/2018/04/26/academic-dishonesty-reports-on-rise-since-2010/.

Park, C. (2003) In Other (People's) Words: Plagiarism by university students--literature and lessons. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 28*(5), 471-488.

Pauli, K. P., Arthur, T. Y., & Price, R. A. (2014). Upon this rock: The effect of an honor code, religious affiliation, and ethics education on the perceived acceptability of cheating. *Journal of Leadership, Accountability and Ethics, 11*(1), 97-110.

Portteus, L. P. (2018, May 6). Anti-plagiarism software records increase in academic dishonesty. *The Western Front*. Retrieved from http://www.westernfrontonline.com/2018/05/06/anti-plagiarism-software-records-increase-in-academic-dishonesty/.

Power, L. G. (2009). University students' perceptions of plagiarism. *The Journal of Higher Education, 80*(6), 643-662.

Price, M. (2002). Beyond "gotcha!": Situating plagiarism in policy and pedagogy. *College Composition and Communication, 54(*1), 88-115.

Reid, S. What courses should you take in college to be a journalist? Retrieved from https://work.chron.com/courses-should-college-journalist-9866.html.

Rolfe, V. (2011). Can Turnitin be used to provide instant formative feedback? *British Journal of Educational Technology, 42*(4), 701-710.

Saldaña, J. (2016). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Saulsbury, M. D., Brown, U. J., Heyliger, S. O., and Beale, R. L. (2011). Effect of dispositional traits on pharmacy students' attitude toward cheating. *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education, 75*(4), 69

Shipley, L. J. (2009). Academic and professional dishonesty: Student views on cheating in the classroom and on the job. *Journalism & Mass Communication Educator. 64*(1), 39-53.

Smith, M. L. & Glass, G. V. (1987). Experimental studies in M. L. Smith and G. V Glass (eds.), *Research and Evaluation in Education and the Social Sciences*, (pp. 124-157). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Society of Professional Journalists. (2014, September 6). *SPJ code of ethics*. Retrieved from https://www.spj.org/ethicscode.asp.

Šprajc, P., Urh, M., Jerebic, J., Trivan, D., and Jereb, E. (2017). Reasons for plagiarism in higher education. *Organizacija, 50*(1), 33-45.

Statistics. (n.d.) In *International Center for Academic Integrity*. Retrieved from https://academicintegrity.org/statistics/.

Stone, E. (2005). For plagiarists, no veil over past mistakes. The Chronicle of Higher Education, 51(41). Retrieved from https://go-gale-com.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/ps/retrieve.do?tabID=T002&resultListType=RESULT_LIST&searchResultsType=SingleTab&searchType=AdvancedSearchForm&currentPosition=1&docId=GALE%7CA147069973&docType=Article&sort=RELEVANCE&contentSegment=ZRDF-Mod1&prodId=CWI&contentSet=GALE%7CA147069973&searchId=R1&userGroupName=asuniv&inPS=true)

Tatum, H. E., Schwartz, B. M., Hageman, M. C., & Koretke, S. L. (2018). College students' perceptions of and responses to academic dishonesty: An investigation of type of honor code, institution size, and student-faculty ratio. Ethics & Behavior, 28(4), 302-21

Turner, C. (2014, August 25). "Turnitin® and the debate over anti-plagiarism software." NPR.org. https://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2014/08/25/340112848/turnitin-and-the-high-tech-plagiarism-debate.

Turnitin. *Interpreting the similarity report*. [Instruction Manual]. Retrieved from https://guides.turnitin.com/01_Manuals_and_Guides/Instructor_Guides/Feedback_Studio/19_The_Similarity_Report/Interpreting_the_Similarity_Report?_ga=2.95940700.1578476801.1540419548-2038033204.1540419548.

USF academic integrity survey. (2008). In *myUSF*. Retrieved from https://myusf.usfca.edu/assessment/surveys/academic-integrity.

Vandehey, M., Diekhoff, G., & LaBeff, E. (2007). College cheating: A twenty-year follow-up and the addition of an honor code. *Journal of College Student Development, 48*(4), 468-480.

Voelker, T. A., Love, L. G., & Pentina, I. (2012). Plagiarism: What don't they know? *Journal of Education for Business, 87,* 36-41.

Wigfield, A., Eccles, J.S., & Pintrich, P.R. (1996). Development between the ages of 11 and 25 in D.C. Berliner & R.C. Calfee (eds.), *Handbook of Educational Psychology* (pp. 148-185). New York, NY: Simon & Schuster Macmillan.

Youmans, R. J. (2011). Does the adoption of plagiarism-detection software in higher education reduce plagiarism? *Studies in Higher Education, 36*(7), 749-761.

APPENDIX A

PRE- AND POST-INNOVATION SURVEY CONSTRUCT

Welcome to the research study!

My name is Jennifer Keller and, aside from being an associate professor here at Western I am also a doctoral student in the Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College (MLFTC) at Arizona State University (ASU). I am working under the direction of Dr. Danah Henriksen, a faculty member in MLFTC. We are interested in understanding more about our students' understanding of academic integrity issues and policies here at Western. This survey is designed to see what students know about academic integrity at Western. Please be assured that your responses will be anonymous and confidential.

Please answer based on what you know or feel. The study should take you around 5 to 10 minutes to complete.

Your participation in this research is voluntary. You have the right to withdraw at any point during the study, for any reason, and without any prejudice. The benefit to the survey will be, I hope, improving future resources designed to help improve academic integrity among our students.

By clicking the button below, you acknowledge that your participation in the study is voluntary, you are at least 18 years of age, and that you are aware that you may choose to terminate your participation in the study at any time and for any reason. Please note that this survey will be best displayed on a laptop or desktop computer. Some features may be less compatible for use on a mobile device.

If you have any questions concerning this survey, please contact Jennifer Keller at Jennifer.keller@wwu.edu. Thank you.

This survey is based on one created by Donald McCabe for the International Center for Academic Integrity and used by other colleges including the University of South Florida.

I have read the above and consent to participate in this study.

- oYes
- oNo

Survey questions:

Q1. On a scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree, how would you rate the following statements?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't know
I believe we have strict penalties for academic dishonesty at Western	○	○	○	○	○
I believe the average student understands the university Academic Honesty policy	○	○	○	○	○
I believe most faculty understand the Academic Honesty policy at WWU	○	○	○	○	○
I believe most students support these policies	○	○	○	○	○
I believe the current Academic Honesty policy is effective	○	○	○	○	○

Q2. Have you been informed about the academic integrity policy at Western?

- oYes
- oNo (If no, skip to Q4).

Q3. If yes, what resources have you used to learn about the Academic Honesty policy at Western (check all that apply)?

- o Orientation
- o Faculty adviser
- o Academic integrity office (directly)
- o Academic integrity office webpage
- o Faculty (in class, on syllabus, etc.)
- o Students
- o Dean or other administrators
- o MyWestern
- o None of the above

Q4. How frequently do you think the following occur at Western?

	Never	Very seldom	Sometimes	Often	Very often
Plagiarism on written	○	○	○	○	○

assignments					
Students inappropriately collaborating with other students on assignments	○	○	○	○	○
Cheating during a test/exam	○	○	○	○	○
A student turning in work done for course X in course Y without pre-approval	○	○	○	○	○

Q5. In the past year, how many times have you seen another student do the following in one of your classes?

	Never	One time	2-3 times	4-5 times	6 or more times
Cheat on a test	○	○	○	○	○
Commit plagiarism	○	○	○	○	○
Collaborate with other students without permission	○	○	○	○	○
Turn in work for one course they wrote/ developed for another without approval	○	○	○	○	○

Q6. If a student did commit a serious academic honesty violation in a course, what should the professor's reaction be? (check all that apply).

- ○ Reprimand the student in person
- ○ Reprimand the student via email
- ○ Lower the student's grade on that test/assignment
- ○ Fail the student on that test/assignment
- ○ Fail the student for the course
- ○ Require the student to redo the assignment/test
- ○ Report the student to the chair
- ○ Report the student to the dean
- ○ Submit an academic honesty violation report
- ○ Do nothing

Q7. How serious do you think each of the following actions is as it relates to academic integrity?

	Not a violation	A minor violation – warning only	A violation requiring a penalty such as a lowered grade
Submitting a paper purchased from an online paper source	○	○	○
Copying information from the internet or other electronic source without full citation	○	○	○
Creating a quote or a made-up source in a story or paper	○	○	○
Taking interview quotes from a video without acknowledging the actual source and representing it as one's own interview	○	○	○
Submitting work you did for one course (such as the Front or reporting) to fulfill a requirement in another course without instructor permission	○	○	○
Paraphrasing someone else's argument using different words without citing the source	○	○	○
Collaborating with others in a required assignment without instructor approval	○	○	○
Searching the web for answers when the quiz is "closed-book"	○	○	○
Obtaining questions for a test from a	○	○	○

student who had it previously			

Q8. How likely is it that…

	Very unlikely	Unlikely	Likely	Very Likely
You would report an incident of cheating you observed?	○	○	○	○
The typical Western student would report such violations?	○	○	○	○
A student would report a close friend?	○	○	○	○

Q9. How confident are you that you know enough not to commit an academic dishonesty violation?

- ○ Extremely confident
- ○ Fairly confident
- ○ Not very confident
- ○ Not at all confident

Q10. How serious do you think the following violations should be treated?

	Not seriously at all	Somewhat seriously	Extremely seriously
A student failing to cite a source properly	○	○	○
A student making up a quote or source	○	○	○
A student turning in work from one course for a grade in another without permission	○	○	○
A professional journalist or PR person failing to cite a source properly	○	○	○
A professional journalist/PR person making up a quote or source	○	○	○

A professional journalist/PR person turning in a story written for one organization/publication to another without permission	○	○	○

Demographic questions

What is your status in the journalism department?

- ○ Pre-major
- ○ Major
- ○ Minor
- ○ Other, please specify_____

Which track are you focusing on?

- ○ News-editorial
- ○ Public relations
- ○ Visual journalism
- ○ Environmental journalism
- ○ Unsure

What is your preferred gender/pronoun choice?

- ○ They/them theirs
- ○ She/her/hers
- ○ He/him/his
- ○ Other/prefer not to answer

APPENDIX B

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW CONSTRUCT

Distribute materials with email invitation	Consent Form
Interviewer introduction, thank you and purpose (1 minute)	Hello. My name is Jennifer Keller. I'd like to start off by thanking you for taking time to come today. We'll be here for about twenty minutes. The reason we're here today is to get your thoughts about the new READ program on the department's Canvas site. The conversation will be recorded so that I can recall the conversation. Is that okay? It will be audio only. I'll ask again once recording begins.
Groundrules (1 minute)	Once again, do I have your consent to record this? (Get verbal response.) I'm going to ask you a few questions related to the new Resource for Ethical Academic Development (READ) that we added to our majors site in April. Feel free to talk about things that I don't ask a direct question about. Your input will inform a study that is working to decrease the number of academic dishonesty violations within our department.
Introduction of participant (1-2 minutes)	To begin, please tell me a little bit about yourself: • How long have you been at Western? • What track are you in? And are you a major, pre-major or minor?
Specific questions (15-20 minutes)	1. What does academic integrity mean to you? 2. When you learned about the new READ program modules, what did you think? 3. How easy was it to navigate the site? 4. What helped you the most in the READ program? 5. Is there anything you think should be changed or could be improved? 6. How effective were the modules in helping you understand Western's Academic Integrity Policy and what constitutes academic dishonesty? 7. Do you think the READ program helped you better understand the relationship between professional ethics and academic integrity? If so, how?

	8. Is there anything else you'd like to say regarding academic integrity in the journalism department or at Western in general?
Closing (2 minutes)	Thank you for coming today and speaking with me about the new READ program on the department Canvas site. Your comments have given me information that I hope will help improve the resource for you and for future students. Thank you for your time.

APPENDIX C

JOURNALISM DEPARTMENT EXIT INTERVIEW

As a graduate of the Department of Journalism, you will soon be a professional who can offer us important advice about our program. We value your assessment of the kinds of learning opportunities you were offered during your time here. Your answers will help us assess our program. Thank you for taking the time to give us this important feedback.

Major Emphasis: _____

1. How would you assess yourself as a writer at the end of your journalism education?

2. What opportunities or activities did journalism classes provide to help you develop as a writer?

3. Are you a better writer now than when you entered the major? Why or why not?

4. Tell us about a story, article, paper, design or visual project you completed that most fully demonstrated the knowledge and abilities you gained in your journalism major emphasis (news editorial, public relations, visual journalism).

5. Were you satisfied with the organization of the major (i.e.: were you able to take courses in a satisfying sequence)? How could we improve the organization of the major?

6. Which core requirements in the major did you find most useful? Are there any changes you would like to see in the major requirements?

7. Were you satisfied with the resources available to you as a journalism major? (e.g. journalism reading room, library resources, computer resources, classrooms, building)

8. Did you access the new Resource for Ethical Academic Development (READ) Program on the department's Canvas site? If so, what did you find most useful (if anything)? What changes would you make to improve it as a resource for students?

9. What do you anticipate doing now? Have you received any job offers? Do you feel prepared to move on to the next stage of your career? If so, why? If not, why not?

10. Please tell us about your achievements. In addition to student publications work here at Western, have you had any work published or accepted for publication? Have you been recognized in other ways, such as publications awards?

Please feel free to comment on any area or issue within the journalism major that is not covered by these questions.

APPENDIX D

ASU INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

ASU Knowledge Enterprise Development

EXEMPTION GRANTED

Danah Henriksen
Division of Educational Leadership and Innovation - West Campus
-
Danah.Henriksen@asu.edu

Dear Danah Henriksen:

On 3/16/2020 the ASU IRB reviewed the following protocol:

Type of Review:	Initial Study
Title:	Academic integrity among journalism students: An action research project to study the impact of an educational resource on student cheating
Investigator:	Danah Henriksen
IRB ID:	STUDY00011638
Funding:	None
Grant Title:	None
Grant ID:	None
Documents Reviewed:	• Academic Integrity_READ Intervention description.pdf, Category: Other; • Exit Interview Consent Information, Category: Consent Form; • Exit interview Recruitment, Category: Recruitment Materials; • Interview consent form, Category: Consent Form; • Interview recruitment email, Category: Recruitment Materials; • Keller_Academic Integrity Protocol, Category: IRB Protocol; • Supporting documents 03-09-20, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions); • Survey consent form, Category: Consent Form; • Survey recruitment email, Category: Recruitment Materials; • WWU Approval Research, Category: Off-site

	authorizations (school permission, other IRB approvals, Tribal permission etc);

The IRB determined that the protocol is considered exempt pursuant to Federal Regulations 45CFR46 on 3/16/2020.

In conducting this protocol you are required to follow the requirements listed in the INVESTIGATOR MANUAL (HRP-103).

Sincerely,

IRB Administrator

cc: Jennifer Keller
Jennifer Keller

Institutional Review Board (IRB) Authorization Agreement

Institution or Organization Providing IRB Review:

Name (Institution/Organization A): _Arizona State University_____

ASU FWA 00009102 IRB Registration #: IRB00000128

Institution Relying on the Designated IRB (Institution B):

Name: ___Western Washington University_____

FWA#: FWA00001207

The Officials signing below agree that Western Washington University may rely on the designated IRB for review and continuing oversight of its human subjects research described below: (check one):

(___) This agreement applies to all human subjects research covered by Institution B's FWA.

(_X_) This agreement is limited to the following specific protocol(s):

Name of Research Project: STUDY00011638 Academic integrity among journalism students: An action research project to study the impact of an educational resource on student cheating

Name of Principal Investigator: ___Danah Henriksen/Jennifer Keller_____

Sponsor or Funding Agency: ___None_____

Award Number, if any: __None_____

(___) Other (describe): _____

The review performed by the designated IRB will meet the human subject protection requirements of Institution B's OHRP-approved FWA. The IRB at Institution/Organization A will follow written procedures for reporting its findings and actions to appropriate officials at Institution B. Relevant minutes of IRB meetings will be made available to Institution B upon request. Institution B remains responsible for ensuring compliance with the IRB's determinations and with the Terms of its OHRP-approved FWA. This document must be kept on file by both parties and provided to OHRP upon request.

Signature of Signatory Official (Institution/Organization A):

Susan Metosky

Date: 4/2/20

Print Full Name: Susan Metosky

Institutional Title: IRB Administrator

Signature of Signatory Official (Institution B):

Date: __3-31-2020_____

Print Full Name: ___David Patrick_____

Institutional Title: __Interim Vice Provost for Research_____