

Academic Integrity in Nursing Programs

Yusrita Zolkefli* & Nur Razanah Rosli

PAPRSB Institute of Health Sciences, Universiti Brunei Darussalam, Brunei Darussalam

E-mail: yusrita.zolkefli@ubd.edu.bn

Dear Editor,

Honesty is a fundamental principle that the nursing profession must uphold at all times. Therefore, it is essential to cultivate a culture of academic integrity in nursing from the outset. Consistent engagement between academics and students exemplifies cultivating an environment of this sort. It is also crucial in cultivating the student's ethical and moral character (1). Furthermore, robust and coordinated academic integrity regulations require a collaborative strategy.

To begin with, assessing the faculty members' understanding of academic plagiarism and intellectual property violations is fundamental. An in-depth knowledge of plagiarism can facilitate the development of effective measures for managing student misconduct (2). However, some faculty members may refrain from reporting academic misconduct, rationalising this through leniency or underestimating the gravity of the violation and perhaps concerns about the time and effort required to complete the reporting process (1).

Furthermore, the absence of standardised procedures for identifying, detecting, and preventing academic misconduct has led to misunderstandings between students and faculty (2). These misunderstandings include various viewpoints regarding citation practices, unclear boundaries between collaboration and plagiarism, and inconsistent application of policies. The dean or director of the faculty should ensure that course materials include explicit academic integrity guidelines prior to the commencement of the semester in order to resolve this issue. Academic integrity should be a regular topic of discussion during staff meetings in order to monitor and resolve any violations. This is followed by a comprehensive review of the current course materials and the consideration of a variety of assessment modalities (3). Instead of relying

on a single assessment method, undergraduate students may be obligated to submit a written report and participate in an oral examination (viva voce) during the final year of the research project to exemplify this point.

In tandem, it is important that faculty members consistently communicate integrity expectations to students. Scheduling specific sessions, such as tutorials, promotes constructive dialogue and enables students to enquire about assessments. In order to guarantee that students assume complete responsibility for their evaluations, they must be adequately prepared for these sessions, which includes receiving an assignment outline in advance. On the other hand, faculty members must be prepared to allocate additional time to students who encounter challenges during the assessment process. Also, they should carefully review student course feedback at the midpoint of the course and at the end of the course to determine whether any modifications to the assessment format or content are required.

At the same time, the faculty is obligated to schedule a preliminary meeting with the student in the event of suspected academic misconduct. Establishing explicit purposes and objectives for the meeting is essential. A student may be required to retry the assessment if their understanding is deemed inadequate (4). Despite this, it is crucial to evaluate the viability of this approach, taking into account factors such as the instillation of responsibility, the prerequisites of the curriculum, and the time constraints (5). Although punitive measures are deemed necessary to maintain academic integrity, it is crucial to transform these circumstances into learning opportunities for students who have engaged in misconduct without condoning unethical behaviour. At the same time, faculty members must actively foster an environment

that prioritises honesty and fairness and demonstrates a high level of integrity (3).

In summary, motivating students to cultivate a sense of personal accountability and commitment to academic excellence is essential. The nursing profession prioritises integrity, as academic dishonesty among nursing students may indicate future unethical behaviour as registered nurses. This evidence supports the notion that cultivating an academic integrity culture is a shared responsibility, underscoring the importance of faculty commitment. As a result, it is fundamental to adopt an unambiguous approach that addresses academic misconduct and sustainable integrity within the context of nursing education.

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