



Integrity: From Classroom to Career¹

UDL 3.0 Consideration 9.4: Cultivate empathy and restorative practice —

Learn from others' perspectives and repair harm.

What is it?

Academic integrity reflects an individual's dedication to ethical conduct and ownership of their scholarly work. It embodies core values including honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage. When you move beyond enforcing rules and instead help learners see how integrity shapes their professional identity, you open the door to deeper learning. By framing integrity as a practice that learners will carry into their careers, you help them understand why ethical conduct matters — not just for grades, but for the professionals they are becoming.

Why do it?

When you approach academic integrity through an ethics-of-care lens rather than a punitive framework, you build trust with your learners and foster a learning community in which everyone feels responsible for upholding ethical standards. Research shows that learners who understand the purpose of integrity expectations are more likely to engage authentically with their learning. Your approach to integrity directly influences whether learners view it as a value to embrace or as a set of behaviors to avoid.

Your learners arrive with diverse backgrounds, experiences with academic conventions, and understandings of integrity practices. Some may be unfamiliar with citation requirements, collaboration boundaries, or expectations for original work in different contexts. By making implicit expectations explicit and teaching the skills learners need, you reduce barriers and set them up for success with integrity.

How to do it

Here are some ways to foster academic integrity in your courses.

Build an integrity-centered community

- Engage learners in conversations about ethical practices from the first class session and continue these discussions throughout the term.
- Invite learners to co-create classroom agreements about ethical practices and collaboration expectations.
- Highlight scenarios from your discipline that illustrate how professionals navigate ethical decisions.

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- Create an environment where learners feel comfortable asking questions about academic expectations without fear of judgment.

Model and teach integrity skills

- Show learners how you attribute sources in your own materials and presentations.
- Provide explicit instruction on restating ideas in one's own words, integrating multiple sources, and avoiding plagiarism.
- Be clear about when group work is encouraged versus when learners should complete tasks independently.
- Share samples of well-attributed work alongside common errors so learners can see the difference.

Design assessments that support integrity

- Create assignments that invite learners to incorporate their own experiences, perspectives, and interests.
- Design authentic tasks that ask learners to analyze, synthesize, and apply concepts rather than simply recall information.
- Incorporate low-stakes checkpoints, drafts, and peer feedback so learners can learn from the process as well as from feedback on the final product.
- Offer varied assessment options so learners can demonstrate their knowledge in multiple ways.
- Refresh prompts and topics regularly to encourage genuine engagement with course material.

Provide clear guidelines and support

- Articulate requirements in your syllabus regarding how to cite sources, when to work with peers, and which tools are permitted.
- Develop rubrics with specific criteria that reward independent reasoning and appropriate acknowledgment of sources.
- Connect learners with campus resources, including the writing center, tutoring services, and library research assistance.
- Offer multiple ways for learners to seek help when they are struggling, including flexible meeting times.

Embrace restorative approaches

- When integrity concerns arise, focus on learning and growth rather than punishment.
- Use integrity violations as opportunities to teach learners how their actions affect the learning community.

- Have restorative conversations that invite learners to reflect on what happened and identify ways to rebuild trust.
- Recognize that learners may make mistakes due to a lack of knowledge rather than intentional dishonesty and respond accordingly.

Key Factors for Fostering Academic Integrity

While the UDL 3.0 Guidelines emphasize cultivating empathy and restorative practices, fostering academic integrity in your courses requires attention to several key factors.

- **Be proactive:** Integrate academic integrity education from the beginning of your course rather than addressing it only when violations occur. When you help learners develop competence early, problems are less likely to arise.
- **Prioritize understanding over compliance:** Help learners understand why integrity matters rather than simply listing rules. When learners internalize these values, they make ethical choices even in situations where guidelines are ambiguous.
- **Address systemic barriers:** Recognize that your learners come from different backgrounds and may have varied experiences with academic conventions. Provide scaffolded support to ensure all learners have equitable access to integrity education.
- **Create a culture of care:** Foster an environment where learners feel they belong and are valued. Research indicates that learners who feel connected to their learning community are more likely to engage ethically.

Resources

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