Faculty ethics unveiled:
scholarship—et tu, brute?

Susan R. Madsen, Utah Valley University

James H. Davis, University of Notre Dame

Abstract Little actual research has been conducted to explore the ethics of the faculty of higher education. A review of the literature has discovered four primary categories of faculty ethics, which include scholarship, teaching, service, and professional (e.g. consulting, treatment of colleagues and peers). This paper will focus on the scholarship category and includes research (e.g. authorship, conflicts of interest, plagiarism/citing-including self-plagiarism, ethical approval, research design, redundant publications, misconduct, accuracy, personal criticism of others) and review of other's work as a reviewer or editor (e.g. unbiased, speed/timeliness, accuracy, responsibility, objectivity, confidentiality, conflicts of interest). The purpose of this paper is to survey and classify key ideas in the literature, present research propositions, and outline ideas for future research in this area.

Key Ideas

- An emerging and critical topic of educational integrity research focuses on the exploration of the ethics of faculty within higher educational settings.

- Five obstacles frame the discussion around why academics do not focus on investigating ethics within their own profession: fear, double standards, personal connections, official channels, and power (based upon Martin's (2007) academic integrity obstacles).

- The ethics of faculty scholarship and research can be summarized into four broad categories: idea generation and ownership (idea); the research methodology and process (process); management of research relationships (relationship); and professional behavior in scholarship (professional).

Discussion Question 1 What do you think are the most critical areas to address today within the faculty ethics umbrella?

Discussion Question 2 What might be effective interventions or solutions in raising awareness of this issue on college/university campuses throughout the world?

Although a fair amount has been written about faculty ethics, covering a large variety of topics, paradigms, and theory, to date few studies have attempted to integrate the existing literature. In this paper we endeavor to summarize the major studies of faculty ethics within a framework to better understand the extant literature and discover areas where further research is needed. Interestingly comparatively little actual research has been conducted to explore the ethics of the management faculty of higher education. While scholars in life sciences, engineering, and law explicitly address the ethical behavior of those

involved in their disciplines, business scholars tend to examine business executives and students without including faculty behavior. Much of focus of trade and scholarly publications has been on practicing executives and students. For example, a recent study by the Public Agenda Foundation concluded that there is a general decline in values with both business leaders and average citizens (U.S. News & World Report, October 30, 2006). The study failed to consider faculty ethics. Similarly studies in the scholarly press have developed theories, models, and analyses to explain the actions of self-serving, opportunistic executives, enriching themselves at the expense of shareholders and important stakeholders without considering their own ethical behavior as scholars, researchers, and educators (e.g. Jensen & Meckling, 1976).

So why don't academics investigate ethics within their own profession? Martin (2007) described five obstacles to academic integrity that can be used to frame such a discussion. The first obstacle he described was that academics in general fear taking a public stand on controversial issues. While they have no problem criticizing business executives, government officials, and even their own university administrations, few faculty members will examine the ethics of their peers. A second obstacle includes double standards that can become barriers to integrity, particularly when they are institutionalized. For example, "Within academia, plagiarism is treated as a mortal sin—at least when done by students. Occasionally academics are accursed of plagiarism; sometimes these academics pay a heavy price, but on other occasions it is the accuser who suffers" (p. 22). Martin's (2007) third obstacle includes our own personal connections. As researchers and scholars these connections can sometimes make it challenging at times to treat others "fairly and equally for their contributions" (p. 23). This obstacle is focused on two primary concerns: conflict of interest and abuse of trust. The fourth obstacle is titled "official channels." Whistleblowers often suffer reprisals and are not appreciated by their peers. Official channels (i.e., formal procedures) like grievance procedures, ombudsmen, anti-discrimination boards and courts do not seem to be effective, and the accusers are often the ones who suffer negative consequences. The final obstacle is power. Unfortunately, power can sometimes lead to corruption even within academia. With scholars and researchers this can refer not only to the power that faculty members may have over their own students, but also the power that reviewers, editors, and grant assessors have in scholarly activity. Because of the perceived power of those in authority, academics often become just like students and "play it safe, fearing the consequences of unorthodoxy, not to mention the risks of openly challenging authority" (Martin, 2007, p. 25).

So what can we learn from what has been written on faculty ethics? There are four general categories of faculty responsibility around which ethical behavior can be examined. These include scholarship/research, teaching, service, and professional (e.g., consulting, treatment of colleagues and peers). Of the four categories scholarship/research is considered the single most important factor for faculty advancement in most schools (Gunderson & Capozzoli, 2008). Because faculty performance in terms of scholarship has such weight for the faculty member's tenure and promotion in most institutions of higher education, ethical breaches are most likely to occur in that category. We will therefore narrow our analysis to an examination of research investigating ethics within faculty scholarship and research. Hence, the purpose of this paper is to survey and classify key ideas in the literature, present research propositions, and outline ideas for future research in this area.

The Ethics of Faculty Scholarship/Research

Gunderson and Capozzoli (2008) argued that the "academic publishing environment contains many factors that may induce unethical behavior" (p. 316). They stated that research requirements for faculty have increased resulting in "intense pressure on both tenured and untenured faculty who must publish to progress and stay creditable in their careers" (p. 316). They concluded that "because academic research and publishing offer such a high-pressure environment, ethical dilemmas related to research and publishing in academia provide an excellent forum for assessing the possibility of changing ethical perceptions for individuals as they progress in their academic experiences" (Gunderson & Capozzoli, 2008, p. 316).

Our investigation of the literature examining the ethics in faculty scholarship can be summarized into four broad categories: idea generation and ownership, the research methodology and process, management of research relationships, and professional behavior in scholarship. We will describe each category in more depth and provide a summary of the extant research in each of the four. Figure 1 provides a visual framework of these four categories in our IPRP Model of Faculty Ethics in Scholarship.

Figure 1: IPRP Model of Faculty Ethics of Scholarship

IDEA	**PROCESS**
(Idea Generation and Ownership)	*(Research Process)*
Appropriate citations	Access to business organizations
Authorship attribution	Boundaries in professional relationships
Duplicative articles	Confidentially
False claims of new work	Conflicts of interest with funding
Order of authorship	Data tampering and falsification
Over-publishing	Failing to report study results that do not support hypotheses
Plagiarism	False accounting of observation
Self-Plagiarism	Fraud
Serial publications	IRB/Human Subjects
Slicing/salami science/L.P.U.	Splitting up data to publish more
	Writing mechanics and publication
RELATIONSHIP	**PROFESSIONAL**
(Research and Scholarship Relationships)	*(Professional Behavior in Scholarship)*
Collaboration authorships	Blurring borderlines
Contribution requirements	Contractual obligations
Exaggerating collaboration of prestigious partner	Editor ethics
Exploitative relationships	False allegations
Honorary authorship	Falsifying credentials
Multi-author publications	Reviewer ethics
Student-faculty authorship	Tenure and academic freedom limits
	Whistleblowing

Idea Generation and Ownership

Central to every research endeavor and resulting publication is the idea or thesis of the project. Ideas can come in a number of different ways. A large body of research examines the innovation and idea generation process in business and the sciences. Ethics in scholarship deals with ownership of the idea, the intellectual property, and how ownership is recognized and managed. Most would agree that it is unethical to represent someone else's ideas as their own. For example, taking an idea from another's publication, conference presentation, or paper within the review process (i.e., when reviewing a paper for publication) would be a breach in proper ethical behavior. If the idea comes from another scholar, the researchers must ensure that they have given proper attribution to the work of others in their writing. As streams of literature develop on a particular theme, theory, or paradigm, it is important that scholars make constant efforts to ensure that the citations in their work do not purposely exclude the studies that may do not completely support their thesis. Recent research (e.g., Boisvert & Irwin, 2006; Bretag & Carapiet, 2007) has also considered self-plagiarism, the misrepresentation of the scholar's own words and ideas as he/she develops a stream of research. This might include re-submitting their own research with minor modifications to multiple journals and conferences and using blocks of their own writing from earlier publications within a new paper. Scholars have investigated these and other idea ownership issues in scholarship. Several are described in Table 1.

Table 1. Idea Generation and Ownership Literature

Author(s)	Area of Examination
Davis (1999); Street, Rodgers, Israel, & Braunack-Mayer (2007)	Authorship attribution
McDonald (1993)	Auto-plagiarism, serial publication of many articles on the same subject with little new material; publishing work claiming to be new without adequate reference to existing literature
Artino & Brown (2009); Mooney (1991); Schuster (1995); Snodgrass (1991); Szirony, Wolfe, & Drake (2004)	Salami science or L.P.U. (least publishable unit); dividing research up into as many different articles as possible
Falvo & Parker (2000)	Appropriate citation and order of authorship
Davis (1999); Macfarlene (2004); Robinson & Moulton (2005); Shils (1997)	Plagiarism
Gilbelman (1999)	Duplicative articles; over-publishing
Anderson (2006); Boisvert & Irwin (2006); Bretag & Carapiet (2007); Brice & Eligh (2004); Green (2005); Hancock (2007); Scanlon (2007); Sheik (2000)	Self-plagiarism

Process

Ethics in faculty scholarship also involves the way in which the research is carried out. There are a number of ways that research procedures and methodologies can be altered that violate faculty research ethical norms. For example, feeling the pressure to publish in major journals and knowing that such journals value statistical significance and support for the hypotheses being proffered might motivate a scholar to drop a dependent performance variable that does not support his/her hypothesis or only report the hypotheses that significantly support the theory being tested. It may also include tampering with and/or falsifying data. A second area that falls within the category of research process are the issues surrounding the subjects being investigated, whether they be individuals or organizations. Most universities now have human subjects committees (also called Institutional Review Boards and Ethics Committees) who provide oversight for the researcher–subject relationship to ensure that the subject's rights are not violated. This includes protecting the identity of the subject in any setting, including the manuscript and the classroom. This category (i.e., process) also includes how the data is divided or split between publications. Faculty may unethically over-use, slice, or cut data into small pieces to maximize the publications. Most scholars agree that a publication must at least make a significant marginal contribution. Cutting the data in this way promotes quantity over quality and is, therefore, considered unethical in most disciplines. A number of studies have examined these and other research processes in scholarship. Table 2 contained a summary of initial literature discovered related to this category.

Table 2. Research Process Literature

Author(s)	Areas of Examination
Davis (1999); Woody (2007)	Confidentiality
Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Lowe (1991)	Access to business organizations
Davis (1999)	Conflict of interest with corporate funding source
Owen & Zwahr-Castro (2007); Peterson (1992)	Boundaries in professional relationships
Artino & Brown (2009)	Splitting up data from one study to publish multiple manuscripts
Blancett (1991)	Writing mechanics and publication
Shils (1997)	Knowingly or carelessly presents false account of observations
McCabe, Trevino, & Butterfield (2001)	Purposefully failing to report study results that do not support a hypothesis
Falvo & Parker (2000)	Data tampering and falsification
Broad & Wade (1982); Davis (1999); Robinson & Moulton (2005)	Fraud
Robinson & Moulton (2005); Seiber (1992)	IRB and Research Subjects

Relationship

A third area of consideration for faculty scholarship is how the research relationships are managed. For example, senior scholars may demand to be lead author on all research with which multiple researchers are involved, despite their minor contribution to the work. Junior scholars may feel coerced into such arrangements because of the power differential and the temptation of increased journal acceptance probability related to the great perceived legitimacy of the research. In other cases faculty may believe that, since the research is in their area of expertise, it is right that they should be listed as an author even though their role was minimal (e.g., offering a few citations, giving the final product a cursory review).

The relationship between the sponsor of the research and the reporting of the results must also be managed ethically. Scholars may feel pressured to use rhetoric that puts the sponsoring organization in the best possible light so that future sponsorship are not threatened and relationships are strengthened. This may include situations in which the results of the researcher's cutting edge research and findings run contrary to the values of his/her administration/university. The limits of academic freedom determine the morality of publishing their findings. These and other relationship issues have been initially explored in the literature and are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3. Research and Scholarship Relationships Literature

Author(s)	Area of Examination
Floyd, Schroeder, & Finn (1994)	Exploitative co-authorship relationship
Brogan & Brogan, 1982	Honorary authorship; attributing authorship to parties contributing little or nothing
Artino & Brown (2009); Hamilton, Greco, & Tanner (1997); Robinson & Mouton (2005); Woody (2007)	Contribution necessary to qualify as a legitimate joint author
Szirony, Wolfe, & Drake (2004)	Graduate student authorship
Mooney (1991)	Growing collaboration among faculty members and multiple-author publications
Macfarlene (2004)	Gaining legitimacy by exaggerating the extent of collaborative work with prestigious partners

Professional

The professional category includes the responsibilities that scholars have to their profession that are also considered important scholarly ethical behavior. This might include reporting the ethical misconduct in scholarly work of peers to the appropriate authorities. A number of studies have investigated this type of responsibility and the often unfortunate outcomes of whistle blowing. Most professional organizations, including colleges and universities, consider a matter of ethical responsibility for faculty to report the misbehavior of peers. Yet, this is

not addressed often in any setting. There are a number of ethical issues that may be considered under professional ethical behavior. A brief review of several of the articles addressing professional ethics can be found in Table 4.

Table 4. Professional Behavior in Scholarship Literature

Author(s)	Area of Examination
Knight & Auster (1999); Martin (2003); Wallbesser (2001)	Whistleblowing
Davis (1999)	Falsifying credentials
Davis (1999)	False allegations of misconduct against a colleague
Woody (2007)	Contractual obligation
Robinson & Moulton (2005)	Tenure and the limits of academic freedom
Robinson & Moulton (2005)	Blurring borderline between right and wrong
Martin (2007)	Reviewer ethics

Scholars do have a professional responsibility to provide an honest, open, and timely review of the research of others submitted to journal and for grants. In most cases the journal attempts to ensure that the reviewer is blind to the authorship of the manuscript but also knowledgeable enough about the area to add value to the review and revision process. To be ethically correct, a scholar who knows the authorship of the article they are asked to review should then disclose this information to editor of that particular journal. Likewise, if the scholar is unable to provide an unbiased review of the theory or paradigm for some reason (e.g., it runs counter to their own research), they should report this to the editor as well rather than providing a harsh review suggesting rejection simply to promote their own research. An ethical scholar, in most cases, should contact the managing editor and remove themselves from the review process. These are a few examples of a number of situations that may challenge the ethical decision-making of scholars and researchers within the academic arena.

Conclusion

The purpose of this paper was to survey and classify key ideas in the literature, present research propositions, and outline ideas for future research in this area. In this initial draft of the paper, we have not yet done all of this; however, we have at least presented a framework and started an initial review of the literature. When we have completed the final draft of this paper in the near future, we hope to effectively fulfill the more comprehensive purpose of the paper as initially outlined.

Faculty ethics in scholarship and research as well as in the other roles that faculty members fulfill are critical to explore in higher education today. As there is more pressure to publish, scholars will be faced with more ethical dilemmas and

decisions. It is imperative that this topic be brought to light in all kinds of publications, conferences, and settings so that members of the academy will think more carefully and critically about their related decisions. If faculty cannot be the highest examples of ethical behavior to their students, we fear unethical behaviors by students will continue to expand. Importantly, student behavior in college transfers to student behavior in the workplace. Something must be done, and colleges and universities should take on this social role, which often starts with the faculty members themselves.

References

Anderson, M. P. (2006). Plagiarism, copyright violation, and dual publication: Are you guilty? *Ground Water, 44*(5), 523.

Artino, Anthony R., & Brown, Scott W. (2009). Ethics in educational research: A comparative analysis of graduate students and faculty beliefs. *College Student Journal, 43*(2), 599-613.

Blancett, S. S. (1991). The ethics of writing and publishing. *Journal of Nursing Administration, 21*(5), 31-36.

Boisvert, R. F., & Irwin, M. J. (2006). Plagiarism on the rise. *Communications of the ACM, 49*(6), 23-24.

Bretag, T., & Carapiet, S. (2007). A preliminary study to identify the extent of self-plagiarism in Australian academic research. *Plagiary: Cross-Disciplinary Studies in Plagiarism, Fabrication, and Falsification, 2*(5), 1-12.

Brice, J., & Eligh, J. (2004). Author misconduct: Not just the editors' responsibility. *Medical Education, 39*, 83-89.

Broad, W., & Wade, N. (1983). *Betrayers of the truth.* New York: Simon and Shuster.

Brogan, K. M., & Brogan, J. D. (1982). Yet another ethical problem in technical writing. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the College English Associates, April 15-17, Houston, TX.

Davis, Michael (1999). *Ethics and the university.* London and New York: Routledge.

Easterby-Smith, M. Thorpe, R., & Lowe, A. (1991). *Management research: An introduction.* London: Sage Publications.

Falvo, D. R., & Parker, R. M. (2000). Ethics in rehabilitation education and research. *Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin, 43*(4), 197-202.

Floyd, S. W., Schroeder, D. M., & Finn, D. M. (1994). "Only if I'm first author": Conflict over credit in management scholarship. *Academy of Management Journal, 37*(3), 734-747.

Gelman, S. R., & Gibelman, M. (1999). A quest for citations? An analysis of and commentary on the trend toward multiple authorship. *Journal of Social Work Education, 35*(2), 203-213.

Green, L. (2005, October). Reviewing the scourge of self-plagiarism. *M/C Journal, 8*(5). Retrieved June 30, 2009.

Gunderson, D. E., & Capozzoli, E. A. (2008). Learned ethical behavior: An academic perspectives. *Journal of Education for Business, 83*(6), 315-324.

Hamilton, J. B., Greco, A. J., & Tanner, J. R. (1997). Ethical questions regarding joint authorship: Business and nonbusiness faculty perceptions on noncontributing authorship. *Journal of Education for Business, 72* (July/August), 325-330.

Hancock, H. (2007). Australian academic environments: Enhancing educational integrity or extinguishing it? [abstract]. The 3rd Asia Pacific Conference on Educational Integrity. University of South Australia, 6-7 December 2007.

Jensen, M.C., & Meckling, W. H. (1976). Theory of the firm: Managerial behavior, agency costs, and ownership structure. *Journal of Financial Economics, 3*, 305-360.

Knight, J., & Auster, C. J. (1999). Faculty conduct: an empirical study of ethical activism. The *Journal of Higher Education, 70*(2), 188-210.

Macfarlane, B. (2004). *Researching with integrity: The ethics of academic enquiry.* London: Routledge.

Martin, B. (2003). Illusions of whistleblower protection. *UTS Law Review, 5*, 119-130.

Martin, B. (2007). Obstacles to academic integrity. The 3rd Asia Pacific Conference on Educational Integrity. University of South Australia, 6-7 December 2007.

McCabe, D. L., Trevino, L. K., & Butterfield, K. D. (2001). Cheating in academic institutions: A decade of research. *Ethics & Behavior, 11*(3), 219-232.

Ross McDonald, J. (1993). What's wrong with these publications? Or, some pathologies of scientific authorship. *Physics Today, 46*(8), 51-52.

Mooney, C. J. (1991, May 22). Efforts to limit 'trivial' scholarship win backing from many academics. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, p. A1.

Owen, P. R., & Zwahr-Castro, J. (2007). Boundary issues in academia: Student perceptions of faculty—student boundary crossings. *Ethics & Behavior, 17*(2), 117-129.

Peterson, M. R. (1992). *At personal risk: boundary violations in professional-client relationships.* New York: Norton.

Robinson, G. M. & Moulton, J. M. (2005). *Ethical problems in higher education.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Page 9 of 10

4th Asia Pacific Conference on Educational Integrity (4APCEI) 28–30 September 2009
University of Wollongong NSW Australia

Scanlon, P. M. (2007). Song from myself: An anatomy of self-plagiarism. *Plagairy: Cross-Disciplinary Studies in Plagiarism, Fabrication and Falsification, 2*(1), 1-10.

Schuster, J. H. (1995, June 9). Letter to the editor: The trend toward multiple authors in scholarly articles. *Chronicle of Higher Education,* p. B3.

Siebert, J. E. (1992). *Planning ethically responsible research: A guide for students and internal review boards.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

Sheik, A. (2000). Publication ethics and the research assessment exercise: Reflections on the troubled question of authorship. *Journal of Medical Ethics, 26*, 422-426.

Shils, E., & Grosby, S. (1997). *The calling of education: "The academic ethic" and other essays on Higher Education.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Snodgrass, G. L. (1991). The pathology ethos: Looking for a rhetorical perspective on scientific fraud. Paper presented at the Conference on College Composition and Communication, March 22, Boston, MA.

Street, J., Rogers, W., Israel, M., & Braunack-Mayer, A. (2007). 'The way the game is played': Practice, perils and pitfalls in supervision and authorship [abstract]. The 3rd Asia Pacific Conference on Educational Integrity. University of South Australia, 6-7 December 2007.

Szirony, T. A., Wolfe, E., & Dake, J. A. (2004). Perceptions of nursing faculty regarding ethical issues in nursing research. *Journal of Nursing Education, 43*(6), 270-279.

Walbesser, H. (2001). *Integrity and higher education: Three monographs.* San Jose, CA: Writers Club Press.

Woody, W. D. (2008). Learning from the codes of academic disciplines. In Moore, S. L. (ed). Practical approaches to ethics for colleges and universities: *New Directions for Higher Education, No. 142* (pp. 39-54).

Page 10 of 10

4th Asia Pacific Conference on Educational Integrity (4APCEI) 28–30 September 2009
University of Wollongong NSW Australia