### Plagiarism Education: Engagement, Awareness, and Knowledge

#### Background
- Plagiarism and cheating need to be examined separately in order to determine how prevalent plagiarism is on its own (Yeo, 2007).
- When plagiarism studies are conducted, few use Canadian students as the participants (Christensen Hughes & McCabe, 2006).

#### Research Questions
1. **RQ1:** What is the self-reported rate of plagiarism among teacher candidates?
2. **RQ2:** Are teacher candidates and pre-service faculty instructors aware of what plagiarism is?
3. **RQ3:** What type of plagiarism education do teacher candidates report they receive, and what type of plagiarism education do pre-service faculty instructors report they provide?

#### Methodology
- Online consent forms and surveys were sent to two groups of participants (teacher candidates and pre-service faculty instructors).
- Surveys were anonymous.
- Compensation for participation was not provided.

#### Sample of Research Question 1:
*During your time in the BEd program, how often have you copied material word for word from a written source and turned it in as your own?*
- **a)** never
- **b)** once – did you know at the time it was plagiarism? (yes or no)
- **c)** more than once – were you aware that it was plagiarism any of the times you engaged in that behaviour? (yes or no)

#### Sample of Research Question 2:
*Student B submitted a report on bullying for a Law and Ethics course. Student B used a journal article on bullying and paraphrased some of the concepts in the report. Student B did not reference the source. Did Student B engage in plagiarism?*
- **a)** yes
- **b)** no
- **c)** unsure

#### Sample of Research Question 3:
*How many of your course instructors asked you to complete an in-class activity on plagiarism?*
- **a)** none
- **b)** some
- **c)** most
- **d)** all

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**Results**

**Engagement in Plagiarism:** Overall, 11.43% of teacher candidates admitted to plagiarizing once during their time in the BEd program, and 40% reported to plagiarizing more than once during their time in the BEd program. Of the teacher candidates who reported plagiarizing, 50% knew it was plagiarism when they did it.

**Plagiarism Understanding:** Overall, 22.86% of teacher candidate participants knew that all five behaviours constituted plagiarism. Regarding the pre-service faculty instructors, 100% rated four of the five behaviours as constituting plagiarism. For one of the five behaviours, 83% reported that it constituted plagiarism.

**Plagiarism Education:** In total, 17.1% of the teacher candidates reported their instructors did not provide enough information to them on plagiarism (22.9% said some, 40% said most, and 20% said all). Likewise, 16.7% of the pre-service faculty instructors reported they did not provide enough information on plagiarism to the teacher candidates. *Regarding the pre-service faculty instructors, 50% do not feel they have adequate knowledge of the University’s policy to determine instances of plagiarism.*

*Bivariate regression found that teacher candidates with higher understandings of plagiarism were less likely to engage in plagiarism (r² = .185, F(1, 33) = 7.477, p = 0.010).*

**Future Considerations**

- If instructors do not adequately understand their University’s plagiarism policy, are students plagiarizing without being punished? Is this an issue?
- Will academic dishonesty in higher education transfer into dishonest behaviours in the workplace?
- Who should be responsible for teaching students and faculty what plagiarism is and how to avoid it?
References