

Ethics and Integrity in Educational Contexts 7

Josh Seeland
Jason Openo *Editors*

Academic Integrity and the Role of the Academic Library


Institutional Examples and Promising
Practices

 Springer


Ethics and Integrity in Educational Contexts


Volume 7


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The aim of this series is to provide an authoritative series of books on topics relating to ethics and integrity in educational contexts. Its scope includes ethics and integrity, defined in broad and inclusive terms, in educational contexts. It focuses on higher education, but also welcomes contributions that address ethics and integrity in primary and secondary education, non-formal educational contexts, professional education, etc. We welcome books that address traditional academic integrity topics such as plagiarism, exam cheating, and collusion.

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Josh Seeland • Jason Openo
Editors

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Editors

Josh Seeland
Library Services
Assiniboine College
Brandon, MB, Canada

Jason Openo
Medicine Hat College
Medicine Hat, AB, Canada

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Preface

This book represents an idea that was too good not to come to fruition. Series editor Sarah Eaton had started shopping the concept of a volume about the role of academic libraries in academic integrity around to some librarians in the fall of 2021. There were quite a few library practitioners doing the work, some with experience writing academic articles, but no one wanting to undertake individually what would surely be a lot of additional toil. Additional, in this sense, meaning that it was not part of the expected duties of anyone who was talking about the idea.

This included myself (Josh), not long into a new role as manager of Library Services at a small Canadian college and still navigating the daily madness that was the COVID-19 pandemic. There were compelling forces at work, however. One of these was Sarah Eaton herself, always willing to encourage, support, and advise, but also a constant source of inspiration in both the quality and quantity of her own work. Another was the momentum that many of us working in academic integrity felt as we engaged institutional support first concerning contract cheating, then with the move to emergency remote learning. The topic of academic integrity was on the map and people were listening.

Jason Openo was a familiar name to me as an academic integrity leader who had helped advance the issue out of his own library at Medicine Hat College two provinces to the west. After a few initial chats, we decided to tackle this project together; between the combination of our skill sets and enthusiasm, it was deemed feasible with a long enough timeline.

I (Jason) have been asked to collaborate on a book on two separate occasions, and both times I said the exact same thing: “I’d be crazy to say yes, but I’d be even crazier to say no.” Working with Josh was an opportunity I could not refuse because it offered the opportunity to explore an increasingly complex and contentious space. At my institution, academic integrity had reached a fever pitch; violations were increasing, and someone needs to do something! But what? One needs to understand the causal architecture before developing a plan of action. This led to my first piece, *The International Dimension of Academic Integrity*. As a result of this exploration, we realized we needed better reporting mechanisms. Even before ChatGPT, faculty were wringing their hands and gnashing their teeth when our institution

asked them to report academic integrity violations. This spawned another project exploring the emotional strain instructors experience when they voluntarily choose to report academic integrity violations.

Working with Josh provided another opportunity to think about what could (or should) libraries be doing to come to terms with this bedeviling problem.

With a list of names including people we had worked with, others we had read, and still others we had not yet read, emails were sent to librarians across the world for chapter contributions. The many positive responses only fuelled our belief in and eagerness for the project. Gathering these together allowed for the writing of a successful proposal, with the feedback again validating that we were on to something worthwhile.

By this point, the COVID-19 pandemic had started to taper off, and the authors were beginning to write their chapters. Many of their libraries had also by now established themselves as hubs of academic integrity in their respective colleges and universities. This manifested itself in a variety of ways, including new titles, job descriptions, services, collaborations, committees, policy initiatives, and publications. Throughout this time, the editors also continued their own work in the area while reading as much of the literature as they could, constantly reflecting on the patterns and connections which were developing and deepening between academic integrity and academic libraries.

Over time, some of the initial contributors had to withdraw from the project. The initial disappointment of these losses and obstacles was offset by our excitement as we read the draft chapters. The work that these librarians and their collaborators were doing in academic integrity all over the world was, and still is, truly inspiring. The thread of continuity through this work didn't just consist of the same literature—though a solid and useful overlap does exist. There was a synergy, perhaps intangible, but still something which we as editors worked at unearthing and synthesizing as we read, revised, and repeated. From time to time, new articles would appear that seemed imbued with the same spirit that we hope to have captured and conveyed in the pages of this book. These articles were collected, read, and integrated wherever and whenever possible.

The main thesis of the book is quite simple: academic integrity is library work. Without hyperbole, academic misconduct threatens the foundation of the postsecondary system, and reckoning with academic integrity provides an opportunity for libraries to demonstrate their leadership capacity, expand their important role in preparing students to operate in a tangled and dangerous information landscape, and support faculty in achieving their institution's mission. Librarians, we believe, do their best work in collaboration, and it was wonderful to collaborate with Sarah Eaton, the authors of these chapters, and each other.

Brandon, MB, Canada

Josh Seeland

Medicine Hat, AB, Canada

Jason Openo

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Josh: I would like to thank my family for their support and understanding in this project getting done; Jason Openo for his time, expertise, great ideas, and fantastic writing; all of the chapter authors for the same; Sarah Eaton for being such a consistent inspiration, collaborator, and leader; my co-workers at Assiniboine College who have helped develop a culture of integrity; Brenda, Lisa, and the members of the Manitoba Academic Integrity Network; all of the members of Canada’s weekly Integrity Hour; the members of ICAI Canada; friends and associates from the many other spheres and endeavors which have had a positive cumulative effect on the creation of this book.

Jason: It must be noted that I am listed as the second editor on this book for a very good reason—Josh did all of the heavy lifting, and this project would not have come to completion if it had not been for his efforts. I want to acknowledge and thank him for his vision, organization, and making it easy to collaborate. I’d also like to thank Sarah Eaton for demonstrating to the world that academic integrity is serious; a serious problem that requires serious scholarship, and for welcoming us to participate in her series. I want to personally thank all the authors for your hard work and for taking (or not taking) my editing suggestions. Your chapters make a significant contribution in a needed area. I’d also like to acknowledge Dr. Toni Samek at the University of Alberta who has been a great mentor to me over the years. Her deceptively difficult question, “What is library work?” framed much of our exploration of academic libraries and academic integrity. Finally, I want to thank my family for allowing me to take on one more side project (and for holding me accountable to the fact that I said I would not do that anymore).

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Editors and Contributors

About the Editors

Josh Seeland is the manager of Library Services at Assiniboine College in Brandon, Manitoba, Canada. He is a founding member of the Manitoba Academic Integrity Network and chairs Assiniboine's Academic Integrity Advisory Committee. Seeland holds a Bachelor of Arts in History and Philosophy from the University of Manitoba and a diploma in Library and Information Technology from Red River College. His writing on academic integrity can be found in *Canadian Perspectives on Academic Integrity*, *International Journal of Mathematical Education in Science and Technology*, and the book *Contract Cheating in Higher Education: Global Perspectives on Theory, Practice, and Policy*.

Jason Openo is the Dean of the School of Health and Community Services. He obtained his Doctor of Education in Distance Education from Athabasca University and his Master of Library and Information Science from the University of Washington's iSchool. Prior to becoming Dean, he worked in libraries for twenty-five years and taught in MacEwan University's Library and Information Technology program, and the University of Alberta's Graduate School of Library and Information Studies. He has led library technology projects that won international, national, and provincial awards and is the co-author of *Assessment Strategies for Online Learning: Engagement and Authenticity*. His other articles on librarianship and academic integrity appear in *Canadian Perspectives on Academic Integrity* and the *Journal of Library and Information Science*.

Contributors

Erin Alcock Science Research Liaison Librarian, Memorial University of Newfoundland and Libraries, St. John's, NL, Canada

Caroline Campbell Language Centre, University of Leeds, Leeds, UK

Jane Costello Instructional Design Specialist, Centre for Innovation in Teaching and Learning (CITL), Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador, St. John's, NL, Canada

Vanessa J. Earp University Libraries, Kent State University, Kent, OH, USA

Katherine Gilliver-Brown Te Puna Ako—Centre for Tertiary Teaching and Learning, Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato, University of Waikato, Hamilton, Waikato, New Zealand

Emily Haikney Learning Development Team, Library, University of Leeds, Leeds, UK

Naomi Jackson Education Consultant. Former Dean of Academic Affairs, CCT College Dublin, Dublin, Ireland

Alistair Lamb University of Waikato Library, Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato, University of Waikato, Hamilton, Waikato, New Zealand

Shannon Moist Head of Reference Services, Library, Douglas College, New Westminster, BC, Canada

Marie O'Neill Dún Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology (IADT) and former Head of Enhancement, CCT College Dublin, Dublin, Ireland

Jason Openo Medicine Hat College, Medicine Hat, AB, Canada

Marta Samokishyn Collection Development Librarian, Saint Paul University, Ottawa, ON, Canada

Josh Seeland Library Services, Assiniboine College, Brandon, MB, Canada

Victoria Tsonos Head of User Services Librarian, Saint Paul University, Ottawa, ON, Canada

Lorna Waddington International History, School of History, University of Leeds, Leeds, UK

Chapter 1

Introduction: Academic Integrity and the Modern Academic Library



Josh Seeland and Jason Openo

Abstract In this introductory chapter the authors explore the multifaceted nature of academic libraries, tracing their historical evolution and highlighting their integral role in higher education. It delves into the question of what defines a library, emphasizing the dynamic interplay between physical spaces, knowledgeable staff, diverse services, and evolving technologies. The chapter contemplates the expansive responsibilities of academic librarians, examining their diverse roles, qualifications, and contributions to the academic community. Against the backdrop of a rapidly changing information landscape, the text explores the ongoing evolution of library work, emphasizing the need for adaptability, collaboration, and a redefined vision. The discussion culminates in an exploration of the evolving intersection between academic integrity and academic libraries, examining how librarians engage in preventing academic misconduct and fostering ethical scholarly practices. The chapter also sets the stage for subsequent contributions, aiming to inspire a deeper understanding of the critical role of academic libraries in shaping the future of higher education through a commitment to academic integrity.

Introduction

What is an academic library? It is a deceptively difficult question. Is an academic library primarily a box? A warehouse of physical and digital stuff, including archives and special collections? Is it a space? A “third space” that serves as the metaphorical

J. Seeland (✉)

Library Services, Assiniboine College, Brandon, MB, Canada

e-mail: seelandjl@assiniboine.net

J. Openo

Medicine Hat College, Medicine Hat, AB, Canada

e-mail: jopeno@mhc.ab.ca

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“heart” of a community? Or is it more like a church? A hallowed space of unfettered inquiry that communicates important core values essential to human flourishing and democracy? Or is it all these things? And what does this have to do with academic integrity?

Academic libraries are defined by the American Library Association (ALA) as “the library associated with a degree-granting institution of higher education” (ALA, 2023a). For the purposes of this book we will also include institutions that grant diplomas, which thus encompasses both colleges and universities. Battles (2003) traces the development of early libraries to collections of clay tablets in Mesopotamia of the third millennium B.C. Hence, academic libraries began with technology, a sense of place, and people. Academic libraries, specifically, he shows to have begun in European universities as far back as the thirteenth century. Technological advances in printing and even shelving swelled the collections of libraries across the world in the coming centuries, with the former also helping to increase literacy, and thus both readership and authorship. Battles (2003) points out how copyright was yet another driver of library growth, with the national libraries of France and Britain growing exponentially during the First Industrial Revolution of the 18th and 19th centuries.

During and after this time academic libraries have been many things to many people. They have been catalysts for intellectual exploration and critical thinking while at the same time being a social space and community hub. Bibliophiles have satiated their hunger for rare and wonderful books in the same stacks as utilitarian students wanting to read only the minimum required texts, if that. Curriculum has come alive through and been built upon the sturdy backs of ever-changing collections in multiple formats. Researchers and scientists across disciplines reciprocated with professionally developed and organized collections by building knowledge on the shoulders of those who came before. So often the heart of a campus, an academic library and its staff serve as a powerful attractor, multiple components like arteries and ventricles working in tandem to pump life into the larger institutional body. A correctly operating and fully functional heart cannot be separated from its parts.

The ALA (2023b) goes on to state that academic libraries provide the following:

- An organized collection of printed or other materials or a combination thereof;
- A staff trained to provide and interpret such materials as required to meet the informational, cultural, recreational, or educational needs of clientele;
- An established schedule in which services of the staff are available to clientele; and
- The physical facilities necessary to support such a collection, staff, and schedule. (para. 2)

At its most basic then, a library has stuff, staff, services, a schedule, and a space. Simple enough, but it is not so simple. Academic libraries augment their institutional reputations by helping to recruit both students and faculty (Oakleaf, 2010). The library’s effort as a collective buying agent, as a force of attraction for both faculty and students, and as a key element supporting academic ranking efforts, means that a library is not just stuff, services, schedule and space; it is a symbol of

a postsecondary community's aspirations (Lankes, 2012). One of these enduring community aspirations is building a culture of academic integrity.

But is academic integrity part of librarian work? And if so, what part? Academic librarians are described by the ALA (2023b) as people who have completed "a master's degree in library science (MLS), preferably from an American Library Association (ALA) accredited school." While this definition allows for the inclusion of many dedicated and talented academic librarians around the world—including many of our chapter authors—it is not exhaustive. Nikta (2022) says that librarians ... "help users to discover, interpret and, ultimately, largely meet their requirements" (p.252). Nikta's observation is important because whatever a library is, its existence is partially defined by its responsiveness to user needs.

For the purposes of this book we prefer that the term academic librarians include other trained staff in colleges and universities, which can include library technicians holding college diplomas and library assistants with undergraduate degrees. Lankes (2012) describes three types of librarians:

1. Librarians by hire—Individuals at small colleges, for example, may not possess a Master of Library and Information Science but are hired into positions that are, for all intents and purposes, librarian positions.
2. Librarians by degree—The editors have absolutely no desire to undermine the Master of Library and Information Science or contribute to the deprofessionalization of librarians (Litwin, 2010), but in the case of academic integrity, it is possible that current graduate programs have not sufficiently embraced this as part of their curriculum and that other staff in an academic library are involved in this role.
3. Librarians by spirit—Individuals who do not have degrees or the term librarian in their job titles but who uphold and promote library values, enhance the skill set of their institutions, and bring the service outlook to use collections, skills, and tools to facilitate learning and knowledge creation.

We prefer Lankes' expanded consideration of who is a librarian, and in the context of the book it is hoped that readers will understand why this is preferable for the purposes of talking about academic integrity and academic librarians.

For all of the possible nuances and interpretations of this starting point, academic libraries can be described, at their core, as a mixture of places, people, tools, services, and a set of processes (such as instruction). All of that, however, does not give much guidance as to what a library is, what a librarian does, or how the library should react to a rapidly changing information ecosystem. As Andrikopoulou et al. (2022) show, the library profession has strong traditions and a long history. And so we return again to that vexing question: What exactly is library work? And, within the context of this book, is academic integrity library work, and if so, why?

The Ongoing Evolution of Library Work

The editors both lived through major changes in library work as students in library programs from the late 1990s through the early 2000s. The concepts of what libraries were and how they worked had slowly started to change during this time due to the rise of the World Wide Web. “Websites” were now available “online” and in their studies both editors learned how to navigate “OPACS” and “search engines” rather than the card catalogues which had previously helped library patrons locate information for decades. First accompanied by the screeching of dial-up modems, then the comparative instantaneity of high-speed connections, hundreds of journal articles could suddenly be searched in one fell swoop. This transformation of search and retrieval from a difficult, physically-bound process to an instantaneous one sent tonnes of bound back issues to the print afterlife. The shift from physical to digital collections has also spurred a new age of library renovations as libraries removed reference and periodical collections to allocate more space for students to bring in their powerful portable devices and study as individuals or in groups who may access a librarian via chat, even though they can conceivably occupy the same physical locations. Some libraries quickly realized they needed power, wifi, and technologically sophisticated personnel.

These developments caused some observers to prematurely predict the demise of libraries. While part of these speculations came from outside of the field, others came from within, at once a resistance to change and a lament for how library work had been done for centuries. There were also numerous voices advocating for evolution and adaptation within the library field. Quaratiello (1997), for example, found that most students did not understand how AltaVista or Lycos worked, and still needed librarians to help them navigate this new world of information. Librarians needed to shift the way they helped users understand the structure and function of information, and whether it was Library of Congress Subject Headings or invisible search engine algorithms, many of these structures privileged a certain point of view. The editors had themselves known a pre-digital library tradition as patrons, but embraced budding concepts such as “digital literacy” in their respective studies and library work after graduation. In our institutions, our roles had largely been as change agents. We had heard staff say, “Google will never replace our resources,” (until they themselves began to rely on Google for most reference questions). We heard, “Seniors will never embrace digital books,” (until they embraced the Kindle). All of which is to say we lived and worked through 30 years of some of the most turbulent technological changes, and the biggest change for libraries may be their openness, ability, and readiness to embrace new technologies and service models. After all this tumult, what we witnessed is that librarians became a profession unafraid of technology and the changing future.

Challenges Faced by Academic Libraries and Librarians

At the point of writing the editors have worked for decades within an academic library field that has, we believe, seen more change in this period than in previous two millennia combined. The sheer explosion of information and diversity of formats have impacted reading and research patterns. And as Ursula Franklin (2014) observed, “When one thing changes all things change” (p.162). Furthermore, it is impossible to separate the upside from the downside of these technological developments. The changes have impacted library facilities, resources, services, and staff. We have both sat through change management seminars, and indeed, the adage about change being the only certainty can and likely already is integrated into the collective library psyche. As Battles (2003) waxes, “from age to age, libraries grow and change, flourish and disappear, blossom and contract” (p.214).

If academic libraries do not define themselves, others will do it for us. Sanches (2022) proposes that this includes “rethinking the nature of the library” (p.476). Not only input but guidance at minimum and, ideally, leadership from those working in academic libraries is crucial in this introspection. Andrikopoulou et al. (2022) are adept in showing the debate within academic libraries concerning our very identity, along with being afforded “a lower status than other university professionals” (p.350) and less “organisational recognition and support” (p.355). As a “feminized” profession that is predominantly service oriented, “academic librarianship can be seen as reproductive labor of the academy, supporting the productive labor of research and scholarship” (Higgins, 2017, p. 71). Sanches (2022) further suggests that there is a lot to work with and that “librarians should be more attentive to the opportunities that the characteristics of libraries....allow” (p.485). A failure to self-define could at best lead to professional inertia and, at worst, having academic libraries changed for the worse in a gradual top-down flow of budget cuts and reorganization that continue to reflect a view of library work as less important than the real work of the university.

Some suggest that the lack of support for and recognition of academic librarians may be linked to our increasingly incompatible adherence to traditional facilities and collections (where *traditional* has become synonymous with old, unnecessary, and irrelevant). Andrikopoulou et al. (2022) show that this begins with librarians tying their identities to the libraries in which they work, even as the library and embedded librarians try to “be everywhere,” shifting away from buying resources for internal use to leveraging our expertise to help our institutions achieve their historical mission and current strategic priorities. Huang et al. (2023) point out that this fixation on collections and space over technology reflects a strong internal focus, and a general library tendency “towards linear thinking, seeing related issues in isolation, and failing to connect developments in the outside world with the local environment” (p.6). Even in the context of services rather than facilities and collections, Huang et al. (2023) contend that academic libraries have a “tendency to continue with services of interest to dwindling audiences [which] can consume resources otherwise available for experimentation and exploration” (p.7). A study

by Giannakouli et al. (2023) showed that participating library staff mostly provided information about plagiarism from the help desk while at the same time bemoaning lack of wider library involvement with non-library staff and policy. The chronology of Battles (2003) is one of libraries eventually having too many physical items requiring too much space. Whether it is the stacks or the reference desk, it seems clear that the traditional confines (the way that librarians have defined their role) may close in on us over time, and at special historical circumstances these confines must be transcended both physically and mentally.

As we have shown, a library is not too amorphous to be defined, but the interplay of collections and people interacting in virtual and physical spaces provides a flexibility that is preferable to ambiguity when it comes to defining the modern academic library. The core mission and the essential elements of space, services, and staff remains the same, but the day-to-day activities of librarians shift, grow, and expand. The *Chronicle of Higher Education* (2022) released its eye-opening “The Library of the Future”, outlining the many ways in which the field is more diverse than ever. For example, only about one third of those working in libraries identify as librarians and are trained as such. There is growing emphasis on soft and, in the archetypal library context, non-traditional skills such as management, leadership, public speaking, and communication. The report illustrates this as a necessity in a field that is stubbornly perceived as stale and lacking in excitement and innovation (can we ever shake this false image?). Asim et al. (2023) follow this line of thinking in saying that “future library professionals might need more complex, critical, innovative, and imaginative thinking” (p.2). Llewellyn (2019) recommends promotion of services and reframing the role of academic libraries as ways to achieve an updated definition. Andrikopoulou et al. (2022) also emphasize the importance of proactive libraries which are constant in the promotion of the skills that all those who may work in and for libraries collectively possess. The odd thing is that there also exists a strong history of library promotion. Libraries have spent considerable time thinking about how to express their value and redefining themselves, but despite their embrace of technology and new services, the contrary perception has not changed. Are libraries that hard to understand?

Academic library facilities and collections have, for one reason or another, changed dramatically over time, and should not hinder a reconceptualization of the profession. These changes have often been reactions (and sometimes slow reactions) to external shifts, rather than proactive changes to adaptively position libraries for this new environment. Because of these many changes, skill updates and professional development trends within the profession require closer examination. Andrikopoulou et al. (2022) suggest that the level of continuing professional development within the library field is low enough as to undermine its credibility. In the context of technology, Huang et al. (2023) and Asim et al. (2023) show how the field has been historically resistant to change, often waiting for things to be well-established in larger society before trying them out in the library. This is by no means unique to the library field, however, as Sano-Franchini (2010) shows in pointing out how cultures at large lag behind technological innovations. While this tendency might best be remedied at the level of professional associations and in library technician and Masters-level curricula, individuals working in academic