

# The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity



Mykolas Romeris  
University



# The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity

Second Edition

International Center for Academic Integrity

T. Fishman, Editor

CLEMSON UNIVERSITY





“The quality of light by which we scrutinize our lives has direct bearing upon the product which we live, and upon the changes which we hope to bring about through those lives.”

Audre Lorde

“Not to arrive at a clear understanding of one's own values is a tragic waste. You have missed the whole point of what life is for.”

Eleanor Roosevelt

“I prefer to be true to myself, even at the hazard of incurring the ridicule of others, rather than to be false, and to incur my own abhorrence.”

Frederick Douglass

“If a teacher does not involve himself, his values, his commitments, in the course of discussion, why should the students?”

Paul Wellstone

“Your beliefs become your thoughts,  
Your thoughts become your words,  
Your words become your actions,  
Your actions become your habits,  
Your habits become your values,  
Your values become your destiny.”

Mahatma Gandhi

“Courage is the most important of all the virtues because without courage, you can't practice any other virtue consistently.”

Maya Angelou

“What is left when honor is lost?”

Publilius Syrus

“Faced with what is right, to leave it undone shows a lack of courage.”

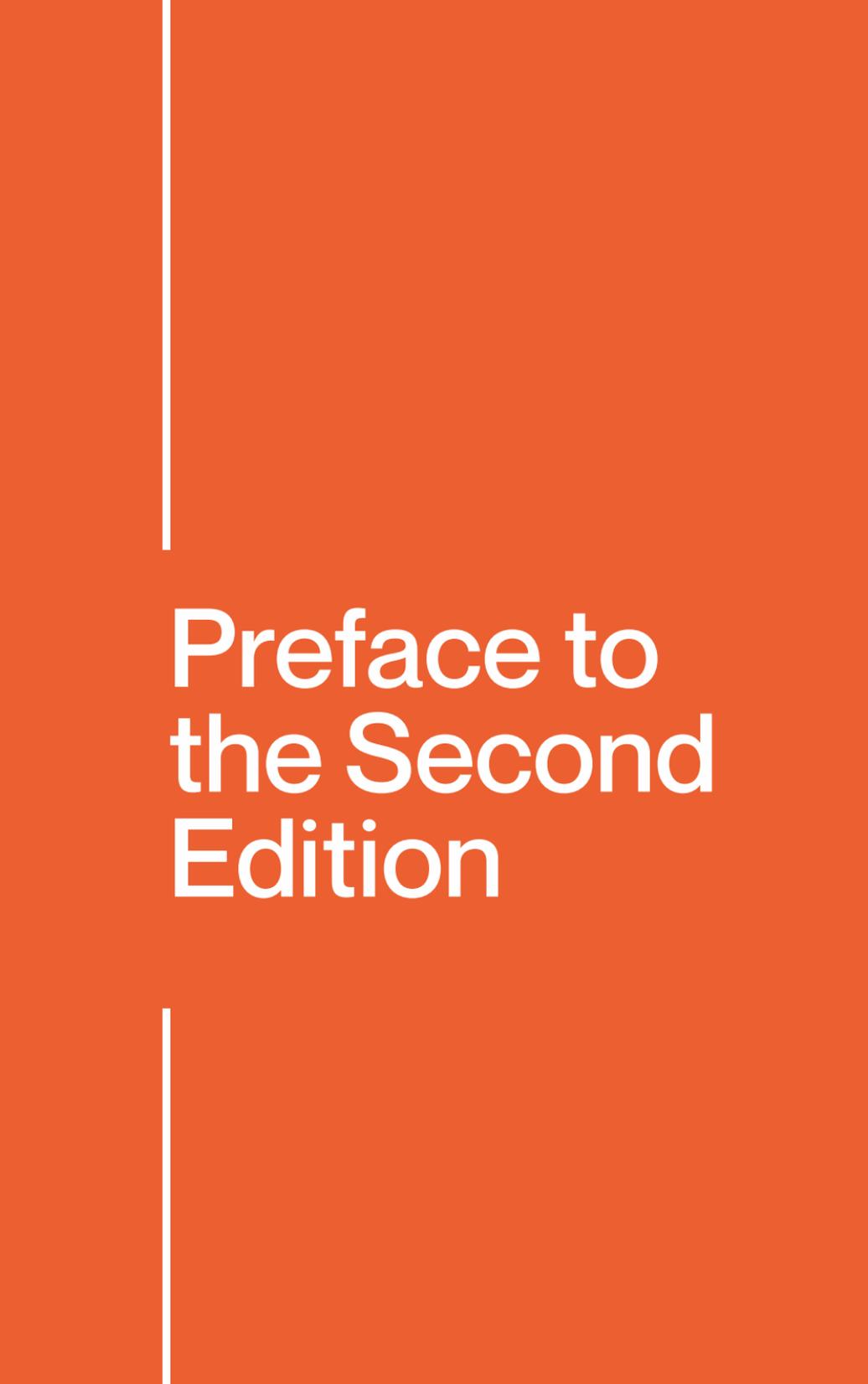
Confucius





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# Preface to the Second Edition

In recognition of the 20th anniversary of the founding of the International Center for Academic Integrity, members of the advisory council set out to “revise and re-vitalize” the *Fundamental Values* in hopes not only of extending its usefulness, but also of drawing attention, once again, to the crucial role that integrity and its component values play in education. The popularity of the original *Fundamental Values* has made it one of the Center’s most frequently requested texts. It has been quoted, sampled, translated and reprinted at universities throughout North America and around the globe. It is our hope that this revision will live up to the high expectations set by the original.

The revised edition features the original five values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility, and adds an additional element: the quality of courage. Through our work with academic integrity, we have found that courage turns out to be indispensable in enacting the fundamental values, especially in the face of pressure to do otherwise.

Since the original *Fundamental Values* text was published in 1999, many changes have taken place at the Center. It now makes its institutional home at Clemson University, in affiliation with the Rutland Institute for Ethics. It has grown to over 1,200 members at 250 institutions in 19 countries on 6 continents. The Center has also formally recognized the trend toward internationalization—of issues, of discussions, and most happily, of its membership—by formally becoming the International Center for Academic Integrity (ICAI).

What has not changed is the Center’s commitment to promoting the fundamental values and academic integrity in scholarly communities of all kinds. As new challenges to integrity appear, so too do new strategies and techniques for teaching and encouraging ethical decision making. Efforts to create and maintain cultures of integrity require our continuous ongoing attention. For that reason, we affirm our commitment to fostering and upholding the fundamental values and encouraging personal, institutional, and cultural commitment to high standards of academic integrity with this, the revised and revitalized *Fundamental Values*.

T.A. Fishman  
Director, ICAI

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'T.A. Fishman', written in a cursive style.

# Preface to the Original: *An Invitation\**

As this document on *The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity* makes clear, academic integrity is essential to the success of our mission as educator. It also provides a foundation for responsible conduct in our students' lives after graduation. The Center for Academic Integrity, a consortium of 200 colleges and universities, seeks to encourage campus conversations about this vital topic. Since 1997, the Center has made its home at Duke in affiliation with our Kenan Ethics Program. Its presence has been a wonderful asset to the efforts of Duke students, faculty, and administrators in promoting academic integrity on our campus. I am especially pleased, therefore, to have the opportunity to share the Center's work with colleagues in higher education across the country.

It can be difficult to translate values, even widely-shared values, into action—but action is badly needed now to promote academic integrity on our campuses. Researchers agree that rates of cheating among American high school and college students are high and increasing. Professor Donald McCabe of Rutgers University, founder of the Center for Academic Integrity, has found that more than 75% of college students cheat at least once during their undergraduate careers. Particularly alarming is research gathered by *Who's Who Among High School Students* indicating that 80 percent of high-achieving, college-bound students have cheated,

that they think cheating is commonplace, and that more than half do not consider cheating a serious transgression. New technologies have also made it easier to cheat: The Educational Testing Service notes that one website providing free term papers to students has averaged 80,000 hits per day.

Not all the news is depressing. The Center for Academic Integrity's research shows that campus norms and practices, such as effective honor codes, can make a significant difference in student behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs. The organizations listed here join me in urging our colleagues in higher education to read and discuss this document and to pursue its recommendations for institutional action. All of us—faculty, administrators, students, trustees, and concerned alumni—have a responsibility to get involved. Raising the level of student academic integrity should be among our highest priorities on college and university campuses.

Nannerl O. Keohane  
President, Duke University, 1999

\*This invitation is from the original 1999 edition of *The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity*.

# Original Signatories



The following organizations expressed their support for the first edition of *The Fundamental Values*:

- Alliance for Higher Education
- American Association for Higher Education
- American Association of University Administrators
- Association for Student Judicial Affairs
- Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities
- Association of College Honor Societies
- Association of College Personnel Administrators
- Center for applied and Professional Ethics, Central Missouri State University
- Center for Ethics in Public Policy and the Professions, Emory University
- Center for Professional Ethics, Manhattan College
- College Board
- Educational Testing Service
- Institute for Global Ethics
- John Templeton Foundation
- Kenan Ethics Program, Duke University
- Kings College Center for Ethics and Public Life
- National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges
- National Association of Student Personnel Administrators
- National Collegiate Athletic Association
- National Consortium for Academics and Sports
- National Institute for Native Leadership in Higher Education
- National Intramural-Recreational Sports Association
- North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Institutions of Higher Education
- Program on Ethics and Public Life, Cornell University
- William and Flora Hewlett Foundation
- The Values Institute, University of San Diego

# Additional Signatories

These additional individuals and organizations expressed their support for *The Fundamental Values*, 2nd edition:

- Adelphi University
- Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences
- American University in Dubai
- Azusa Pacific University
- Bentley University
- Brock University
- Carroll College
- Centennial College
- Christopher Newport University
- Colorado State University
- Florida International University
- Florida State University
- Georgia Military College
- Hofstra University
- John Jay College of Law – CUNY
- Kennesaw State University
- Mississippi State University
- Missouri State University
- Mount Royal University
- **Mykolas Romeris University**
- Palmer College of Chiropractic
- Saint Leo University
- Simon Fraser University
- Stevens Institute of Technology
- SUNY Stony Brook
- Syracuse University
- The American College of Greece – Deree

- The Apprentice School
- The School for Ethical Education
- The University of Rochester
- Tracey Bretag, University of South Australia
- Tricia Bertram Gallant, UC San Diego
- Universidad EAFIT
- University of Alabama
- University of Alberta
- University of Colorado at Boulder
- University of Denver
- University of Georgia
- University of Manitoba
- University of Mary Washington
- University of Maryland, Baltimore County
- University of Michigan
- University of Minnesota, Twin Cities
- University of Monterrey
- University of New Brunswick
- University of North Carolina, Charlotte
- University of Oklahoma
- University of South Carolina
- University of South Florida
- University of Toronto
- University of Waterloo
- University of Wisconsin, Madison
- University of Wisconsin, Stout
- Virginia Tech
- Woodward School
- Winona State University

# What is Academic Integrity?

Why is it Important?

Why Identify Fundamental Values?



Many teachers, students, and administrators embrace the principles of academic integrity because they know that the goals of teaching, learning, and research can only be accomplished in environments in which ethical standards are upheld. It is still rare, however, for scholarly institutions to identify and describe their commitment to the principles of integrity in terms that are at once positive and practical. Instead, it is more common to find the subject of academic integrity addressed by identifying and prohibiting behaviors that run counter to the principles of integrity. The Fundamental Values Project is an attempt to frame academic integrity in ways that are both positive and pragmatic.

The International Center for Academic Integrity defines academic integrity as a commitment to five fundamental values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. We believe that these five values, plus the courage to act on them even in the face of adversity, are truly foundational to the academy. Without them, everything that we do in our capacities as teachers, learners, and researchers loses value and becomes suspect. When the fundamental values are embraced, utilized, and put into practice they become touchstones for scholarly communities of integrity. Rather than thinking of them merely as abstract principles, we advocate using the fundamental values to inform and improve ethical decision-making capacities and behavior. The fundamental values enable academic communities to translate their ideals into action.

**“Academic integrity is a way to change the world.  
Change the university first; then change the world.”**

**Youngsup Kim  
ICAI Conference Participant, 2008**

Scholarly communities flourish when community members “live” the fundamental values. To do this, community members must invoke them—making them part of frequent dialogues that invite students, faculty, and administrators to consider the potential for ethical values to inform and improve various aspects of life on campus and beyond. Integrity is strengthened within academic communities when community standards are aligned with the fundamental values and supported by its institutional policies and procedures. When a society’s educational institutions are infused with integrity, they help create stronger civic culture for society as a whole.

# The Fundamental Values

Honesty



**Academic communities of integrity advance the quest for truth and knowledge through intellectual and personal honesty in learning, teaching, research, and service.**

Honesty is an indispensable foundation of teaching, learning, research, and service, and a necessary prerequisite for full realization of trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. It is essential that academic policies and community practices send a clear message that falsification of data, lying, cheating fraud, theft, and other dishonest behaviors are unacceptable.

**“Honesty is the first chapter in the book of wisdom.”**

**Thomas Jefferson**

Dishonest behavior not only jeopardizes the welfare of academic communities and violates the rights of its members, it can also tarnish the reputation of the institution and diminish the worth of the degrees it grants. Honesty begins with individuals and extends out into the larger community. As they seek knowledge, students and faculty alike must be honest with themselves and with each other. In study halls and laboratories, in libraries, playing fields and classrooms, cultivating and practicing honesty lays a foundation for lifelong integrity. Developing the courage and wherewithal necessary to make honest, ethical choices, even when at personal cost, is a necessary step in establishing communities of trust.

**“The ability of the university to achieve its purposes depends upon the quality and integrity of the academic work that its faculty, staff, and students perform. Academic freedom can flourish only in a community of scholars which recognizes that intellectual integrity, with its accompanying rights and the responsibilities, lies at the heart of its mission. Observing basic honesty in one’s work, words, ideas, and actions is a principle to which all members of the community are required to subscribe.”**

**“Rights, Rules, Responsibilities”  
Princeton University, 1995**

# The Fundamental Values

Trust



**Academic communities of integrity both foster and rely upon climates of mutual trust. Climates of trust encourage and support the free exchange of ideas which in turn allows scholarly inquiry to reach its fullest potential.**

When honesty is established as a value it allows for and encourages the development of trust. Trust accrues over time, with experience, and is built on a foundation of actions more importantly than words.

**“I have to trust what I do and then do it.”**

**Ednita Nazario**

Trust is promoted by faculty who set clear guidelines for assignments and for evaluating student work and by students who prepare work that is honest, thoughtful, and genuine. Trust is developed by schools that set clear and consistent academic standards, that apply their standards unfailingly and fairly, and that support honest and impartial research. Trust is often developed reciprocally; being trustworthy and allowing oneself to trust others go hand in hand.

Trust is a necessary foundation of academic work. Only with trust can we ground new inquiries in the research of others and move forward with confidence. Trust enables us to collaborate, to share information, and to circulate new ideas freely, without fear that our work will be stolen, our careers stunted, or our reputations diminished. Trust is essential so that those outside academic communities can believe in the value and meaning of scholarly research, teaching, and degrees. Communities of trust engender cooperation by creating environments in which participants expect to treat others—and be treated—with fairness and respect.

**“This semester a professor excused me from taking a test at the normal time and allowed me to choose the time and date when I could make it up. Mutual trust was built from day one of this semester and has influenced the way I approach the course. I feel an obligation to my teacher to perform to the best of my ability, which I credit to the respect we have for one another in our different roles.”**

**Student Representative of ICAI**

# The Fundamental Values

Fairness



**Academic communities of integrity establish clear and transparent expectations, standards, and practices to support fairness in the interactions of students, faculty, and administrators.**

Fair treatment is an essential factor in the establishment of ethical communities. Important components of fairness include predictability, transparency, and clear, reasonable expectations. Consistent and just responses to dishonesty and integrity breaches are also elements of fairness. Fair, accurate and impartial evaluation plays an important role in educational processes, and fairness with respect to grading and assessment is essential to the establishment of trust between faculty and students.

**“Justice cannot be for one side alone, but must be for both.”**

**Eleanor Roosevelt**

Faculty members and administration also have a right to expect fair treatment, not only from students but also from each other.

Students are fair to each other and to the community when they do their own work honestly, to authors when they acknowledge borrowed work appropriately, to administrators when they respect and uphold academic integrity policies, and to alumni when they maintain the good reputation of the institution.

Faculty members are fair to students and institutions when they communicate expectations clearly, respond to dishonesty consistently, uphold academic integrity principles unflinchingly, and lead by example dependably. Administrators are fair to their communities when they provide clear, useful, and just policies that help establish and nurture communities of integrity, and that treat students, faculty, alumni, and institutions with respect.

**“Students expect their academic work to be fairly and fully assessed. Faculty members should use—and continuously revise—forms of assessment that require active and creative thought and promote learning opportunities for students.”**

**“Message for New Students:  
The Importance of Academic Integrity”  
SYNFAX Weekly Report 9/1/97**

# The Fundamental Values

Respect



**Academic communities of integrity value the interactive, cooperative, participatory nature of learning. They honor, value, and consider diverse opinions and ideas.**

Scholarly communities succeed only where there is respect for community members and for the diverse and sometimes contradictory opinions that they express. The most dynamic and productive learning environments are those that foster active engagement, including rigorous testing, spirited debate, and lively disagreements over ideas tempered by respect for those who voice them. In academic environments of integrity, even those who disagree on facts share respect and reverence for knowledge and the methods by which it is obtained.

“Without feelings of respect, what is there to distinguish men from beasts?”

Confucius

Respect in academic communities is reciprocal and requires showing respect for oneself as well as others. Respect for self means facing challenges with integrity. Respect for others means valuing diversity of opinions and appreciating the need to challenge, test, and refine ideas.

Students show respect when they value and take advantage of opportunities to gain new knowledge, by taking an active role in their own education, contributing to discussions as well as listening to others' points of view, and performing to the best of their ability. Being rude, demeaning, or disruptive to others undermines climates of respect.

Faculty show respect by taking their students' ideas seriously, by recognizing them as individuals, helping them develop their ideas, providing full and honest feedback on their work, and valuing their perspectives and their goals. Members of academic communities also show respect for other scholars by acknowledging intellectual contributions through proper identification and citation of sources. Cultivating environments in which all members show and enjoy respect is both an individual and a collective responsibility.

“As a scholar, one should be generous in acknowledging the work of other scholars, for their work makes possible one's own.”

“Academic Honesty in the Writing of  
Essays and Other Papers”  
Carleton College, Princeton University, 1990

# The Fundamental Values

**Responsibility**



**Academic communities of integrity rest upon foundations of personal accountability coupled with the willingness of individuals and groups to lead by example, uphold mutually agreed-upon standards, and take action when they encounter wrongdoing.**

Responsibility for upholding the values of integrity is simultaneously an individual duty and a shared concern. Every member of an academic community—each student, faculty member, and administrator—is responsible for safeguarding the integrity of its scholarship, teaching and research.

"Someone ought to do it, but why should I?  
Someone ought to do it, so why not I?—  
Between these two sentences lie whole centuries  
of moral evolution."

Annie Besant

Shared responsibility both distributes and magnifies the power to effect change. Responsible communities can work to overcome apathy and to inspire others to uphold the academic integrity standards of the group. Being responsible means standing up against wrongdoing, resisting negative peer pressure, and serving as a positive example. Responsible individuals hold themselves accountable for their own actions, and work to discourage and prevent misconduct by others.

Cultivating responsibility means learning to recognize and resist the impulse to engage in unscrupulous behavior. Being a responsible member of an academic community also means holding others accountable when they fail to uphold the values of the group. Holding oneself and others to high standards of integrity is often challenging; it requires courage.

"When we take responsibility for the work we produce,  
we give it credibility. Without credibility, there is no point  
in doing the work."

Deb Eerkes, ICAI Leader

# The Fundamental Values

Courage



To develop and sustaining communities of integrity, it takes more than simply believing in the fundamental values. Translating the values from talking points into action—standing up for them in the face of pressure and adversity—requires determination, commitment, and courage.

Courage differs from the preceding fundamental values in that it is less a value than a quality or capacity. Courageous people are often misunderstood as lacking fear. In reality, courage is the capacity to act in accordance with one's values *despite* fear.

“Courage is the first of human qualities because it is the quality which guarantees the others.”

Aristotle

Courage is an element of character that allows learners to commit to the quality of their education by holding themselves and their fellow learners to the highest standards of academic integrity even when doing so involves risk of negative consequences or reprisal.

Being courageous means acting in accordance with one's convictions. Like intellectual capacity, courage can only develop in environments where it is tested.

Academic communities of integrity, therefore, necessarily include opportunities to make choices, learn from them, and grow. Through this iterative process, courage, honor, and integrity can develop as interwoven and mutually dependent characteristics.

Members of academic communities must learn not only to make integrous decisions, but also to display the courage necessary to follow their decisions with action. Only through the exercise of courage is it possible to create and maintain communities of integrity strong enough to endure as responsible, respectful, trustworthy, fair and honest regardless of the circumstances they face.

“Faculty and students who display courage in the pursuit of integrity not only become role models but also increase standards for learning and scholarship. Community is thus forged and becomes a key source for building habits of civility for a lifetime.”

Pat Drinan, Founding Member, ICAI

# Developing Cultures of Integrity



Promoting the fundamental values of academic integrity in education requires balancing high standards of integrity with the educational mission, as well as compassion, and concern. Two decades of attention to the processes and practices of successful academic integrity programs inform the following recommendations for programmatic development.

While there is no “one-size-fits-all” formula for establishing climates of integrity, there are steps that can be taken to maximize chances for success.

Institutions should:

1. Develop and publicize clear, fair, academic integrity policies, procedures, and statements that can be effectively understood and consistently implemented.
2. Promote positive aspects of academic integrity amongst all segments of the campus community. Promotional activities should include discussions of the fundamental values, development of ethical decision-making capacities, and highlighting the link between academic integrity and broader ethical concerns.
3. Educate all members of the community about academic integrity standards so that expectations are well understood as integral components of the community culture.
4. Practice the actions described in campus policies consistently and fairly. Provide support to those who follow the policies and uphold standards.
5. Develop, explain, and administer equitable, transparent systems for adjudicating integrity violations.
6. Stay abreast of current developments in technology and educational practices in order to anticipate increased risks and address potential problems.
7. Regularly assess the effectiveness of academic integrity policies, procedures, and practices. Revise and revitalize as necessary to update and improve.

The details of each institution's academic integrity programs must depend on the specific characteristics of the community. In each case, however, the relationship between policies and procedures, community standards, and day-to-day conduct should be congruent, consistent, and compatible with the agreed-upon institutional values.

# Acknowledgments\*

\*These acknowledgements are from the original document, excepting the additional acknowledgements and where noted.

When board members of the Center for Academic Integrity assembled at Duke University in September 1997 to identify the fundamental values of academic integrity, we could hear the echoes of generations of scholars and teachers who have promoted honorable behavior on campuses. Generous financial support and encouragement from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation enabled us to focus on a statement would make our collective wisdom available to other schools. This statement was discussed and refined at conferences held at the University of San Diego and at Babson College. The result was this document, The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity.

Many people collaborated on the statement, but we especially thank Sally Cole of the Center for Academic Integrity, Larry Hinman of the University of San Diego, Elisabeth Kiss of Duke University, and Jeanne Wilson of the University of California at Davis for their intellectual and editorial leadership. At critical times, each of these individuals helped us move forward.

Heartfelt thanks go also to the hundreds of students, faculty, and administrators who have made helpful and critical comments, offered examples and quotes from their own campuses, and reinforced our conviction that the fundamental values of honesty, trust, respect, fairness, and responsibility offer an important conceptual structure within which to look carefully at one's own approach to academic integrity issues on a campus.

Finally, thank you to the hundreds of individual members of the [now International] Center for Academic Integrity. Without their energy and enduring involvement, this project could not have been attempted.



## Additional Acknowledgements:

The 2012 revision of The Fundamental Values was undertaken by a committee comprised of: Tricia Bertram Gallant, Deborah Eerkes, Tony Feghali, Teddi Fishman, Joseph Gordon, Alax Jones, Pamela Law, James M. Lancaster, Donald L. McCabe, Vincent McGuire, Aaron A. Monson, Mary Olson, and Philip Zachariah.

As was the case for the original *Fundamental Values* project, this edition would not have been possible were it not for the dedication of these individuals as well as the support and involvement of the hundreds of members of ICAI whose commitment to the principles of integrity underpin all of the achievements of the organization.



# *The Fundamental Values Project*

*The Fundamental Values Project* was undertaken to identify and define values upon which scholarly endeavors and the educational enterprise rely. By recognizing these fundamental values that apply across cultures and institutional types, the hope was to help inform and improve policies, practices, and ultimately academic communities themselves.

This project received generous support from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and from the Kenan Ethics Program.

The International Center for Academic Integrity is a consortium of schools, colleges, and universities across the globe, united to combat cheating and promote integrity in all aspects of education. The Center welcomes participation and involvement from all who share in that aim.

For more information about the Center, please visit our web page: [www.academicintegrity.org](http://www.academicintegrity.org)

The International Center for Academic Integrity is affiliated with the Rutland Institute for Ethics at Clemson University in South Carolina.



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*The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity* (Second Edition, 2014)  
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Institute for Ethics

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This edition preserves the original text but includes changes to layout, formatting,  
and visual presentation.

This adapted presentation is not endorsed by the International Center for Academic  
Integrity.



