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# Indigenous Perspectives on Academic Integrity in Post-Secondary Institutions in British Columbia

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## **Abstract**

The international literature on academic integrity in post-secondary environments considers various points of view, but the perspectives of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples in the nation now known as Canada are acutely underrepresented. Using talking circle and art-based inquiry methods, this qualitative research explores the views of Indigenous faculty, staff, administrators, and graduates affiliated with a mid-sized post-secondary institution in British Columbia, Canada. Through the imagery of the Medicine Wheel, this study reveals a holistic vision of academic integrity that emphasises relationships with people and knowledge. The implications of this relational paradigm are discussed, including responses to academic misconduct that preference educative opportunities, consider intent, and enable restorative justice. The contrast between the perspectives of the Indigenous participants and the neoliberal paradigm, which foregrounds many academic integrity policies, is examined. The findings further underscore ways in which prevailing approaches may inhibit integrity by fostering systemic, social, and pedagogical barriers to developing a relationship with knowledge. This study adds Indigenous voices to the research literature and provides an entry point for considering how Indigenous perspectives may inform more inclusive and equitable approaches to academic integrity.

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## Chapter 1 – Introduction

### 1.1 Introduction to the research context

The hum of the classroom corridor dissipates as the door to the Indigenous Students Centre slowly closes behind me. The aroma of sage and sweetgrass from a recent smudging lingers in the room and reminds me that I am standing on the lands of the Coast Salish people, who have been stewards of this region from time immemorial. Yet the academic institution that now occupies this land only recently opened spaces that honour the Indigenous faculty, staff, and students who make up a growing part of our community. Indeed, like many post-secondary institutions across the land now known as Canada, this institution has made concerted efforts to decolonise and recentre Indigenous ways of knowing and being, though much work remains to be done.

Following the calls of the 2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC, 2015b), decolonisation discourse in higher education has motivated change and provoked curriculum and policy reforms. However, the benefits of decolonisation within all areas of academia have not yet been fully achieved. The extant literature demonstrates a growing interest in Indigenisation of curricula, pedagogy, research, and governance (Wilson, 2008; Cote-Meek and Moeke-Pickering, 2020), but policies that affect student experiences and outcomes are less frequently mentioned. Notably, although academic integrity has become an increasingly prominent concern, a database search of the English language research literature on academic integrity returned no results relevant to the perspectives of Indigenous learners.

Academic integrity is foundational to a post-secondary environment where authentic learning and the exchange of ideas can flourish. Despite the espoused value of academic integrity, many academics and researchers are concerned about increasing departures from the principles of integrity (Brimble, 2016; Lancaster, 2019; Awosoga *et al.*, 2021a). In post-secondary institutions in Canada, academic integrity and conversely, academic misconduct, are defined and managed in various ways (Eaton, 2017). Efforts to promote integrity and discourage misconduct have focused on a range of prevention and response strategies, as well as attempts to understand



students' motivations for engaging in unsanctioned behaviours. Research on the perspectives of faculty and students in Canadian institutions has advanced our understanding of academic integrity in Canadian context. Despite this work, our view of academic integrity remains impoverished without the input of those on whose lands our institutions are built.

This research amplifies the voices of Indigenous faculty, staff, administrators, and graduates and creates an opportunity to extend the work of decolonisation. Through talking circle and art-based inquiry methods, this study explores Indigenous perspectives of academic integrity. To situate the findings, this work begins with an overview of higher education in British Columbia, including a reminder of the legacy of the residential school system. A literature review further expounds on the scholarly study of academic integrity, followed by an overview of the methodology and design of the current research. The rich dialogue with the participants and highly symbolic artwork described in the data analysis and conclusions underscore the deep meaning of integrity in many Indigenous contexts and provide valuable insights for reimagining academic integrity across institutions.

## **1.2 Post-secondary education in British Columbia**

Across the 13 provinces and territories of Canada, education is primarily managed by provincial governments, with post-secondary institutions being broadly categorised as universities, institutes, and colleges. In British Columbia, universities provide undergraduate and graduate instruction in a wide range of disciplines, whilst institutes offer specialised programmes in trades, technology, and public safety. Colleges have the mandate to provide adult basic education, vocational and trades training, and foundational undergraduate programmes (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2018). Separately, Indigenous controlled post-secondary institutions are governed by their communities, and provide lifelong learning, college, and university programmes that support Indigenous learners and their communities, cultures, and languages (IAHLA, 2019).

Significant federal and provincial investments in compulsory education have contributed to strong educational attainment rates across the country. With over 92% of people in Canada having completed at least compulsory schooling (OECD, 2021), and over 65% having completed formal university, college, or apprenticeship training (Statistics Canada, 2016), the country exceeds OECD averages. However, these statistics obscure the gaps in achievement for Indigenous Peoples: only 49% of all Indigenous Peoples (46% First Nations, 58% Métis, 27% Inuit) have attained qualifications beyond compulsory schooling (Statistics Canada, 2016). Research investigating the low participation and completion rates of Indigenous learners in Canadian post-secondary education has exposed an array of interconnected political, financial, institutional, and dispositional barriers that impede success (Environics Institute, 2011; Steel and Fahy, 2011; Munro, 2019). In response, the Canadian government has increased investments in compulsory and post-secondary education for Indigenous learners (Indigenous Services Canada, 2020). Whilst these efforts are vital, Henry *et al.* (2017) remark that changes to systemic racism and colonialisation are frequently absent from political and institutional agendas. For many Indigenous Peoples, the education system epitomises the destruction wrought by colonial forces.

### **1.3 Residential schools and the TRC**

In the founding of the nation now known as Canada, education was weaponised against Indigenous Peoples, their languages, lands, and sacred knowledges. Beginning in the early 1800s, over 150,000 children were removed from their homes, severed from their communities, and relocated to government-funded residential schools. Under the guise of the 1876 Indian Act and treaties, the government affirmed its fiduciary responsibility to provide schooling for First Nations peoples (TRC, 2015c); however, education became a means for the federal government to ‘get rid of the Indian problem’ (Scott, 1920 cited in TRC, 2016, p.288). Thousands of children and youth in poorly resourced and often overcrowded residential schools perished from disease, malnutrition, lack of medical attention, and neglect (Carr-Stewart, 2019). The colonial agenda to subdue and ‘civilise’ First Nations, Métis, and Inuit justified and normalised the physical, mental, and sexual abuse of ‘tens of thousands’ of young people (TRC, 2016, p.131).

Nearly all of Canada's residential schools had been phased out by the 1980s; the last school did not close until 1996 (Miller, 1996). Still, the closure of residential schools could not end the intergenerational trauma inflicted by this cultural genocide (Daniels, 2019). Advocates for Indigenous knowledges note that education in Canada continues to be racialised in ways that favour the Eurocentric perspectives that prevail both inside and outside the walls of the institution (Tanaka, 2015; Hogue, 2018). In 2015, the members of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) issued 94 Calls to Action to 'redress the legacy of residential schools and advance the process of Canadian reconciliation' (TRC, 2015b, p.1). The Commission called for the transformation of Canada's education system 'into one that rejects the racism embedded in colonial systems of education and treats Aboriginal and Euro-Canadian knowledge systems with equal respect' (TRC, 2015a, p.239). Transformative reconciliation must involve reconceptualising all aspects of academia in ways that honour Indigenous knowledges, languages, cultures, and relationships. This endeavour, however, is not simply an additive process of including Indigenous ways in the Eurocentric institution (Cummins, 1987; Kuokkanen, 2007). Reconciliation disrupts the power structures that sustain the status quo; it interrogates the seen and unseen sources of racism and discrimination; it amplifies the voices of the marginalised. Advancing reconciliation will require a critical, inward reflection on academia's colonial identity, and an outward, collaborative journey towards transformation.

#### **1.4 Terminology and research location**

Throughout the literature, there are various approaches to identifying the original inhabitants of the land now known as Canada. Following Younging's (2018) recommendations, this study uses the term *Indigenous* as an adjective, and *Indigenous people* as a global reference where specific identity is not needed. The plural term *Indigenous Peoples* refers to the distinct societies of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit in Canada. The terms used for particular Indigenous Peoples, languages, and vocabulary privilege the terms used by the participants and Indigenous scholars themselves and respect their preferred spelling. The plural term *knowledges* is used to acknowledge the diversity and plurality of Indigenous wisdom. Whilst capitalisation decisions defy

conventional style, this intentionally affirms the distinct identities and rights of Indigenous Peoples.

This research was conducted at a mid-sized urban college situated on the traditional and unceded territories of the x<sup>w</sup>məθk<sup>w</sup>əyəm (Musqueam), Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh (Squamish), and sə́ilwətaʔt (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. Like other colleges in British Columbia, Salish College (pseudonym) offers a wide range of programmes in response to its mandate to provide adult basic education, vocational and trades training, and foundational undergraduate programmes. Institutional reports reveal very low rates (less than 1%) of academic misconduct, though the institution's decentralised system likely leads to underreporting of suspected incidents (D Stevenson [Salish College] 2022, personal communication, 27 June). This research contributes to institutional knowledge by illuminating the previously unheard perspectives of Indigenous graduates, staff, administrators, and faculty regarding academic integrity. The conclusions bring Indigenous voices out of the margins of academic integrity discourse and provide a starting point for further research, conversations, and collaboration towards decolonising academic integrity in post-secondary institutions across the land now known as Canada.

## **Chapter 2 – Literature Review**

A literature review pertaining to academic integrity in higher education revealed themes exploring precipitating factors for academic misconduct, institutional policies and procedures, responses to academic breaches, and faculty experiences (Christensen Hughes and McCabe, 2006; Stoesz and Eaton, 2020; Sopcak and Hood, 2022). The voices of Indigenous scholars are notably absent from much of the academic integrity literature and there are no known primary studies of Indigenous perspectives. Therefore, this review relies heavily on non-Indigenous sources, though emerging literature from Indigenous scholars provided introductory insights for understanding these issues through various Indigenous lenses.

## **2.1 Factors that contribute to academic misconduct**

Concerns regarding academic integrity in higher education have prompted researchers to investigate reasons why students engage in academic misconduct by analysing the motivational factors, individual characteristics, academic discourse skills, and cultural factors that contribute to academic breaches (Pecorari, 2010; McCabe, 2016; Ison, 2018). The extant research on academic integrity reveals a preoccupation with understanding students' perspectives and exposing the factors that contribute to misconduct (Eaton and Edino, 2018). Further research is urgently needed to improve the representation of Indigenous perspectives on these themes.

### **2.1.1 Motivational factors**

Building on the seminal research by Bowers (1964), a large-scale survey implemented by McCabe and colleagues in the United States revealed students' self-reported attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours towards academic dishonesty (McCabe and Trevino, 1993; 1997; McCabe *et al.*, 2001). Across all years of this quantitative project, students repeatedly referred to two motivations for violating academic integrity standards: first, students commented that the rules and expectations are not clear; second, students reported they face pressure to achieve high grades, and they may feel that cheating is necessary in order to compete in the classroom (McCabe, 2016). Similar results were found in research conducted in Canadian post-secondary institutions, with lack of clarity around academic integrity and pressures to succeed both emerging as common reasons for misconduct (Christensen Hughes and McCabe, 2006). Focus group research with students at a mid-sized Canadian university also found situational factors such as full course loads, health, and personal circumstances including financial pressures increased motivation to engage in academic misconduct (Awosoga *et al.*, 2021b).

Studies such as the McCabe survey have provided a valuable source of large-scale research in this field and have advanced our understanding of the factors that precipitate academic misconduct. However, the preponderance of quantitative designs and a lack of disaggregated data may limit the ability to consider intersectional variables of advantage and disadvantage (Eaton and Edino, 2018; Packalen and

Rowbotham, 2022). In particular, further research is needed to identify the factors that motivate Indigenous learners to uphold or violate academic integrity policies. In a literature review exploring behaviours of persistence and early school leaving amongst Indigenous post-secondary students, Herkimer (2021) notes that motivating factors may differ between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. Notably, the collectivist values common amongst Indigenous groups may motivate students to succeed in order to benefit their communities; 'to do well in school is to respect one's Elders' (Joseph and Windchief, 2015 cited in Herkimer, 2021, p.13). However, the neoliberal measures of success espoused by most post-secondary institutions conflict with Indigenous aims of cultural integrity, relationships, and self-determination (Pidgeon, 2008; Enslin, 2017). Thus, the collectivist-oriented motivations of many Indigenous students may affect their perceptions and commitments to academic integrity in ways that differ from individualistic-oriented peers and institutions.

### **2.1.2 Individual characteristics**

Whilst the McCabe survey has been applied in research in Canada (Christensen Hughes and McCabe, 2006), recent studies have identified notable differences between students in Canada and the United States. For example, many American research studies validate the findings of McCabe and Trevino's (1997) study of nearly 1,800 students, affirming that younger students, and young men in particular, are more likely to self-report cheating behaviour (Choong and Brown, 2007; Hensley *et al.*, 2013; Elias, 2017). However, Canadian studies frequently find equally high rates of misconduct across age and gender demographics (Jurdi *et al.*, 2011; Bokosmaty *et al.*, 2019; Awosoga *et al.*, 2021a), suggesting that the relationship between these individual characteristics and academic misconduct is not universal. Similarly, whilst studies from the United States confirm the benefits of the honour code system — a popular American model in which students report incidents of unethical behaviour to authorities — Canadian research suggests honour codes may be less effective in Canada. In Christensen Hughes and McCabe's (2006) survey of 14,913 undergraduate

students, only 13% of respondents believed students would report their peers. Data specific to Indigenous students' responses are unavailable.

Some researchers attribute academic misconduct to low levels of self-efficacy (Jurdi *et al.*, 2011; Baran and Jonason, 2020), personality traits (Giluk and Postlethwaite, 2015), or a generational decline in morals (Faucher and Caves, 2009). These findings remain contested, as other scholars view academic misconduct as a systematic and institutional phenomenon, rather than a product of individual characteristics (Bertram Gallant and Drinan, 2006). In one of the only known publications to date discussing Indigenous perspectives of academic integrity across Canada, Lindstrom (2022) cautions that an emphasis on individual characteristics is misaligned with Indigenous principles of relational accountability and precludes mobilising these perspectives in academic institutions. Other scholars have applied social and behavioural theories in academic integrity research (Bandura, 1986; Ajzen, 1985), concluding that the factors are complex and multifaceted. This complicates generalisations that rely on individual student behaviours and prompts critical analysis (Brimble, 2016; Hendy *et al.*, 2021). Diverging from approaches that underscore student intentionality in cases of academic misconduct, some researchers highlight the challenges of conforming to the expectations of academic discourse, particularly for students whose first language is not English.

### **2.1.3 Academic discourse skills**

As internationalisation efforts have strengthened the diversity of student populations on English-speaking campuses, language proficiency has received greater attention in academic integrity literature (Merkel, 2020). Students who have not acquired advanced academic language skills may have difficulty understanding and managing their coursework, leaving them vulnerable to intentional and unintentional misconduct (Bretag, 2016). Pecorari's (2010) qualitative research with international graduate students positions plagiarism as a linguistic phenomenon, noting that academic writing demands competencies many students do not possess. Sri-Lankan linguist and professor Canagarajah recalls learning to navigate English academic writing conventions as a 'painful personal experience of shuttling between discourse

communities' (2001, p.37). Eurocentric institutions tend to value academic communication that is hierarchical in organisation, logical, and objective (Gay, 2002). These norms typically accompany a preference for autonomy and textual ownership over collaborative work, which may exacerbate students' difficulties with the expectations of academic discourse and increase the potential for misconduct (Pennycook, 1996; Song-Turner, 2008). Eaton and Burns's (2018) exploration of culturally responsive pedagogy as a framework for addressing plagiarism notes that standard writing conventions 'may invalidate other (non-Western) ways of communicating that involve the use of extensive background information, stories, indirect metaphors, or passionate expression of ideas' (p.344). For Opaskwayak Cree scholar Younging (2018), these systems fail to acknowledge the significant contributions of Indigenous traditional and oral wisdom. This perpetuates the dismissal of Indigenous knowledge and promotes ongoing colonialism by preferencing Western sources of information.

#### **2.1.4 Cultural factors**

Researchers have investigated the connection between culture and academic misconduct, highlighting how academic expectations, pedagogies, and cultural dimensions influence student attitudes and behaviours (Handa and Power, 2005; Leask, 2006; Ison, 2018). Several studies relate student behaviours and attitudes towards academic misconduct to Hofstede's (1980) cultural dimensions, particularly the individualism and collectivism dimensions (Brennan and Durovic, 2005; McCabe *et al.*, 2008; Mahmud *et al.*, 2019). Through this lens, students from Western countries tend to be characterised by individualism and personal autonomy, whilst students from collectivist regions typically value in-group cohesion and cooperation (Hofstede, 1980). The social values prevalent in collectivistic cultural milieus, some argue, may clash with academic expectations of originality, and foster unsanctioned collusion (Brennan and Durovic, 2005). This concern was corroborated by McCabe *et al.* (2008), whose survey of over 1,300 university students found those from collectivist cultures admitted to collaborative cheating more frequently than students from individualist cultures. However, whilst Martin's (2011) survey of 163 business students similarly confirmed correlations between collectivism and plagiaristic behaviours, the author



cautioned against cultural stereotyping. Likewise, Leask (2006) expressed concern that classifying students according to cultural characteristics may reify Western cultural imperialism.

In the absence of primary research specific to Indigenous students, researchers and post-secondary policy makers may assume Indigenous students' experiences and perspectives are either homogeneous with the majority student population or similar to other minority groups. In their study of international students' experiences with academic integrity in Canadian post-secondary institutions, Sanni-Anibire *et al.* (2021) comment that students 'of Indigenous descent...face many of the same challenges of adapting to the postsecondary academic culture as those traditionally categorized as international students' (p.10). Conflating Indigenous students' experiences with that of international students fails to acknowledge the institutional and situational barriers that impede Indigenous Peoples' participation and success at all levels of education (Clark *et al.*, 2014). Further, the expectation that Indigenous students adapt to the post-secondary culture reifies the colonialist agenda of assimilation, absolves institutions of responsibility, and dismisses Indigenous ways of knowing and learning. In many Canadian post-secondary settings, these barriers to success are reinforced in academic integrity policies and strategies (Stoesz and Eaton, 2020).

## **2.2 Institutional policies and practices**

Whilst there is a paucity of scholarly literature on academic integrity policies in Canadian context, nascent research studies provide essential information about how institutional policies confound or support integrity. As technology advances, policies and procedures often reflect a concern with detection strategies that can compete with technological change (Eaton *et al.*, 2020b). Simultaneously, there is an increasing criticality of punitive approaches and a shift towards preventative and educative measures, though responses to academic integrity violations typically retain a judicial approach (Stoesz and Eaton, 2020), which may create dissonance for Indigenous learners (Poitras Pratt and Gladue, 2022).

### 2.2.1 Institutional policies

Across all Canadian post-secondary institutions, governance and policy making are managed at the institutional level. As such, there is no singular approach to promoting academic integrity or handling academic misconduct, and research investigating the policies of Canadian post-secondary institutions is limited. Stoesz and Eaton's (2020) review of policies from 24 publicly funded universities in Canada's western provinces revealed an overwhelming predilection for punitive measures. The policies 'focused on policing, reporting, investigating, and sanctioning student engagement in academic misconduct', with an emphasis on 'moral discourse' (Stoesz and Eaton, 2020, p.14). The prevailing discourse in academic integrity policies echoes the legal language of criminal codes, positioning 'students as potential offenders' and the institution 'as the judge, jury, and potential executioner' (Sutherland-Smith, 2011, p.128). With consequences ranging from mandatory tutorials, to failed assignments, to permanent expulsion from the institution, students in Canadian post-secondary institutions report feelings of fear, stress, and devastation when facing allegations of misconduct (Sopcak and Hood, 2022). Applying Fairclough's (1992) model of critical discourse analysis to an examination of plagiarism policies from 20 universities (including five in Canada), Sutherland-Smith (2011) notes that this adversarial system reinforces the social construction of institutional power. By demonstrating vigilance against a perceived infiltration of dishonesty in academia, institutions 'maintain and reproduce their positions as the gatekeepers and producers of knowledge and the intellectual elite within society' (Sutherland-Smith, 2011, p.129).

Examining academic integrity policies through the lens of critical discourse analysis may also expose a hierarchical 'imposition of form' that obfuscates meaning and reinforces institutional power (Bourdieu, 1991, p.79). In Canada, Eaton's (2017) analysis of institutional definitions of plagiarism revealed a tendency to use ambiguous statements that result in inconsistent applications of the policy and create confusion for students. Taylor and Bick's (2019) investigation of the academic integrity policies of 453 institutions in the United States revealed that most policies were written above a 16<sup>th</sup>-grade level and were frequently unavailable in accessible formats. A discourse analysis of policies used in Canadian institutions would be required to determine if

similar issues could be contributing to the reported lack of understanding of academic integrity amongst students (Christensen Hughes and McCabe, 2006).

For Indigenous learners, the power wielded through hierarchical academic integrity policies may conflict with common Indigenous epistemologies of relationality. Within neoliberal institutions, academic integrity often prioritises individual interests over the common good and inevitably ‘capsizes the noble pursuit of knowledge and plunges education into issues of plagiarism’ (Poitras Pratt and Gladue, 2022, p.103). Similar concerns over the influence of neoliberalism on academic integrity have been expressed by other scholars (Saltmarsh, 2005; Eaton, 2021; Crossman, 2022), though there are few proposed remedies. Poitras Pratt and Gladue (2022) suggest academic integrity, including its underlying assumptions and values, must be critically examined and redefined as part of the work of decolonisation, Indigenisation, and reconciliation. This provides an opportunity to problematise performative neoliberalism and envisage academic integrity through an Indigenous lens of ‘interconnectedness’, ‘honesty’, and ‘a sense of responsibility to one another’ (Poitras Pratt and Gladue, 2022, p.103).

### **2.2.2 Detection**

With developments in digital technologies, some academics assert that these systems have facilitated a rise in academic misconduct (Sutherland-Smith, 2008; Hamilton and Wolsky, 2022), fuelling what Bertram Gallant deemed a ‘moral panic’ (2008, p.2). Astute instructors who discern unusual writing patterns in student submissions may search local databases or the internet to seek out original sources. Institutions may also invest in text-matching software in an effort to combat the misuse of others’ work without attribution. Such tools purport to detect plagiarism by comparing submitted work to content on the internet and in previously submitted sources and flagging instances of potential copying (Hayden *et al.*, 2021). When students have the opportunity to review feedback from the text-matching software, proponents of these tools note the pedagogical benefits of enhancing writing skills and promoting academic integrity (Davis and Carroll, 2009; Weber-Wulff, 2016). A survey of faculty, teaching assistants, and students at a Canadian university concluded that, overall, participants

were satisfied with the use of text-matching software as a formative self-assessment tool (Zaza and McKenzie, 2018).

Despite the formative capabilities of most text-matching software, these tools are most frequently employed by faculty to detect plagiarism in student assignments (Zaza and McKenzie, 2018). When students are required to submit their work through text-matching tools, the experience may create a sense of unease. Students in Zaza and McKenzie's (2018) study expressed increased anxiety over potential false accusations of plagiarism, particularly when they were unable to view originality reports generated by the software. These fears are not unfounded, as a review of 15 common text-matching tools revealed inaccuracies and false positives across all systems (Foltýnek *et al.*, 2020). These findings concur with earlier research (Weber-Wulff, 2016), including concerns that algorithmic detection unfairly disadvantages non-native English speakers. Introna and Hayes (2008) assert that text-matching algorithms 'are developed within a western cultural context...[a]s such they may unfairly discriminate against those from non-western backgrounds' (p.118). Further research is warranted to explore potentially detrimental impacts of text-matching software on Indigenous learners.

Noting the benefits and limitations of text-matching software, the authors of an institutional study at a Canadian university concluded that text-matching software alone 'is not sufficient to reduce instances of plagiarism' (Eaton *et al.*, 2020b, p.278). Notably, these tools are insufficient in detecting incidents of contract cheating. Contract cheating, which refers to work submitted by students who commissioned others to complete it for them (Lancaster, 2020), is not currently addressed by legislation in Canada and presents a growing challenge to the efforts of detecting academic misconduct (Eaton, 2022). Expressing further concerns about reliance on text-matching software, Rettinger and Bertram Gallant (2022) see technological advances and the commodification of education as combined threats to academic integrity, and they propose relationship building as the way forward. Taking an even stronger stance, some critics of detection software have raised legal and ethical concerns over the use of such tools in Canadian institutions, and they question the use of text-matching software for any purpose. In particular, allowing companies to collect,

retain, and benefit from student work may contravene the principles of ownership, control, access, and possession of information espoused by many Indigenous communities (FNIGC, 2019). Institutions have a responsibility to ensure the protection of Indigenous knowledge; the convenience of text-matching tools cannot supersede this essential mandate.

### **2.2.3 Prevention and education**

Post-secondary institutions have increasingly incorporated preventative and educative elements to bolster compliance with academic integrity expectations. Innovations noted in the literature include academic integrity websites, online tutorials, awareness campaigns, and instructional videos (Griffith, 2013; Lock *et al.*, 2019; Hanbidge *et al.*, 2020). Research on the efficacy of an online academic integrity tutorial used at a university in Western Canada (Benson *et al.*, 2019) aligns with earlier studies that suggest instructional interventions improve knowledge and skills pertaining to academic integrity (Elander *et al.*, 2010; Lowe *et al.*, 2018). Similarly, the pilot phase of a first-year writing course at British Columbia's largest university (McNeill, 2022) affirms the potential for educative approaches to influence behaviours and attitudes towards academic integrity (Azulay Chertok *et al.*, 2014). Further research is warranted to evaluate the effectiveness of these strategies across disciplines and in various post-secondary settings, particularly in Canadian context (Stoesz and Yudintseva, 2018).

There is a notable lack of information regarding the efficacy of these preventative and educative approaches amongst Indigenous students. However, the literature acknowledges the importance of Indigenous student resource centres in promoting overall wellbeing and success. Dedicated Indigenous centres typically provide culturally relevant academic support and social initiatives in a relationship-oriented environment (Timmons, 2013; Wesley-Esquimaux and Bolduc, 2014). Even so, researchers caution that many Indigenous students do not openly disclose their Indigenous identity in an effort to avoid negative labelling. As a result, they may never benefit from available resources and mentoring in academic integrity (Pidgeon, 2016).

Indigenous academics from two Canadian universities have created student resources on the topic of academic integrity. The University of Toronto's *Seven Grandfathers in Academic Integrity* brochure (Maracle, 2020) and the University of Calgary's *Indigenous Academic Integrity* resource (Gladue, 2020) promote integrity and honour Indigenous paradigms. Eschewing a pan-Indigenous approach, the documents are intentionally written from a local Indigenous lens, and guide students towards academic integrity through culturally relevant frameworks. These innovative resources 'challenge the oft (consciously or unconsciously) held belief that western axiology and ethics are the pinnacle and definition of truth in academic culture' (Poitras Pratt and Gladue, 2022, p.115). Not only are these informal resources essential for supporting Indigenous learners, but they also confront the unquestioned Eurocentric rhetoric of academic integrity. Post-secondary institutions have an opportunity to disrupt colonial structures and expand our understanding of academic integrity to include Indigenous principles and perspectives.

#### **2.2.4 Responses**

Even with effective preventative strategies in place, institutions must be prepared to respond to intentional or unintentional academic integrity violations. As noted, the literature reveals a persistent affinity for punitive responses to academic misconduct, despite the trend towards educative experiences. Sopcak and Hood (2022) poignantly note 'an irreconcilable rift' (p.554) between the principles of prevention and education strategies and the compliance codes of a 'quasi-judicial, adversarial process' (p.555). This is confirmed in Stoesz and Eaton's (2020) review of academic integrity policies from institutions across Canada, which exposes widescale reliance on punitive measures once misconduct has occurred. Consequences typically fall on a spectrum of options commensurate with the perceived severity of the breach, with expulsion from the institution being the ultimate punishment (Amigud and Pell, 2020). Both qualitative and quantitative studies provide evidence that fear of repercussions dissuades some students from engaging in academic misconduct (Zobel and Hamilton, 2002; Power, 2009). Yet proponents of educative and restorative models argue that enforcing sanctions has failed as a deterrent to academic misconduct (Kara and MacAlister, 2010). Indeed, Christensen Hughes and McCabe (2006) reported that 53%

of undergraduates admitted to serious cheating, even though 67% believed the penalties for misconduct were harsh. Whilst the literature is silent on the efficacy of different approaches with various Indigenous peoples, Lindstrom (2022) cautions that 'fear is not one of the motivating elements in Indigenous approaches to learning' (p.128). These factors challenge the cogency of punitive strategies as a deterrent to academic misconduct.

Shifting the academic integrity narrative away from punishment and towards pedagogy, Bertram Gallant (2008) advocated a learning-oriented environment that inspires students and faculty to embrace integrity in all aspects of teaching and learning. A decade later, Bertram Gallant (2017) revised the model to include a strategy for responding to misconduct. Drawing on Kolb and Kolb's (2005) learning theory and Mezirow's (1990) transformative learning theory, Bertram Gallant proposed seeing incidents of misconduct as 'teachable moments' that can be used to 'guide [students] through the experiential learning cycle to reach the learning objectives of developing ethical decision-making skills, enhancing meta-cognition, and increasing student understanding of academic and professional integrity standards' (2017, p.92). The author recommends engaging students in activities such as seminars and courses that enhance learning (Bertram Gallant, 2017).

Similarly, Penaluna and Ross (2022) recommend 'moving away from moral or legal binaries' (p.405) and advocate an educative approach to post-infraction situations. As student affairs administrators at a large university in Western Canada, the authors developed a series of scenario-based workshops, which must be attended by those who have been found responsible for academic misconduct. The researchers noted a reduction in defensive behaviours and improved emotional states, which they credit to the collaborative learning environment (Penaluna and Ross, 2022). Collaborative learning approaches have also been identified as central to many Indigenous educational strategies. Mi'kmaq scholar Battiste (2002) describes Indigenous pedagogies as 'learning by observation and doing, learning through authentic experiences and individualized instruction, and learning through enjoyment' (p.18), suggesting that cooperative activities, seminars, and workshops may resonate with Indigenous learners.

Sopcak and Hood (2022), however, argue that inserting mandatory educative elements into what is otherwise a punitive process fails to uphold the broader goals of civic education and community building. Drawing on the principles of restorative practices (Wachtel, 2016), the authors implemented restorative resolutions as the principal response mechanism to academic misconduct at their mid-sized Canadian university. Unlike punitive measures that emphasise rule compliance, restorative practices aim ‘to develop community and to manage conflict and tensions by repairing harm and building relationships’ (Wachtel, 2016, p.4). Though the authors acknowledge this process must exist within an ecosystem of preventative, disciplinary, and restorative practices, the model has received overwhelmingly positive feedback from both responsible parties and harmed parties (Sopcak and Hood, 2022). The restorative process focuses on accountability and repairing harm done, giving responsible parties an opportunity ‘to listen to the impact of their actions (material, emotional, on the community) in a non-adversarial environment’, and to collaboratively determine appropriate outcomes (Sopcak and Hood, 2022, p.562). Advocates for restorative justice practices identify underlying similarities between these approaches and Indigenous legal traditions (Chartrand and Horn, 2016). Though the systems have essential and important differences, the shared goal of restoring balance and relationships presents an intriguing opportunity for further research to explore the suitability of restorative practices in Indigenous contexts.

### **2.2.5 Faculty**

Institutional policies and strategies can only foster a culture of integrity when combined with the efforts of faculty ‘who often bear the burden of preventing, recognizing, and responding to breaches’ (Crossman, 2019). Whilst the research on faculty perspectives of academic integrity is significantly outweighed by studies exploring student perspectives, recent literature confirms that faculty in Canadian institutions espouse the importance of academic integrity (Awosoga *et al.*, 2021a; Hamilton and Wolsky, 2022). Yet studies also indicate faculty are reluctant to report suspected misconduct, frequently resorting to measures that diverge from formal policy, such as giving students a verbal warning, allowing them to resubmit the assignment, or ignoring the transgression altogether (Jendrek, 1989; McCabe, 1993;



Sattler *et al.*, 2017; Crossman, 2019; Eaton *et al.*, 2020a). A study at a university in British Columbia found more than 40% of faculty members admitted to overlooking student cheating on at least one occasion (Coren, 2011).

Faculty may avoid imposing policy measures for a variety of reasons. Limited research suggests that faculty in Canada, like students, may not define and perceive academic misconduct uniformly, making it difficult for some to confidently identify transgressions (Zivcakova *et al.*, 2012; Amigud and Pell, 2021). Faculty may be dissuaded from reporting incidents if the offense is viewed as trivial, if they believe the mandated responses are too harsh, or if there is insufficient evidence (Coren, 2011). Various studies corroborate findings that the time required to report academic misconduct is a barrier for many instructors (McCabe, 1993; Coren, 2011; Crossman, 2019). Even with incontrovertible evidence, faculty may still be instructed by deans or department heads to dismiss the case or to allow the student to resubmit their work. This can lead to feelings of disenfranchisement and a lack of authority (Eaton *et al.*, 2020a).

Qualitative studies further underscore the emotional toll dealing with academic misconduct has on faculty. Faculty may feel anger, disappointment, or a betrayal of trust when their students are found responsible for academic misconduct (Vehviläinen *et al.*, 2018). The prospect of confronting students may incite fear over potential reactions, as well as concerns regarding negative student evaluations and public perception (Eaton *et al.*, 2020a). Such repercussions are particularly worrisome to non-tenured faculty who are often in precarious employment situations. Bertram Gallant (2018) observes that this fear is exacerbated in community college contexts, where instructors have less time to engage with their students and may feel disconnected from the institution. As a sessional instructor at a large Canadian university, Crossman (2019) encourages institutions to recognise 'the emotional and psychological demands of reporting academic misconduct and provide instructors with resources for managing these additional stresses' (p.37). Professional development, reflective opportunities, peer support, and evaluation rubrics are noted in the literature as effective measures for mitigating the burden of coping with academic misconduct (Yeo and Chien, 2007;

Zivcakova *et al.*, 2012; Bertram Gallant, 2018; Vehviläinen *et al.*, 2018; Crossman, 2019; Eaton *et al.*, 2020a).

Post-secondary institutions reflect the increasingly diverse population across Canada. Despite the fact that Indigenous Peoples are the fastest growing population (Indigenous Services Canada, 2020), they remain underrepresented amongst faculty, and their experiences and perspectives receive scant representation in the literature (Henry, 2012). Breaking the silence on Indigenous perspectives of academic integrity, Lindstrom (2022) and Poitras Pratt and Gladue (2022) emphasise the importance of relationships, with role modelling and a commitment to reciprocity empowering students for integrity. Whilst Indigenous values are not homogenous, this reflects the common theme of relationality across many Indigenous groups. Clearly, whether faculty envision academic integrity from Eurocentric or Indigenous paradigms, there is a consensus on the importance of integrity in academic work, yet the voices of Indigenous scholars remain muted in the academic integrity literature. Listening to Indigenous colleagues and students is a small but vital step towards decolonising academic integrity and creating a learning environment where rich and varied sources of knowledge are valued.

## **Chapter 3 – Methods and Methodology**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter outlines the research objectives and provides details about the methodology and methods used. As a preface to discussing methodological considerations, sampling, and data collection and analysis techniques, I introduce my positionality as a researcher. Attending to the practice of reflexivity facilitated an understanding of how my subjectivity and privilege influenced the research; this summary contextualises this aspect of the study for readers (Cote-Meek, 2014).

#### **3.1.1 Researcher positionality**

I am a white settler. My heritage is Scottish and a mixture of other European ancestries. I spent my early years on Robinson-Huron and Robinson-Superior Treaty

territory in Ontario, and today I am grateful to live and work as an uninvited visitor on traditional and unceded Coast Salish territory in the province now known as British Columbia. Some Indigenous scholars question how researchers of settler origins might respectfully conduct research alongside Indigenous peoples (Wilson, 2008; Tuhiwai Smith, 2012; Kovach, 2021). My decision to conduct this research and to participate in the talking circle drew on Barkaskas and Gladwin's (2021) vision of talking circles as potential sites of decolonising activity. This demanded reflecting on my positionality by acknowledging the seen and unseen privilege that being a white settler has provided me throughout my life in all areas of colonized society, particularly in the area of education. It required decentring myself (Olsen, 2018) and my privileged experiences with academic integrity and engaging in active, respectful listening (Barkaskas and Gladwin, 2021) to the stories, experiences, and perspectives shared in the circle. I was not always successful in achieving this aim; the work of decentring and decolonising my own worldview continues.

### **3.1.2 Purpose**

This study explored Indigenous perspectives of academic integrity in post-secondary institutions in British Columbia. The two research questions that guided this study are:

RQ1: How do Indigenous graduates, staff, and faculty in post-secondary institutions in British Columbia perceive academic integrity?

RQ2: How do Indigenous graduates, staff, and faculty in post-secondary institutions in British Columbia conceptualise academic integrity in art form?

### **3.2 Research design and methods**

As this exploratory study aimed to elicit participants' culturally embedded perspectives on academic integrity, a qualitative approach was used to investigate the research questions (Denzin and Lincoln, 2018). In considering the data collection options, it was essential to acknowledge the exploitative and destructive history of research on Indigenous peoples. The chosen methods for this study are predicated on relational elements common to Indigenous epistemologies (Kovach, 2019). They were selected

with the aim of disrupting the painful reverberations of colonial history and contributing to the ongoing work of decolonising academic research. Therefore, this research employed two qualitative methods of data collection: talking circle and art-based inquiry. These methods challenge Eurocentric norms in research, focalise Indigenous ways of knowing and being, and begin to shift educational paradigms towards equitable systems (Wilson, 2008; Hammond *et al.*, 2018).

### **3.2.1 Talking circle**

The narrative data for this study were collected through a talking circle session. Steeped in protocol, talking circles provide a culturally safe environment for Indigenous people to share from the heart, mind, body, and spirit (Lavallée, 2009). Though similar to focus groups, talking circles create intentional space for all members to participate, reducing the likelihood of one individual dominating the conversation, and opening up opportunities for disparate opinions (Tachine *et al.*, 2016). In the circle, speaking, listening, and mindfulness encourage an environment where all members (including the facilitators) are equal. Whilst this method is not found in all Indigenous contexts, the format was familiar to the participants in this study, and an atmosphere of equality and trust quickly enveloped the circle. As the conversation progressed around the circle, individual perspectives and stories generated a momentum of reflection, and themes naturally emerged. As is common in talking circle protocols, the circle continued until all participants had expressed their perspectives fully and the conversation came to a natural conclusion.

Congruent with relational epistemologies and respect for local protocol, I offered each talking circle participant a cedar bundle to acknowledge the insights being shared. This also symbolised my commitment to honour the voices of the participants and steward the knowledge 'in a good way' (traditional teaching cited by Kovach, 2021, p.57).

### **3.2.2 Art-based inquiry**

Art-based inquiry is a participatory action research method that can expound on otherwise hidden themes (Wang *et al.*, 2017). In many Indigenous cultures, the creation and use of artistic forms is infused into all aspects of daily and spiritual life

(Muirhead and de Leeuw, 2012). In this study, the art-based inquiry provided an opportunity for participants to express shared views of academic integrity in a motif of culturally relevant imagery. Although the group collectively agreed that adding text to the artwork enhanced meaning, they preferred the circular, rather than hierarchical, arrangement of words.

### **3.3 Ethics**

Cohen *et al.* (2018) underscore the ethical imperative to ensure research does not cause harm to participants. In this qualitative study, respecting Indigenous ways of working and researching together was essential to avoiding harm. Prospective participants received a plain language information sheet that outlined the purpose of the research, expectations and potential risks, and the right to withdraw without penalty (see Appendix C). They also received a privacy notice, informed consent document (see Appendix D), and guiding questions to review prior to agreeing to participate (see Appendix E). Confidentiality was respected throughout the study, data were stored securely, and participants were de-identified in this written work; however, participants were informed that anonymity may be compromised due to the small sample size. Participants were provided with contact information for support services available within the institution and externally in the event they experienced distress during or after the talking circle. Appropriate precautions were taken to safeguard the health and safety of the participants and researcher, and the study was conducted in accordance with provincial health orders in place at the time. Ethics approval was granted by Salish College and the University of Glasgow (see Appendix F).

In addition to ethical considerations for the physical and mental wellbeing of the participants, every aspect of this research was predicated on an ethic of honouring and respecting Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and collaborating. In an Indigenous research context, offering a gift to participants is a respectful way of entering into a reciprocal relationship (Wilson, 2008). At the talking circle, I offered each participant a cedar bundle. Amongst Indigenous nations across North America, cedar is one of the four sacred medicines: tobacco, sage, cedar, and sweetgrass. Although cedar offerings are acceptable in the local context, for many Indigenous groups, tobacco is commonly

revered as the most sacred (Indigenous Corporate Training, 2012). Recognising the history of harm done to Indigenous Peoples through research and in acknowledgement of the sacredness of the gift of Indigenous knowledges, I originally planned to offer ceremonial tobacco to the participants. This inclusion aligns with the principles of the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS2) (Canadian Institutes of Health Research, 2018a), which is the authoritative guideline for ethical research in Canada, and which specifically addresses research involving First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples.

The use of tobacco was approved by Salish College but was initially rejected by the School of Education Ethics Committee at the University of Glasgow due to a perceived risk of harm. However, rather than protecting against hypothetical harms, this prohibition presented a risk of harm to relationships with Indigenous community members through colonial paternalism. The matter was escalated to the University Ethics Committee; following subsequent reviews and consultation with a third-party university research ethics board in Canada, the use of tobacco was ultimately approved. Although the timing of the approval prevented the offering of tobacco to the participants until after the data collection had been completed, this process advanced efforts to decolonise research practices, and set a precedent for future research at the primary institution. I commend the University for engaging in the work of decolonising research practices and creating further opportunities for respectful collaboration with Indigenous peoples. I am ashamed for the decades of abuse Indigenous Peoples have endured at the hands of ignorant and unscrupulous White researchers, and I celebrated this approval with a mixture of joy and tears. Above all, I raise my hands in thanks to the participants in this research for accepting my humble offering and welcoming me into the circle.

### **3.4 Sampling and participants**

Participants were recruited through convenience and non-probability snowball sampling techniques. In qualitative research, snowball sampling provides an effective strategy for reaching potential participants when the applicable population is few in number, or when initial contact requires an established relationship and trust

(Atkinson and Flint, 2001). As noted in the Tri-Council Policy statement on Research Involving the First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples of Canada (Canadian Institutes of Health Research, 2018b), obtaining the support and assistance of local Indigenous community members is essential to recruitment. Therefore, the Indigenous Education office at Salish College provided a vital point of contact between the researcher and prospective participants. Participants received invitations to participate in the study through email and were encouraged to forward the invitation to others.

Five of the six individuals who responded to the invitation participated in the study. Whilst the small sample size limits the generalisability of the findings, the size is appropriate to the aims of the study and reflects the demographic characteristics of Indigenous populations in post-secondary institutions. The participants ranged in age from 35 years to older than 55 years. Two participants were employees from the Indigenous Education office, one was an instructor, one was in administration leadership, and one was a graduate of the institution. Participants self-identified their Indigenous ancestry and gender identity. The participants expressly noted that their opinions are their own; they do not speak on behalf of their nations. The demographic data of the participants are outlined in Table 1.

*Table 1: Participants in Indigenous perspectives of academic integrity study*

<b>Pseudonym</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Indigenous Ancestry</b>
Cedar	F	Indigenous Education staff	Heiltsuk
Clem	M	Administration leadership	Cree-Métis
Dakota	F	Graduate	Cree-Métis
Joseph	M	Indigenous Education leadership	Mohawk
Rainbow	F	Faculty	Tsimshian

### **3.5 Data collection and analysis**

#### **3.5.1 Data collection**

As is appropriate in many Indigenous contexts, I began the talking circle with a land acknowledgement. Acknowledging the land is a mindful way to honour the Indigenous stewards of the land, both historically and presently (Daigle, 2019). The transcription of the land acknowledgement can be found in Appendix B. Following the land acknowledgement, the talking circle session was opened with a blessing by one of the Indigenous participants. The opening blessing facilitated an environment of cultural safety and established a tone of respect (Kurtz, 2013). To ensure the talking circle proceeded in accordance with applicable protocols, an Indigenous co-facilitator was present to assist with the overall format. Following the recommendations of Riessman (2008), a series of open-ended questions provided a focal point for the conversation in the talking circle, though in keeping with the nature of participatory research and talking circle protocols, the topics moved fluidly in collaboration with participants.

#### **3.5.2 Data analysis**

Throughout this study, maintaining the integrity of participants' perspectives was vital. Research integrity and validity can be supported through member checking, which improves the accuracy of data and analysis through the iterative process of reviewing, confirming, and reaching consensus on the content and conclusions of the research (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Caretta and Pérez, 2019). This relational strategy is consistent with Indigenous paradigms, and honours the principles of OCAP® (FNIGC, 2019): ownership, control, access, and possession. These principles affirm that Indigenous Peoples 'have control over data collection processes, and that they own and control how this information can be used' (FNIGC, 2019, p.2). In this research, the transcriptions from the talking circles were returned to participants for correction and verification (Kanu, 2011). To investigate recurring themes, the approved transcripts and the final piece of artwork were analysed through an iterative process of initial coding and focused coding. As Braun and Clarke (2006) explain, coding in qualitative inquiry is an organic process of organising data into meaningful categories. In the initial



coding phase, in vivo coding provided an appropriate technique to honour the voices of the participants and attune the analysis to their perspectives (Saldaña, 2021). Insights uncovered in the first round of coding were refined through repeated readings of the transcripts and examination of the artwork, along with continuous reflection on my personal bias and subjectivity (Creswell and Poth, 2018). In the focused coding phase, the initial codes were recoded to capture the most salient concepts. Subsequently, subcodes were added to two of the focused codes to further elucidate these categories.

Once the coding phases were complete, I reviewed the focused codes and subcodes to reflect on the relationship between the revealed codes and the research questions (Srivastava and Hopwood, 2009). This facilitated a refocussing of the codes into broader themes (Braun and Clarke, 2006). This analysis revealed three central themes: (i) integrity as a holistic concept, (ii) barriers and constructs that break the circle of integrity, and (iii) ways to repair the broken circle. These themes serve as the foundation for exploring the research findings. The focused codes, subcodes, and themes deduced from the analysis process along with sample excerpts from the transcripts can be found in Appendix A.

## **Chapter 4 – Research Findings**

### **4.1 Introduction to the findings**

This study explored Indigenous perspectives of academic integrity in a post-secondary environment in Canada. Through talking circle and art-based inquiry methods, Indigenous faculty, staff, and graduates underscored the significance of holism and relationships in many Indigenous worldviews. Using the participants' imagery of the Medicine Wheel as a framework, this chapter reviews three complex themes that emerged: integrity as a holistic concept, barriers and constructs that break the circle of integrity, and ways to repair the broken circle.

## 4.2 Integrity: the Medicine Wheel circle

As a precursor to exploring the participants' perspectives of academic integrity, it was important to consider how this term is viewed in Indigenous cultures. For the participants, it was immediately apparent that separating academic integrity from the broader concept of integrity was impossible. As Rainbow stated, 'integrity can never be separate', 'it's always with me'. In the Sm'algyax language of the Tsimshian people, Rainbow combined the words 'ayaawx', meaning law, and 'adaawx', meaning truth-telling, to explain the concept of integrity. Whilst these simplified English translations fail to capture the deeply rooted ancestral and spiritual importance of these words, they convey the solemn importance of integrity. Similarly, Dakota used the Cree word 'tâpwêwin', meaning speaking the truth, to relate to the concept of integrity. Noting that she had been taught the traditional seven teachings at an early age, Dakota described integrity as 'something you try and embody...it's a way of being in the world'.

The inseparable nature of integrity was also reflected in the artwork created by the participants. Reinforcing the view that integrity is a holistic concept, the participants chose the circular model of the Medicine Wheel to conceptualise academic integrity (see Figure 1). Whilst it is important to note that not all First Nations, Métis, or Inuit reference the Medicine Wheel in their teachings, the participants unanimously adopted it as an appropriate framework for this study. The imagery of the Medicine Wheel and the symbols, colours, and words selected for the artwork convey two key concepts associated with academic integrity: relationship to people and relationship to knowledge.

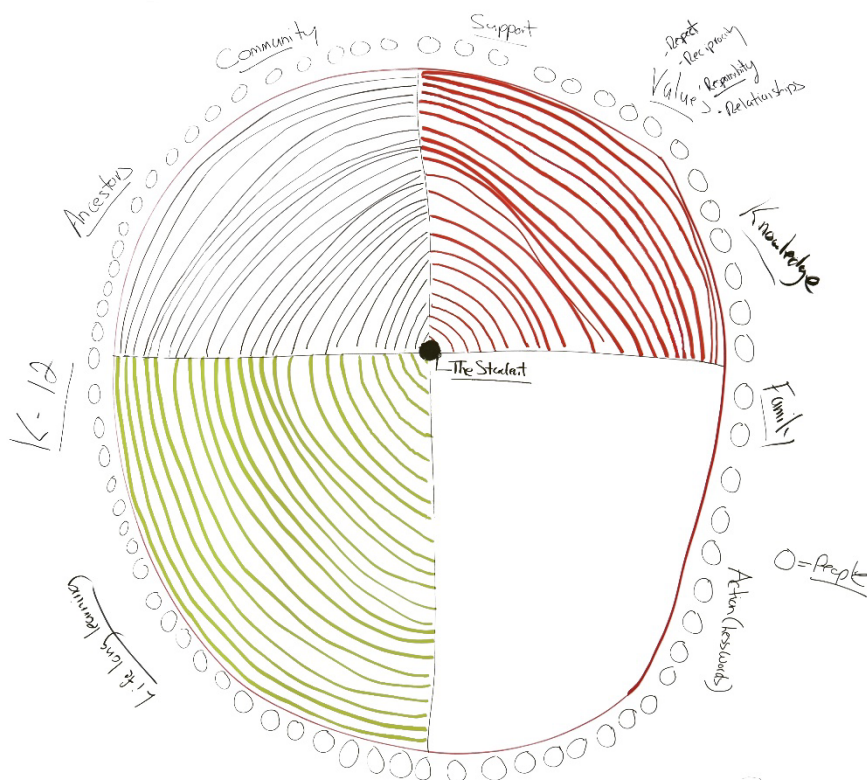


Figure 1: The Medicine Wheel as a holistic model of academic integrity

#### 4.2.1 Relationship to people

The Medicine Wheel circle is divided into four coloured quadrants: black, red, yellow, and white. Joseph explained the colours ‘represent everybody...how we’re all connected.’ Cedar echoed this notion, saying, ‘We’re all one.’ Encompassing the circle, the participants drew a perimeter of smaller circles representing people and ‘the importance of acknowledging our ancestors, that they are behind us and with us’. The constant presence of the ancestors was particularly tangible to Rainbow, who remarked, ‘I have all the ancestors behind me right now as I sit in a circle; they’re all with me.’ She further commented on the responsibility to honour the ancestors in academic work through truth telling and giving credit to those who passed on the knowledge. However, giving credit in academic work to knowledge holders who passed down teachings through oral tradition posed some challenges. Rainbow recalled being told by an instructor that putting the teachings of her great grandmother in quotation

marks in her assignment was insufficient; she needed to back up the claims with verifiable evidence. Her solution was to retain the quotation from her great grandmother, and to find an additional source that would validate the information. 'I would write, find somebody like Marie Battiste [who] said something similar to what my great grandmother had already taught me, way before I ever heard of Marie Battiste...that's how I worked with that.' Other participants had experiences with instructors who were more receptive to oral teachings. When Dakota referenced the oral teachings of an Elder of the Métis community in one of her assignments, her instructor 'was fine with it', and did not request further academic evidence.

For the participants, honouring relationships included being humble and treating others with respect. Rainbow situated respect within the laws of the Tsimshian people. 'The laws are simple. They were respect for all. Not just respect, but love, kindness.' Joseph agreed, reminiscing 'that's something that my mom has always taught me' and adding that humility is an essential value. In an academic setting, the participants agreed that instructors must be able to combine humility and honesty. In particular, being able to admit a mistake or acknowledge not having all the answers was viewed as an important part of integrity in the relationship between instructors and students. From a staff member's perspective, Cedar emphasised the importance of treating students with respect. In her view, academic integrity is strongly related to the responsibility of all members of the institution to act consistently and fairly towards students. Regarding institutional integrity, she commented, 'We all need to be invested and continuing to pave the way for our young people, not just the strong ones...but those who are sitting in the back of the room'.

Bringing the circle of relationships together, the participants added one final individual at the centre of the Medicine Wheel: the student. As Cedar explained, 'in the very centre is you. It always begins with your academic integrity, the values.' Drawing on the wisdom of her great grandmother, Rainbow remarked that 'your words and your actions ripple out and affects [sic] everybody'. Using the Medicine Wheel as a framework, the participants illustrated the relationships between ancestors, community, family, students, and the interconnected responsibilities in honouring those connections.

#### 4.2.2 Relationship to knowledge

Building on the theme of relationships, the participants discussed academic integrity in terms of a relationship to knowledge. Returning to the holistic view of integrity, Clem succinctly noted, 'integrity at its core is about relationships.' In an academic context, he continued, 'It's not about academics, it's about knowledge, and it's a relationship with the knowledge...why we don't know something is that we don't yet have a relationship with that knowledge.' The group concurred, noting that most students aspire to develop that relationship. Clem summarised, 'We have that misplaced notion that there's a desire to be dishonest in our relationship with knowledge. I think that's much more the exception than the rule.' The participants agreed that a student who has engaged in academic misconduct by intentionally submitting work that is not their own has not demonstrated a relationship with the knowledge. As Clem articulated, 'if you don't have a relationship to the knowledge then it's not right that you just put someone else's stuff in and say, "I've satisfied that connection to the knowledge."'"

As demonstrated by the Medicine Wheel artwork, the participants viewed knowledge as part of the same circle of interconnected relationships as the ancestors, family, and community. One's relationship with knowledge, then, is intimately connected to the people who shared the knowledge. For Clem, demonstrating a relationship to knowledge equally requires demonstrating a relationship to the knowledge holders. 'How do they relate to those that have passed that knowledge on? That's where it becomes much more dynamic, much more tied to community.' When viewed as 'living, breathing content', Clem explained, knowledge is 'not a fixed thing'. Exploring this further, he explained:

It comes right down to language for me because language, the English language, is built around nouns and possessives. Indigenous languages are more commonly built around verbs: relationships. It's that distinction that really breaks things down because we get so fixed on 'mine, I possess this.' It's something that's fixed and therefore owned, and that includes words and ideas. That dismisses, in my mind, the relationship that we have with that knowledge and who passed that on,

and where they came from. It does come down to integrity; it comes back to integrity. Academic is a term we use, but it's knowledge. And it's how we relate to that knowledge and who are the stewards of that knowledge.

The participants considered respectful stewardship of knowledge as essential to demonstrating a relationship with the knowledge. This relational approach to knowledge, however, was often challenged in the participants' experiences in post-secondary education.

### **4.3 Breaking the circle**

The participants identified several factors that could break the circle of academic integrity. Often recounting personal experiences, they discussed barriers and pressures associated with participation in post-secondary education and provided insights into the colonial constructs of academic integrity.

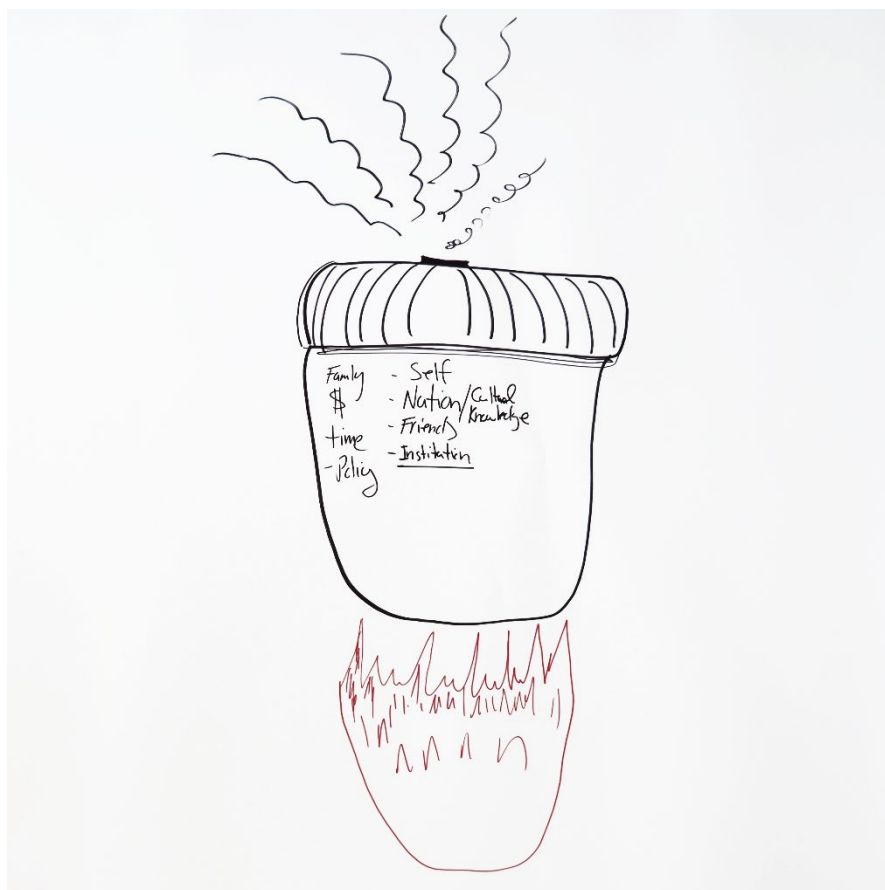
#### **4.3.1 Barriers and pressures**

The transition from high school to post-secondary, for many of the participants, was a challenging and lonely experience. As the first individual in her family to graduate from high school and the first to enter post-secondary, Dakota recalled, 'I had to figure out a lot on my own.' This included navigating a complex and stressful funding process.

I was funded for part of my education...but it was a lot of, you know, you have to maintain a certain grade point average, et cetera. You have to do progress reports. And just the process of applying is slow. It's like watching paint dry sometimes when you're like, 'Okay, am I going to find out? School's set to start in six weeks. Am I going to find out if I'm getting funded for it? Do I have to sell something to try and pay tuition?' So, it's a process that's really bureaucratic and sometimes slow. And that's before you're even getting into school...you have to maintain your GPA, you have to keep on top of your progress reports, if you need school supplies, you'd have to submit. And then they have their fiscal

year and...if their fiscal year of funding lapses in the middle of your studies, well, then you have to reapply again and then you have to wait. And it's just this whole process that really detracts from and takes away from your mental reserves that you have to [have] to be a student. Let alone all other life issues.

The 'other life issues' mentioned by participants included caring for children, needing an extended absence to attend a funeral in a home community, and finding and retaining meaningful employment. In a separate piece of artwork, the participants portrayed the stresses felt by Indigenous students as ingredients in a pressure cooker (see Figure 2).



*Figure 2: Pressures Indigenous students in post-secondary education face depicted as ingredients in a pressure cooker*

In addition to finances, family, friends, and time pressures, the participants identified educational institutions and policies as sources of stress. Whilst some students may

feel pressure from family members to succeed in post-secondary, others may feel ostracised. Rainbow's cousin, for example, called her a traitor for pursuing education in a colonial institution. Finally, the participants included one's self, one's nation or community, and cultural knowledge amongst the list of pressures. The addition of cultural knowledge, Clem explained, acknowledged that Indigenous students may demonstrate knowledge in ways that differ from Eurocentric norms. This creates pressure on students to conform to academic norms or defend different ways of demonstrating knowledge.

Financial barriers prevented success for three Indigenous students in one of Rainbow's courses. When face-to-face instruction was suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the course, including mandatory attendance, transitioned online. However, Rainbow recounted, 'None of them had internet in their homes. Sure, we could get them a laptop or computer, but we couldn't give them that connection.' The three students were unable to fulfil the attendance requirement. At the directive of her supervisor, Rainbow was required to give the students a grade of incomplete in the course, which resulted in their inability to complete the programme. When courses resumed, one of the students did not return. For Rainbow, the enforced inflexibility of attendance requirements despite financial and digital inequities represented an institutional failure to uphold academic integrity.

Despite financial concerns, Dakota felt encouraged by her community to attend post-secondary. However, this was accompanied by a personal sense of responsibility to succeed.

A lot of the Elders in the community...would say 'Go to college, go to university; that's your ticket out.' And it's a lot of pressure. You feel like, 'Okay, I have to do this because if I don't, it's almost like this is emblematic of a failure. If I fail at this, I'm failing on behalf of all other Aboriginal students.' You just you feel like you have to represent.

The ability to be successful, however, may be hindered by a lack of preparedness. Drawing on his experience in the compulsory education sector, Joseph expressed



concern over policies designed to improve graduation rates amongst Indigenous students.

There's such a push to get graduates out. I worked in the K to 12 sector, and they would bring in an enhancement agreement. 'We[']ve] got to increase numeracy. We[']ve] got to increase reading and writing. We[']ve] got to increase graduation rates.' They would put that in writing, and now they're focused on having this come to fruition. And what was happening was, individuals were just starting to get pushed along the system. ...I remember working with a grade 11 student [who] was struggling. An assessment was done, and it was highlighted that the student had a grade 4 reading and writing level. How does this student get to grade 11, then?

The participants' stories revealed that even students who had done well in high school could struggle with the expectations of college and university. Reflecting on the difficult transition many Indigenous students experience when they enter post-secondary, Dakota remarked:

It's such a hard thing to deal with when you enter academia. When you're coming from oral traditions, there are linguistic differences...and then suddenly, you're having to write in APA format or...you're having to provide citations in the correct place. ...It's like being a student is its own profession. I feel like that just takes a lot of energy and attention away from the actual learning process. And it doesn't really serve your own personal end, which is to gain knowledge.

For the participants, stepping into the post-secondary institution meant adjusting to a new social and academic environment. In addition to facing financial burdens and the expectations of family and community, they struggled to understand and comply with unfamiliar academic norms. In particular, the participants noted a disconnect between the colonial dictates of academic integrity and Indigenous ways of connecting to people and knowledge.

### 4.3.2 Colonial constructs of academic integrity

Whilst the participants did not condone academic misconduct, there was a prevailing perspective that academic integrity policies disrupt the process of creating a relationship with knowledge. For students engaging with knowledge from oral traditions, the requirement to follow standardised referencing systems may create a barrier to demonstrating a relationship with the knowledge. As Rainbow had experienced, instructors may require students to substantiate oral teachings with references that conform to Eurocentric norms. This 'disservice', Clem elucidated, 'force[s] us to do workarounds'. Similarly, the dictates of academic writing conventions may exclude Indigenous 'ways to reflect knowledge'. Reflecting on changes in post-secondary institutions over the last 35 years, Clem noted a shift in attention from engaging with knowledge to 'hunting for breaches'. He attributed this shift, in part, to protective manoeuvring on the part of the institution:

When a dominant paradigm...comes under pressure because of different cultures coming to Canada...the natural instinct will be to actually retrench and protect, and [in] my opinion, what you're seeing is a sense to double down and protect this. Because as we are, as a system, starting to explore and think about decolonization, those are things where you can anchor it. Because if you anchor down in the APA, if you anchor down on those things, you're essentially protecting a Western knowledge construct, you are protecting a sentence structure, you're embedding and entrenching, like law, like a contract: this is how you shall communicate. ...And communication...is at the roots of knowledge, at the roots of meaning. And so, if you fix communication so rigidly, you're essentially protecting that Western knowledge.

Cedar concurred, referring to academic integrity policies as 'a colonial checkmark'. The policies, Clem commented, reinforce colonial constructs of textual ownership: 'You can't touch it; you can't modify it. It's mine. It's therefore sacrosanct and it ends up becoming an overweight sense of self within the academic space.' This 'fixation of the educational profession' may detract from developing a relationship with knowledge.

Further, the participants viewed the policies as irrelevant to many students' future goals. Clem commented, 'It isn't necessarily a fixation of the professions they're going into...the metric to be [successful] is going to be found in the field, in the preceptorship, in the clinicals...academic integrity has nothing to do with that.'

The participants identified further elements of colonial approaches in the methods typically used to convey and enforce academic integrity expectations. Joseph recalled receiving information from his post-secondary institution at the beginning of the semester. 'It was right at the forefront, and it just came out all of a sudden. I felt like, "Are you telling me that I'm dishonest from the get-go?" It put a fear in me, even though...I've never cheated, and I've never plagiarised.' Similarly, Dakota felt the information she received was 'imposing' and 'very one-sided'. Whilst the participants did not have personal experiences of receiving sanctions for academic misconduct, they felt that punitive responses were 'counterproductive'. Dakota expressed concern that punitive approaches mirrored what many Indigenous people face in the justice system; 'What does someone really learn from that?'. The participants agreed that responses to academic misconduct should promote the students' relationship with knowledge and build community.

#### **4.4 Repairing the circle**

Returning to the holistic concept of integrity, the participants made several recommendations for improving institutional approaches to academic integrity. Their collective vision for the future reveals an underlying emphasis on relationship with knowledge and others.

At a foundational level, Clem recommended critically evaluating existing academic integrity policies by asking 'Why is this needed?'. Current policies at Salish College, he suggested, are too in-depth to have the same relevancy in all departments. Faculty members in individual programmes can detach themselves from responsibility by deflecting blame on 'this anonymous college that has caused this harm'. Similarly, Joseph remarked that the academic integrity policy 'seems like it's to have something that [faculty] can go to, flip open the page and say, "Oh, you did this wrong. This is

what needs to happen.” In this respect, the academic integrity policy becomes a mechanism to label students as ‘academically honest’ or ‘academically dishonest’. ‘To label’, Joseph commented, ‘is just so black and white.’ To better reflect the academic requirements of each programme, Clem reasoned, ‘It’s better to keep your policy fairly light and open.’ This would shift responsibility to the programme areas, requiring them to establish guidelines relevant to the specific subject matter and educational goals.

When an academic integrity violation has been confirmed, the participants preferred relational solutions over punitive measures. As a graduate from Salish College, Dakota felt instructors have a responsibility to uncover the intent behind the behaviour. Taking time to find out the reasons why a student engaged in academic misconduct may reveal situational pressures or expose areas where the student could benefit from additional support. Even if the student admitted to intentional misconduct, Dakota felt it was important to give the student a second chance to demonstrate their knowledge. From a faculty perspective, Rainbow concurred, suggesting that academic integrity violations present a ‘teachable moment’. Recounting how she had dealt with cases of plagiarism in the past, she recommended using alternate assessments and an empathetic approach, even if this did not adhere to the policy. Referring students to the Indigenous Students Centre, Cedar remarked, can help students talk through the pressures they are experiencing and connect with resources such as counselling and disability services.

The participants also discussed the potential usefulness of applying a restorative justice model in response to academic integrity violations. Rainbow noted that the restorative process ensures all involved parties accept appropriate responsibility, and Dakota appreciated that students could be reintegrated into the academic community. Drawing on his experience with an apology ceremony, Clem saw value in restoring relationships through this highly relational process. However, Clem cautioned that, if used inappropriately, restorative justice could reinforce colonial norms. ‘We have to make sure that [it] is truly a harm that has been caused and that the harm isn’t because of an imposition we have.’ If a student has received a charge of academic misconduct because ‘we’re restricting the way in which that knowledge is collected, or determined, or measured...that’s our harm.’ The participants agreed that it is essential

to ascertain the students' intent before selecting an appropriate response to academic misconduct.

Finally, the participants remarked on the strengths of Indigenous students, which they feel are often overlooked in the post-secondary environment. For many Indigenous students, entering higher education involves stepping into a different culture. Often, they must navigate this cultural space in a language that is not the one used at home. The participants reflected on the tension that students may feel, and the concern that it is necessary to abandon one culture in order to survive in the other. Rainbow noted that this can be particularly difficult for two-spirited individuals, whose identities fall outside of gender binaries. Clem affirmed the strength of Indigenous students who endure these challenges: 'You're stronger for having the ability to be multilingual; having two worlds.' Likewise, Indigenous knowledge and practices are founded on unacknowledged wisdom and disregarded rights. Clem stressed, 'We have a liminal right above and beyond everything else, above and beyond Western knowledge.' Acknowledging, celebrating, and learning from the strengths and rights of Indigenous faculty, staff, administrators, and students could help repair the ruptures in the academic integrity circle.

## **Chapter 5 – Discussion**

### **5.1 Introduction to the discussion**

This exploratory study examined Indigenous perspectives of academic integrity in a post-secondary institution in Canada. This chapter seeks to interpret key findings in relation to relevant literature with particular emphasis on the ways in which Indigenous views may align with or challenge common Eurocentric approaches to academic integrity. Accordingly, this section discusses a holistic vision of integrity, factors that impede Indigenous students from upholding academic integrity, and perspectives on responding to academic misconduct with integrity.

## 5.2 Relationally oriented integrity

Salish College, like other post-secondary institutions across Canada, uses words such as honesty, truth, and respect to describe the values of academic integrity. Likewise, the Indigenous participants in this study stressed the importance of these same words in reference to integrity. This shared vocabulary demonstrates synergies between Indigenous and Eurocentric concepts of academic integrity, yet the perspectives shared in this study suggest that there remains a disconnect in the inherent beliefs associated with these terms. To comprehend this dissonance, these words must be understood within the context of Indigenous epistemological spaces. Whitebear (personal communication cited in Younging, 2018) explains, 'When Indigenous people talk to each other, we have our own ways of thinking and knowing. We understand each other. I can *hear* what an Indigenous person is really saying, what they actually mean. Non-indigenous people don't have that context' (p.4, emphasis in original). To hear and understand Indigenous perspectives of academic integrity, then, it is essential to contextualise the underlying meanings ascribed to integrity and its associated values.

The concept of interconnectedness featured prominently in both elements of this qualitative study. The image of humanity embraced within the Medicine Wheel circle and surrounded by the ancestors foregrounds the connectivity that is common to many Indigenous ontologies (Carr-Stewart, 2019). As Opaskwayak Cree scholar and lecturer Wilson (2008) explains, 'relationships do not merely shape reality, they are reality' (p.7). Often articulated as seven generational thinking, relationships and the reality they form are understood to extend seven generations into the past and future (Styres, 2017). Knowledge acquisition exists within this circular construct of time and relationships, which includes relationships with all beings and the land (Tanaka, 2015). Accordingly, the way we interact with knowledge today has implications on relationships with past and future generations.

For students, viewing academic integrity through a relational lens may fortify their connection to knowledge keepers of the past and the future. By honouring and acknowledging that connection in academic work, they prioritise community and

demonstrate respect for relationships with others. Likewise, in connecting to those who passed on the knowledge, students create a connection to the knowledge. As the participants explained, it is this 'relationship with the knowledge' that actualises learning. Wilson and Hughes (2019) note that '[k]nowledge participates in this relationship' (p.9). This agentic view echoes one participant's description of knowledge as 'living, breathing content', which exists not only within cognitive spaces, but emerges from 'experiential understanding; sensory, emotional, and spiritual knowing; intuition; dreams; and cultural knowing' (Wilson and Hughes, 2019, p.11). These Indigenous perspectives of knowledge in relationship challenge dominant paradigms of knowledge ownership. Wilson (2008) affirms, 'if knowledge is formed in a relationship, it can't be owned. ...The idea belongs to the cosmos, to all of the relations that it has formed' (p.114). In this context, integrity is realised through accountability to the interconnected relationships with knowledge, people, and the land.

When integrity is envisioned as part of a relational landscape, it is important to acknowledge the responsibilities of all parties. Participants in this study remarked that academic institutions, like students, must also commit to honouring relationships. In the holistic worldview depicted by the participants and reflected in the literature, relationally oriented integrity permeates all aspects of life. Blackfoot scholar and lecturer Lindstrom (2022) explains, 'I do not differentiate between academic integrity, social integrity or spiritual integrity' (p.126). Therefore, faculty, staff, and administrators demonstrate integrity through respectful relationships with colleagues and students in all interactions. For the faculty member participant, demonstrating respect for her students included acting with humility and being willing to admit mistakes. Commenting on discrepancies in perceived fairness and biased decision-making towards Indigenous students, administrator and participant Cedar pleaded for consistency in applying policies. This holistic view aligns with Bertram Gallant's (2008) appeal to '[attend] not just to the rule compliance or integrity of the individual student or student population but to the integrity of the institutional environment as a whole' (p.88). Yet the participants presented a vision of academic integrity that extends beyond the confines of the institution; it transcends individual responsibility and encircles the generations of interconnected relationships. In this way, academic

integrity includes the integrity of the student, the integrity of the institution, and the social, spiritual, and ecological responsibilities associated with those relationships.

### **5.3 Impediments to integrity**

Previous research has associated personal, social, academic, and financial pressures with increased tendencies to engage in academic misconduct (Christensen Hughes and McCabe, 2006; McCabe, 2016; Awosoga *et al.*, 2021b). Echoing these factors, the participants identified finances, family, friends, time, and policies as sources of stress. This aligns with previous research in which financial issues were identified as the main obstacle preventing Indigenous students from completing post-secondary education, in addition to challenges associated with family life, studying, and having to leave the local community (Environics Institute, 2011). Adding new perspectives to the literature, the participants also included self, nation, cultural knowledge, and the institution as ingredients in the figurative pressure cooker of student stress (see Figure 2). Despite experiencing these pressures, the participants reported personally adhering to the principles of academic integrity throughout their education. Nevertheless, they affirmed that pressure may be a contributing factor to student academic misconduct. Whilst further research is required to confirm a causative effect of these elements on academic misconduct amongst Indigenous students, this section outlines key points of consideration.

Echoing cautionary voices in the literature (Zwagerman, 2008; Pecorari, 2010; Moore Howard, 2016; Strangfeld, 2019), the participants in this study challenged dichotomized views of honest and dishonest students. Delving deeper into the differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous perspectives, this section explores contrasting views of the prevalence of academic misconduct, the cultural context of academic integrity policies, and the presumed norms of discourse communities.

#### **5.3.1 Similar yet different pressures**

The similarities in pressures faced by Indigenous and non-Indigenous students may appear to provide opportunities for institutions to employ widescale support



measures. However, an uncritically homogenous approach is likely to overlook the unique vulnerabilities of Indigenous students. For example, although research in Canadian institutions highlights lack of understanding around academic integrity policies as a source of anxiety amongst students (Christensen Hughes and McCabe, 2006; Eaton, 2017; Bens, 2022), these studies conceal the complex reasons for Indigenous students' unpreparedness. Recent research demonstrates that secondary schools across the country have inconsistent and often paltry approaches to academic integrity education and policy (Stoesz, 2022). Undoubtedly, this contributes to the lack of preparedness for many students entering post-secondary, but additional factors specifically disfavour Indigenous learners. In particular, the legacy of the residential school system continues to affect educational outcomes for Indigenous Peoples through ongoing patterns of disadvantage. Under resourced, overcrowded, and poorly funded schools create impoverished educational opportunities for students on reserves (Craft and Regan, 2020). Additionally, many First Nations communities do not have secondary schools, forcing students to leave their homes in order to complete compulsory education (AFN, 2020). Finally, as one participant noted, efforts to increase Indigenous participation in post-secondary education have included the province's Indigenous Enhancement Agreements (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2022). Whilst these agreements purport to advance culturally relevant measures of student success, they may shroud neoliberal ideologies that foreground statistical and economic gains. Consequently, students may be pushed through compulsory education without gaining sufficient preparation for higher learning, which may have implications for academic integrity (Brayboy and Maaka, 2015). For Indigenous students entering post-secondary environments, unfamiliarity with the expectations of academic integrity policies may be a consequence of systemically inequitable educational opportunities.

In a recent Canadian study, university students admitted they were more likely to engage in inappropriate academic behaviour when faced with personal or academic time pressures (Awosoga *et al.*, 2021b). Although time limitations may enervate most students, the intersection of time and family responsibilities may present a particular challenge for Indigenous students, thus creating further risks to maintaining academic

integrity. The participants noted that Indigenous protocols and relational values may require students to be absent for extended periods of time. This reflects the salience of interconnectedness in Indigenous worldviews and aligns with a previous report that inflexible schedules and attendance policies create barriers for Indigenous learners' participation (Steel and Fahy, 2011). Accordingly, the Indigenous women in Kenny's (2002) qualitative study recommended that educational institutions 'accommodate cultural leave as required for elaborate funerals and cultural events' (p.60). Adopting such recommendations may alleviate some of the pressures that provoke academic misconduct.

Likewise, whilst financial pressure has been identified as a precipitating factor for academic misconduct amongst diverse post-secondary students (Awosoga *et al.*, 2021b), the sources and processes of obtaining funding for Indigenous learners can create particular strain (EnviroNics Institute, 2011; Herkimer, 2021). As one participant described, the misalignment of timelines for Indigenous student funding with institutional payment deadlines, and onerous requirements such as maintaining a specific grade point average and completing progress reports can create anxiety that challenges students' emotional and mental reserves, potentially weakening resolve to uphold integrity. Burke and Sanney (2018) explain that 'financial demands related to tuition...might lead to the perceived need to access resources in dishonest ways' (p.10). These financial pressures are compounded by disproportionately high unemployment rates amongst Indigenous peoples, the predominance of low-income occupations, inadequate government funding and discriminatory dispersal criteria, and prohibitive costs of living for learners in remote communities (TRC, 2015b; OECD, 2018). Therefore, whilst Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners may experience similar pressures in post-secondary environments, this research prompts inquiry into the potential impacts these factors have on Indigenous students' commitment to academic integrity.

### **5.3.2 Deficient or compliant**

Indigenous scholar Wilson (2008) said, 'An idea cannot be taken out of [its] relational context and still maintain its shape' (p.8). For the participants in this study, removing

academic integrity from a holistic context of relationality distorts its shape in ways that cannot be reconciled with Indigenous ways of knowing and being. The disconnect between Eurocentric and Indigenous perspectives is strikingly noted in the participants' assertion that wilful cheating is 'much more the exception than the rule'. In contrast to widely reported concerns in the literature over perceived increases in academic misconduct (Lancaster, 2019; Awosoga *et al.*, 2021a), the participants questioned the cogency of this claim. The apparent increase, one participant surmised, could be the result of institutions 'hunting for breaches'. Though the group acknowledged intentional misconduct does occur, their perspective that academic integrity is a 'fixation of the education profession' illuminates the fundamental differences between Eurocentric and Indigenous approaches to integrity. For whilst the vocabulary associated with integrity is largely shared, the motivating factors that animate integrity in academic spaces derive from very different perspectives (Kanu, 2011; Tanaka, 2015). For institutions, academic integrity policies serve to protect, regulate, and enforce principles such as honesty, trust, and respect (Eaton, 2017). In many Indigenous worldviews, integrity is foundational to being in relationships with people and knowledge; honesty, trust, and respect predicate these relationships (Kuokkanen, 2007). In this paradigm, the relevancy of a rules-based policy is questionable. The accusatory nature of many academic integrity policies, I would suggest, creates a boundary of fear that is likely to push students away. Rather than encouraging a relationship with knowledge, the policy produces either compliance with authority or avoidance of penalties. In contrast, a holistic paradigm of integrity promotes relationship (Lindstrom, 2022). Relationships with both people and knowledge are not static entities; they develop over time, they inspire loyalty, and they endure despite disappointments.

The fixation on academic integrity within post-secondary institutions is borne out of an increasingly neoliberal culture that values competitive individualism and ideologies of economic success (Apple, 2004; Shin and Csiki, 2021). Accordingly, much of the research on academic integrity reifies these norms, investigating individual student characteristics as predictors of academic misconduct and proposing competitive models, such as the honour code system, as solutions (McCabe and Trevino, 1997;

Faucher and Caves, 2009; Jurdi *et al.*, 2011; Giluk and Postlethwaite, 2015). However, as Indigenous scholar Lindstrom (2022) notes, this approach uncritically assumes 'that the institutional and ethical culture are relevant to an Indigenous paradigm' (p.126). She further cautions that focussing on individual risk factors 'essentializes students as inherently dishonest' and obfuscates institutional accountability for adhering to values that 'foster competitive individualism within a punitive academic culture' (p. 127). By deflecting responsibility onto students, institutions may engage in othering those who do not conform to Eurocentric norms. In this environment, students are socialised into normative academic culture through educative and often punitive measures. This process — which is alarmingly reminiscent of the residential school system — can force Indigenous students to learn to navigate colonised post-secondary culture whilst clinging to their Indigenous cultures and identities (Kuokkanen, 2008). Despite the cultural acuity students demonstrate in what the participants called 'living in two worlds', Indigenous 'learners are left to feel deficient in academic landscapes and unable to recognize that it is possible for them to thrive in post-secondary education' (Herkimer, 2021, p.6). These realities challenge researchers to investigate beyond individual characteristics and consider the intersectionality of academic integrity.

The participants in this study remarked that academic integrity policies tend to reflect 'black and white' reasoning. Concerned that a generic institution-wide policy does not reflect the academic requirements of each programme, the group recommended establishing discipline-specific guidelines. This resonates with academic writing expert Jamieson's (2008) view that specialised integrity policies can help students develop a relationship with words and their meaning 'rather than to fear the penalty of misuse' (p.90). The penalties associated with academic misconduct, according to the participants, also tend to be 'black and white'. This tendency is confirmed in Stoesz and Eaton's (2020) review of academic integrity policies across Canada, which found most policies emphasised punitive and legal discourse, despite criticisms of these practices (Leask, 2006; Sutherland-Smith, 2008). Although attention to student intent is evident in select policies and procedures (Benson *et al.*, 2019; University of Calgary, 2020), the majority of institutions continue to dichotomise students as either honest or dishonest and position all academic misconduct as malfeasance. This moralising

view assumes that all students have the knowledge and skills to avoid a charge of plagiarism (Pecorari, 2010), and subsumes unintentional misconduct under intentional transgressions. Yet as instructors of international students have noted, academic discourse and its associated conventions are cultural constructs (Pennycook, 1996; Leask, 2006), and appropriate writing strategies are specific to academic genres (Pecorari, 2006). In Eurocentric institutions, academic discourse often favours hierarchical structure and demeans knowledge conveyed through story work and other non-linear forms (Eaton and Burns, 2018; Gay, 2002). The assumption of 'linguistic and epistemological superiority in the academy' (Saltmarsh, 2005, p.6) presents a particular challenge for the inclusion of Indigenous oral knowledge. Most citation style guides denigrate oral teachings by reducing them to the level of personal communications (MacLeod, 2021). As one participant personally experienced, students may be required to substantiate oral teachings with references that are perceived by the institution as reputable. The inability to appropriately validate and reference oral histories, drum songs, land-based teachings, and other rich sources of Indigenous knowledge pushes Indigenous epistemologies further into the margins of academia (Lindstrom, 2022).

The dichotomized labelling of students into honest and dishonest categories disadvantages students who have underdeveloped language skills or who are unfamiliar with academic writing conventions. These students are at increased risk of misconduct; engaging in intentional plagiarism may be a strategy to survive in an unfamiliar landscape, whilst unintentional plagiarism may reflect a lack of skill (Bretag, 2016). For Indigenous students, systemic educational barriers and the requirements to conform to Eurocentric forms of academic discourse may present particular challenges to overcoming the label of 'dishonest'. The participants in this study asserted that intent should be considered when reviewing potential cases of academic misconduct. Determining intent repositions academic integrity into relational context and provides opportunities to address areas of weakness. This perspective parallels concerns scholars have expressed over institutional policies that disregard intent (Price, 2002; Howard and Robillard, 2008; Zwagerman, 2008), and potentiates educative responses to intentional and unintentional misconduct.

#### 5.4 Responding with integrity

In the neoliberal paradigm of Canadian post-secondary institutions, responses to academic misconduct tend to emphasise individual responsibility within a judicial framework (Stoesz and Eaton, 2020). When adjudicating cases of academic misconduct, institutional processes typically adhere to the legal principles of procedural fairness (Morrison and Zachariah, 2022). The findings in this study, however, illuminate ways in which this paradigm is antithetical to Indigenous ideals of relationality. The participants described academic integrity policies as ‘imposing’, ‘one-sided’, and ‘black and white’, and the corresponding punitive responses as ‘counterproductive’ and ‘colonial’. From a faculty perspective, one participant described how she felt compelled to use alternate approaches with her students, even though these did not align with the policy expectations. This echoes Indigenous scholar Lindstrom (2022), who laments that she is ‘forced to follow institutional codes that...do not necessarily address the reasons why students cheat’ (p.131). The institutionally mandated ‘punitive framework makes little sense because it does not enable me to draw on culturally appropriate models of academic integrity that would help students to feel confident or competent in their academic skills’ (Lindstrom, 2022, p.131). Although the literature provides only a glimpse into what culturally appropriate models of academic integrity might look like for Indigenous students, holistic, relational, and restorative approaches are predominant themes (Eaton, 2021; Lindstrom, 2022; Poitras Pratt and Gladue, 2022).

Noting concerns with what Price (2002) refers to as the ‘gotcha’ (p.89) approach to academic integrity enforcement, recent literature reflects an increased interest in preventative measures. Online tutorials, instructional videos, institutional web pages, writing courses, and awareness campaigns have shown promising effects on students’ knowledge, skills, and attitudes related to academic integrity (Griffith, 2013; Lowe *et al.*, 2018; Benson *et al.*, 2019; Lock *et al.*, 2019; Hanbidge *et al.*, 2020; Perkins *et al.*, 2020; McNeill, 2022). This attention to students’ unfamiliarity with the expectations of academic integrity reframes academic misconduct as a consequence of inability rather than immorality. Such strategies appear to align more closely with Indigenous perspectives, though Eaton (2021) cautions against a ‘transmissionist model’ (p.158)

that imparts rules at the expense of learning. Instructional programmes that solely inform students about the expected conventions and customs of academic integrity do not develop authorial skills. As Price (2002) comments, '[n]o written policy could give a student full knowledge of academic citation any more than memorizing a written manual could teach one how to ride a bicycle or play guitar' (p.99). Prevention that transcends a banking model of education (Freire, 1972) necessitates pedagogical approaches that give students opportunities to develop their scholarship abilities without fear of reprisal (Pecorari, 2010). This resonates with the participants' views that learning is a process of developing a relationship with knowledge and encourages educative elements that complement prevention work.

Renowned Tewa scholar Cajete (Cajete and Little Bear, 2000) describes developing academic skills as 'coming-to-know', which 'entails a journey, a process, a quest for knowledge and understanding' (p.80). Similarly, Price (2002) remarks that 'learning to avoid plagiarism is a process...not an instantaneous event' (p.104). Envisioning academic integrity as a journey towards a relationship with knowledge creates opportunities for what several participants described as teachable moments. Like the participants in this study, academic integrity expert Bertram Gallant (2008) views misconduct as a 'teaching and learning imperative' (p.27). Drawing on Mezirow (1990), an incident of academic misconduct becomes an opportunity for transformation in which the student learns to 'make sense of their experience in a helpful way that will guide their future decision making and actions, otherwise they may simply learn not to get caught' (Bertram Gallant, 2017, p.92). This transformative process may be enhanced through the support of Indigenous student centres, which research confirms have a positive effect on outcomes for students who openly identify as Indigenous (Timmons, 2013; Wesley-Esquimaux and Bolduc, 2014). This culturally relevant form of academic and social support may help prevent academic misconduct, as relationships within the academic community have been shown to mitigate risks of academic misconduct (Cole and Kiss, 2000; Stearns, 2001; Palazzo *et al.*, 2010). For Indigenous Peoples who are overrepresented in Canada's criminal justice system (Giannetta, 2021) and who often walk through the gates of post-secondary institutions carrying the weight of systemic racism and intergenerational trauma (Daniels, 2019),

redirecting academic integrity efforts away from a hierarchy of judgement and towards a transformative learning experience conceivably has relational and reconciliatory potential.

The findings of this study emphasise that for many Indigenous Peoples, transformative learning exists within a circle of interconnected relationships. When these relationships are fractured through academic misconduct, restoration necessitates a corresponding relational approach. Eschewing quasi-judicial responses, the participants remarked on the potential for restorative justice practices to offer a more culturally appropriate response model, particularly for intentional misconduct. This view is corroborated by a growing body of literature that establishes how restorative justice practices can enhance transformative learning and academic integrity in higher education (Kara and MacAlister, 2010; Moriarty and Wilson, 2022; Sopcak and Hood, 2022). Whereas preventative and educative models emphasise information sharing, the restorative justice approach seeks to foster accountability and repair trust between the individual responsible, those harmed, and the community (Watchel, 2016). The early success of restorative responses to academic misconduct at a mid-sized Canadian university presents an intriguing argument for implementing this approach as a preferred default (Sopcak and Hood, 2022). Further, the recommendation of the participants in this study and evidence in the literature (Chartrand and Horn, 2016) provides compelling incentive to explore the suitability and efficacy of restorative justice practices amongst Indigenous and non-Indigenous students.

Actuating this model in post-secondary institutions may be challenging, as the literature shows a wide continuum of opinions on the appropriateness of flexible responses to academic misconduct. Amigud and Pell's (2021) multinational survey of academic staff confirmed earlier reports that many academic integrity policies are ambiguous and may be interpreted inconsistently, leading to a disconnect between policy and practice (de Maio *et al.*, 2020; Eaton *et al.*, 2019). Further, faculty may justify non-compliance with the policies for a variety of reasons that protect themselves or their students (McCabe, 1993; Coren, 2011; Crossman, 2019). Despite this evidence, over 53% of respondents in Amigud and Pell's (2021) survey argued that



under no circumstances should the rules of academic integrity be waived. The remaining participants believed particular situations warranted leniency; situations which are notably similar to those identified by the participants in the current study, including first-time offences, cultural differences, and compassionate grounds (Amigud and Pell, 2021). The varying interpretations and applications of academic integrity policies present a risk to a culture of educative and restorative responses and suggest that institutions need to address the misalignment of expectations and outcomes. Perhaps more importantly, emerging voices in the literature and the current study problematise the many rule-based policies which categorise compassionate responses as non-compliant. For if Indigenous and non-Indigenous voices affirm the need for more nuanced measures, whose voices are being represented in these policies? This question prompts urgent, critical, and collaborative evaluation of academic integrity policies with the perspectives of marginalised faculty, staff, and students at the fore. For Indigenous Peoples, this represents not only an opportunity to reimagine a holistic framework of integrity, but the hope for greater decolonisation of academic spaces.

## **Chapter 6 – Conclusion**

### **6.1 Limitations and implications for further research**

The scarcity of prior research concerning Indigenous perspectives of academic integrity constrained the literature review and comparative analysis to the limited sources currently available. This exploratory primary research study introduces the perspectives of a small group of Indigenous faculty, staff, administrators, and graduates to the academic integrity literature. The appropriateness of this sample size has been outlined in chapter 3, and the validity of this decision remains. Nevertheless, the generalisability of qualitative inquiry may be limited (Creswell and Creswell, 2019) and the current research should not be interpreted to represent all Indigenous perspectives or even the perspectives of the Indigenous groups represented by the participants. Replication of this study in other contexts would be recommended to expand upon the findings and better understand a broad range of Indigenous perspectives. Particular care should be taken to avoid overgeneralisations that undermine the heterogeneity of Indigenous Peoples (Barkaskas and Gladwin, 2021).

Some Indigenous researchers are sceptical of non-Indigenous researchers engaging in research with Indigenous partners (Wilson, 2008; Kovach, 2021; Tuhiwai Smith, 2012). Whilst the present study finds merit in a collaborative approach, some specific limitations are acknowledged. Though this research adhered to the guidelines of the TCPS2 (Canadian Institutes of Health Research, 2018a), my positionality as a non-Indigenous researcher limits my ability to thoroughly embrace Indigenous paradigms and interpret findings without a non-Indigenous bias (Olsen, 2018). This limitation was amplified by my inability to conduct research in the languages of local Indigenous Peoples. Future research in this area may be enhanced by the fulsome contributions of Indigenous researchers and language speakers.

This study opened the conversation on Indigenous perspectives of academic integrity, yet the participants commented that much work remains to be done. Future research should include collaborative review of institutional academic integrity policies to seek out opportunities for inclusion of Indigenous views. However, rather than an additive process of grafting Indigenous approaches onto existing policies, the holistic vision of integrity outlined in this study suggests thorough, systemic review is warranted.

## **6.2 Closing the circle**

Across the land now known as Canada, a growing body of research confirms the salience of academic integrity in higher education (Locke *et al.*, 2019; Christensen Hughes and Eaton, 2022; Packalen and Rowbotham, 2022; Stoesz, 2022). Indigenous voices, though, are largely subsumed within the morass of dominant student and faculty perspectives or segregated alongside international student perspectives. This study sought to amplify Indigenous voices and create an entry point for decolonising academic integrity in higher education.

Drawing on ontological paradigms of holism represented by the Medicine Wheel, the findings of this study demonstrate how Indigenous models of interconnectedness situate academic integrity within a timeless circle of relationships with people and knowledge. Yet for Indigenous students, faculty, staff, and administrators, sustaining a relational vision of academic integrity in post-secondary spaces may be hindered by

prevailing approaches to academic integrity that are typically steeped in neoliberal values (Shin and Csiki, 2021). These dominant ways of engaging with information may invalidate Indigenous knowledges by valorising individualism and competition, discrediting oral wisdom, and reifying the colonial legacy of assimilation (Poitras Pratt and Gladue, 2022).

Indigenous epistemologies of relationality countervail dominant ideologies and promote holistic environments that nurture relationship with knowledge. From this perspective, academic integrity is inseparably grounded in the broader principles of integrity, which relies on reciprocal truth-telling to maintain the wholeness of the circle (Lindstrom, 2022). Whilst the literature presents an emphasis on monitoring and penalising academic misconduct (Stoesz and Eaton, 2020), the participants in this study aligned with scholars who promote compassionate, educative, and restorative approaches (Pecorari, 2010; Bertram Gallant, 2017; Sopcak and Hood, 2022). Eschewing rules-based frameworks which demand technical compliance, this study advances Indigenous holistic paradigms of integrity as having the potential to engender reciprocal truth-telling, relational accountability, and authentic engagement with knowledge in academia and beyond.

The apparent disconnect between Indigenous and settler perspectives of academic integrity underscores the complexity of integrative solutions in post-secondary institutions. The perspectives introduced in this research encourage further exploration of how Indigenous views of relationality may enliven a heterogenous culture where stewardship of knowledge strengthens the bonds of integrity for all. This relational task is necessary to the work of decolonising academic integrity, it is essential to honouring Indigenous knowledges, and it is imperative to reconciling with those on whose lands our post-secondary institutions are built (TRC, 2015b).

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## Appendix A: Themes, Codes, and Samples

Theme	Focused Code	Sub Code	Sample Transcript Excerpt
<b>The Medicine Wheel circle</b>	TRUTH		'I was constantly told by my professors that I need to back it up and I didn't...we don't have it in writing. But yet they didn't understand adaawx: truth telling. That means what comes out of my mouth is not a lie. I didn't just make it up. I'm going to give it credit back to my ancestors.' (Rainbow)
	HOLISM		'So, it's not separate and, what would the word be? I'd be fragmented, I'd be schizophrenic. I don't know what I'd be if I had to say, I gotta behave a certain way.' (Rainbow)
	RELATIONSHIPS	Relationship to people	'The original Medicine Wheel. These colors are supposed to represent everybody. The black, the red, the white, the yellow; how we're all connected.' (Joseph)
	RELATIONSHIPS	Relationship to knowledge	'And the idea that it's a relationship with knowledge. It's not about academics, it's about knowledge, and it's a relationship with the knowledge and why we don't know something is that we don't yet have a relationship with that knowledge.' (Clem)
<b>Breaking the circle</b>	BARRIERS AND PRESSURES		'And just the process of applying is slow. It's like watching paint dry sometimes when you're like, "Okay, am I going to find out? School's set to start in six weeks. Am I going to find out if I'm getting funded for it? Do I have to sell something to try and pay tuition?"' (Dakota)
	COLONIAL CONSTRUCTS		'Academic integrity is something that's really just a fixation of the educational profession. It isn't necessarily even a fixation of the professions they're going into.' (Clem)

Theme	Focused Code	Sub Code	Sample Transcript Excerpt
Repairing the circle	RESPONSES	Teachable moments	'And I think a teachable moment is saying, show me what you did know. Like he said, it's important to see the knowledge.' (Rainbow)
	RESPONSES	Intent	'And so, I think that's the biggest thing I'd be like, why? I can tell that you didn't write this. Why did you do this? Why did you feel the need to do this? I don't necessarily think that it's like they're a cheater, and they just like to cheat.' (Dakota)
	RESPONSES	Restorative justice	'Restorative justice talks about repairing a relationship and it presumes that that student has caused a harm on someone else. We have to make sure that is truly a harm that's been caused and that the harm isn't because of the imposition we have.' (Clem)
	OPEN POLICY		'It's better to keep your policy to keep it fairly light and open. Your procedures, you focus on procedures as a resource.' (Clem)
	INDIGENOUS STRENGTHS AND RIGHTS		'And before contact, the classroom for our people was the environment that we lived. When we taught little ones how to hunt and fish. And grandmothers and aunties were teaching about food preparation. The little ones would watch and learn by example. In that kind of an environment there was no ridicule.' (Cedar)  'But the fact of the matter is Indigenous knowledge, practices, and laws underlie everything here. We have a liminal right above and beyond, everything else, above and beyond Western knowledge, realism.' (Clem)



## **Appendix B: Land Acknowledgement**

It is an honour and privilege to be here with you today on the traditional and unceded territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh peoples, whose diverse cultures, languages, and knowledge have enriched this land from time immemorial.

As a settler on this land, I am grateful for the opportunity I've had to live, work, play, and study on the homelands of the Coast Salish peoples. For the last year, I have lived not far from here on the corner of what is now known as Kingsway and Broadway. I'd like to share with you a bit of what I have been learning about this area's rich history.

Centuries ago, the road we call Kingsway was a walking path that had been established by several Salish peoples that interacted with one another. Along the path were hunting grounds, summer camp areas, places for harvesting, and temporary villages. Over time, the route became the main mode of transportation between what are now several different cities. It was a source of life, community, and connection.

In 1860, settlers also saw value in the path, and the quick transportation it provided across the long stretch of land from Vancouver to what was the capital at the time: New Westminster. The path was made into a wagon road, then later widened, then in 1913, it was paved over and officially named Kingsway. In less than a hundred years, centuries of Indigenous ways of being and living, their knowledge and stewardship of the land, and their stories were obliterated under a layer of concrete. The settlers had recognized the value in the pathway, they saw how they could benefit from the years of Indigenous footsteps that had smoothed the way, and they took this valuable resource as their own, calling it Kingsway in honour of the monarch in whose name they believed they had the right to the land and anything on it.

When I am at home and I look out my apartment window, I see the bustle of Kingsway below. Now, when I look out at that view, I can't help but think about the original people who followed the contours of the land to create a pathway and a lifeline. I think about how that pathway lasted for centuries because these diverse groups shared goals – like transportation – and values – like trust, honesty, respect, and responsibility. And I can't help but see parallels between this history and academic

integrity, or rather, academic misconduct. The settlers saw a good thing, they stole it, put their own name on it, and took credit for work they didn't do. In the process, they erased the knowledge, work, and stories of the people who had not only developed the pathway but built their lives along the route. Of course, there is no way to compare the devastation wrought by colonial forces who destroyed the land and stole countless lives to an act of academic misconduct. But it reminds me that, buried underneath the concrete façade of our institution, there is a history of integrity that goes deeper than our meagre policies could ever capture. Today, I am here to listen, to learn, and to honour those who lived on this land long before me. With gratitude, I open my ears and my heart to you, and pray that I will be able to hold your knowledge in my hands with the kind of integrity that honours this precious gift.

Thank you.

## Appendix C: Participant Information Sheet



### Participant Information Sheet

#### Indigenous Perspectives on Academic Integrity in Post-Secondary Institutions in British Columbia

##### Who is conducting the study?

Researcher: Dawn Cunningham Hall

Supervisor: Dr Kevin Proudfoot

Degree: This research study is in partial fulfilment of the degree of MSc Education.

##### Invitation to participate

You are being invited to take part in a research project on Indigenous perspectives of academic integrity in post-secondary institutions in British Columbia.

The information in this document will help you understand why the research is being done and what to expect if you decide to participate. Please read the information carefully, discuss it with others if you wish, and ask me if anything is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to participate.

##### What is the purpose of the study?

The purpose of this study is to explore some of the ways Indigenous graduates, faculty, and staff perceive academic integrity. I want to learn more about how Indigenous Peoples think about academic integrity, experience it in post-secondary institutions, and envision the future of academic integrity.

Information from this study will help post-secondary institutions understand Indigenous perspectives and may influence institutional policies and procedures.

##### Why have I been chosen?

You are being asked to take part because you are an Indigenous graduate, faculty, or staff member affiliated with a post-secondary institution in British Columbia, and because your perspective is important.

##### Do I have to participate?

Participation in this study is voluntary. If you decide to participate and you change your mind, you can withdraw at any time without giving me a reason. Withdrawing from this study will not affect your relationship with me or with your post-secondary institution in any way. Just let me know if you want to stop participating and I will not use any of the information you share with me in this research or any future projects.

##### What will happen to me if I participate?

If you participate, you will join a small group of people in talking circles on two different days. You will be invited you to share what you think about academic integrity. You do not have to answer any question that you do not want to. At one of the talking circles, the group will have the opportunity to co-create a piece of artwork that represents your perspectives of academic integrity.

The talking circles will be scheduled at a time and location that is convenient for the group. Each talking circle will take about 2-3 hours. I will audio-record the talking circles so that I can transcribe the words afterwards. The talking circles will be finished by June 2022.

If you experience any distress during or after the talking circles, you can reach out to the Indigenous facilitator or call the KUU-US Crisis Line Society 24/7 at 1.800.558.8717.

**Will the information that I give you in this study be kept confidential?**

When I write about the study, I will remove all information that might lead back to you after the study has been completed. I will replace your name with a pseudonym when writing up the final paper.

I will keep all the information I collect in a private, locked cabinet, on an encrypted hard drive, or on the University of Glasgow's password protected, secure cloud storage.

Your confidentiality will be respected during this study and in the presentation of the results. However, since the research will involve a small, regional group of participants, anonymity cannot be guaranteed. Also, if evidence of potential harm to yourself or others is uncovered, I may be obligated to inform relevant agencies of this.

**What will happen to the results of this study?**

It is important that this research accurately reflects your words and perspectives. After the talking circles have finished, I will transcribe the recordings. You will have an opportunity to read the transcription of your words and make corrections. If there are any parts of the transcription that you do not want me to use in the final paper, just let me know and they will not be included.

I will look for themes in the transcriptions and in the artwork that the group creates. All participants will have an opportunity to confirm or correct the themes before I use them in the final paper. You will receive a copy of the finished paper at the end of the project.

The recordings, transcriptions, and any information that connects you to the study will be destroyed at the end of the project. Paper documents will be shredded, and electronic items will be permanently deleted. The finished paper will be shared with colleagues, and the information may be used at academic presentations or in journal articles. Only information that is in the final paper will be shared.

**Who has reviewed the study?**

This study has been reviewed and approved by the School of Education Ethics Forum at the University of Glasgow.

**Who can I contact for more information or to participate?**

If you have any questions or if you wish to participate in this study, you can ask me, Dawn Cunningham Hall (2508294C@student.gla.ac.uk). You may also contact my supervisor, Dr Kevin Proudfoot (Kevin.Proudfoot@glasgow.ac.uk), or the Ethics officer for the School of Education, Dr Paul Lynch (Paul.Lynch@glasgow.ac.uk). You may also contact [research site contact information].

Thank you for your consideration,

Dawn Cunningham Hall

## Appendix D: Consent Form



### Consent Form

Title of Project: Indigenous Perspectives on Academic Integrity in Post-Secondary Institutions in British Columbia

Name of Researcher: Dawn Cunningham Hall

Name of Supervisor: Dr Kevin Proudfoot

Name of Contact at [research site]: [contact name and email]

Please check 'yes' or 'no' for each statement

#### Participation

Yes  No  I confirm that I have read and understood the Participant Information Sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

Yes  No  I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.

#### Protection of Privacy

Yes  No  I acknowledge that the talking circles will be audio-recorded and transcribed.

Yes  No  I consent to being audio-recorded during the talking circles.

Yes  No  I acknowledge that copies of transcripts will be returned to participants for verification.

Yes  No  I acknowledge that recordings and transcripts will be destroyed once the project is complete.

Yes  No  I acknowledge that participants will be referred to by pseudonym in any publications arising from this research.

Yes  No  I acknowledge that any information likely to identify individuals will be anonymized.

Yes  No  I acknowledge that the material will be treated as confidential and kept in secure storage at all times.

Yes  No  I have received a copy of a Privacy Notice in relation to this research project.

#### Publication of Material

Yes  No  I acknowledge that the material may be used in future publications, both print and online.

Participant Consent

I agree to take part in this research study

I do not agree to take part in this research study

Printed name of participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix E: Guiding Questions

Divided into themes, guiding questions for the talking circle and art-based inquiry include:

### 1. Listening to the ancestors

- Is there a concept of academic integrity in your traditional teachings?
- What words (in any language) would you use to describe academic integrity?

### 2. Telling your stories

- How did you first learn about academic integrity?
- How would you describe your experience with academic integrity in post-secondary education?
- What values do you associate with academic integrity?

### 3. A vision for the future

- How would you explain academic integrity to someone else?
- What do you think should happen when someone violates an institution's academic integrity policy?
- How would you like to see institutions change their approaches to academic integrity?

### 4. An artistic expression of academic integrity

- How would you (collectively or individually) conceptualise academic integrity in art form?

## Appendix F: Ethics Approval



14/04/2022

Dear Dawn Cunningham Hall

### **School of Education Research Ethics Committee**

**Project Title:** Indigenous Perspectives on Academic Integrity in Post-Secondary Institutions in British Columbia

**Application No:** 402210105

The School of Education Research Ethics Committee has reviewed your application and has agreed that there is no objection on ethical grounds to the proposed study. It is happy therefore to approve the project, subject to the following conditions:

- Start date of ethical approval: 19/04/2022
- Project end date: 11/08/2022
- Any outstanding permissions needed from third parties in order to recruit research participants or to access facilities or venues for research purposes must be obtained in writing and submitted to the School of Education Research Ethics Administrator before research commences. Permissions you must provide are shown in the reviewer feedback form, titled *Notification of Ethics Application Outcome*, that has been sent to you.
- Data collected should be held securely for the period you indicated in the application and any personal data collected should be appropriately managed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation.
- The research should be carried out only on the sites, and/or with the groups and using the methods defined in the application.
- Any proposed changes in the protocol should be submitted for reassessment as an amendment to the original application. The *Request for Amendments to an Approved Application* form should be used:  
<https://www.gla.ac.uk/schools/education/research/ethics/forms/>

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P Lynch'.

Dr Paul Lynch  
School of Education Ethics Officer

**Dr Paul Lynch**  
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Glasgow G3 6NH  
Please email: [paul.lynch@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:paul.lynch@glasgow.ac.uk)