Academic Integrity and Restorative Practices

ICAI Webinar
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Outline

Theory
• Academic Integrity and post-secondary’s civic education mandate
• What are Restorative Practices (RP)?
• Persistent myths surrounding RP and RJ
• Q&A

Application
• MacEwan University’s application of RP to promote academic integrity and respond to academic misconduct
• Common concerns
• Q&A
Academic Integrity and Post-Secondary’s Civic Education Mandate

• PSI’s increasing focus on fostering civic responsibility, engaged citizenship, and ethical decision making in students (Boyte, 2015; Jorgensen & Shultz, 2012)

• Student success is defined in terms of academic and citizenship skills

• Restorative Practices afford experiential learning opportunities related to moral development, emotional intelligence, and engaged citizenship (e.g., Karp & Sacks, 2014).

• To compare, see student perceptions of standard quasi-legal processes (Pitt, Dullaghan, & Smith, 2020)
Defining Restorative Practices (RP)

• Umbrella term, including Restorative Justice

• “Restorative justice is a process to involve, to the extent possible, those who have a stake in a specific offense and to collectively identify and address harms, needs, and obligations, in order to heal and put things as right as possible.” (Zehr, 2003, p. 40).
RP/RJ As Community- & Integrity-Building Tool

• Four underlying principles (Karp, 2019, p. 9):
  • inclusive decision making
  • active accountability
  • repairing harm
  • rebuilding trust

• RP to promote fundamental values of academic integrity (ICAI, 2021): honesty, fairness, trust, respect, responsibility, & courage
Persistent Myths Surrounding RJ/RP

RJ/RP

- **Myth 1**: is primarily about forgiving the wrongdoer and their reintegration
- **Myth 2**: is an easy way out for offenders/allows them to shirk responsibility
- **Myth 3**: is mainly focused on reducing recidivism
- **Myth 4**: is another form of mediation (see Zehr, 2003, p. 6, for debunking)
- **Myth 5**: might be OK for less serious offenses, but not for serious ones
- **Myth 6**: is much more time and resource intensive than quasi-legal, model code procedures

- **Myth/Contentious Issue**: RJ/RP are appropriation of Indigenous legal practices (see Chartrand & Horn, 2018, for an excellent discussion)
Restorative Practices at MacEwan University

• To promote student success
• To promote faculty buy-in
• To create a community of integrity
• Restorative resolution an option for academic and non-academic misconduct, *if conditions are met*:
  • No risk for further harm
  • Student takes responsibility, is willing to explore harms and repairs for those harms (no ”option shopping”)
  • Voluntary participation by student and harmed parties (or proxies)
  • Signed privacy statements
Restorative Responses to Misconduct

- ... characterized by:
- “A focus on HARMS and consequent NEEDS of those affected;
- Addressing OBLIGATIONS that result from those harms;
- Using inclusive, COLLABORATIVE processes;
- Involving those with a legitimate stake in the situation; and
- Seeking to REPAIR harms and put right the wrongs to the extent possible.” (Zehr, 2003, p. 33)
Restorative Questions 1 – Responsible Party

• What happened?
• What were you thinking of at the time?
• What have you thought about since?
• Who has been affected by what you have done?
• In what way have they been affected?*
• What do you think are the obligations resulting from your action?* What are appropriate consequences?* What do you think could be put in place to ensure it doesn't happen again?*

(Questions marked with an asterisk* have been added to or slightly modified from Wachtel’s (2016, p. 7))
Restorative Questions 2 – Harmed Parties

• What did you think when you realized what had happened?
• What impact has this incident had on you and others?
• What has been the hardest thing for you?
• What do you think needs to happen to make things right? What are appropriate consequences?* What do you think could be put in place to ensure it doesn't happen again?*

(Questions marked with an asterisk* have been added to or slightly modified from Wachtel’s (2016, p. 7))
Outcomes

• Focus on fairness and consistency
• Not identical to outcomes of quasi-legal, disciplinary process, but equitable
• Can be a mix of sanctions, educational, and restorative activities (e.g., developing (anonymous) action plans, resource sheets, reflective papers, value statements, educational material, etc.)
• Binding (not appealable)
Summary

• RP are a tool for post-secondary institution to pursue the loftier, civic & ethical education goals found in mission and vision statements
• RP connect academic integrity work to the institutions strategic goals
• RP are an effective integrity- and community-building tool
• RP can assist with faculty buy-in in addressing academic misconduct
• RP cannot replace quasi-legal procedures, but should be considered as the default approach
Thoughts on Participating in RP Resolution

• Short interviews with MacEwan faculty members and Students’ Association member: 
  https://streaming.macewan.ca/channel/Restorative%2BPractices/155819242
References


International Center for Academic Integrity (ICAI). (2021). The fundamental values of academic integrity (3rd ed.). [https://www.academicintegrity.org/fundamental-values/](https://www.academicintegrity.org/fundamental-values/)


