



Academic Integrity

There are many reasons someone might not understand or observe Academic Integrity. Academic Integrity might be a new skill that needs to be developed. Students may have been taught and trained to understand academic integrity differently than ACC does. And, when people are under stress, they are at risk of making poor decisions.

Part of what we are seeing within post-secondary during this quick move to online and remote learning is an increase in students committing academic misconduct such as cheating and plagiarism. Faculty may feel frustrated and disappointed when this behavior happens, but if we view Academic Integrity as an academic skill that needs developing, we can view it as an opportunity to support student growth.

Here are some proactive steps you can take to encourage Academic Integrity in your courses.

Design Your Assessments to be Plagiarism-Resistant

One way to care for our students and ourselves is the choices we make around assessments. It may be that re-structuring your assessments to be “plagiarism-resistant” will prevent Academic Misconduct from happening. If you need help revamping a specific assignment, please reach out to your Faculty Development Coach or Josh Seeland at seelandjl@assiniboine.net.

As members of the International Center for Academic Integrity (ICAI), the Manitoba Academic Integrity Network (MAIN), and through ACC’s Academic Integrity Advisory Committee (AIAC), there are many resources and colleagues available to assist you. Online resources are currently being compiled for publication. Contact Josh Seeland at seelandjl@assiniboine.net for immediate assistance.

Plagiarism Prevention and Detection Through Text Matching Software

In addition to providing you with support to revise your assessments, CLI has invested in a text-matching software system called Urkund, which can help to prevent and detect academic misconduct such as plagiarism and cheating.

What It Is:

Urkund is an easy and effective tool that uses automatic text-recognition to prevent, detect, and handle plagiarism and cheating. Academic integrity professionals point out that it is not a magic-bullet solution which will eliminate all academic misconduct on its own. Rather, it is a formative assessment tool useful in helping students complete their assessments with integrity. The focus should not be on moving an imagined ideal similarity score, but on improving student writing skills and on learning. For example, if

all students are using the same thesis statement, common words/phrases, or terminology in an assignment, the class average for similarity might be higher than a class where each student has an individual topic with different sources. Aiming for a 0% similarity score is never ideal.

A Few Notes:

Research in Academic Integrity recommends that institutions develop guidelines for the use of text-matching software. This is currently under way. Students must also be made aware that their assignments will be submitted to Urkund; this is normally done in a syllabus or course outline. Students are able to opt out of having their assignments submitted to Urkund.

How Checking a Document Works in Urkund:

1. Submit the Document

The Urkund process starts when you submit a document to the system. This can either be through Moodle or email. Urkund supports a wide variety of file formats, including Word documents.

2. Urkund Retrieves Relevant Sources

Urkund analyzes the text and checks for text similarity to documents in their archives, the Internet, academically published material, and previously submitted student documents.

3. A Report is Created and Delivered

After analyzing the document, Urkund creates a report and sends it to you either through Moodle or email. With that information, you can make the final call about whether or not the document is plagiarized.

If you have questions about how to use Urkund with Moodle, please see the “Access Urkund Through Moodle” document on the CLI website or contact Chris Bell at bellc2@assiniboine.net.

Adapted from “Urkund's anti-plagiarism system” by Urkund <https://www.orkund.com/the-orkund-system>