Academic Integrity is a rather new term to me. I have never before been introduced to this specific terminology, although I have been introduced to the concept before, specifically in school where students referred to it as cheating. This is on a very small level however, as cheating would involve something like writing notes or answers on a paper and sneaking them into an examination. In school, cheating would also have involved something like copying text from a Wikipedia page for a task instead of writing your own understanding of the topic and actually doing the work. Most teachers could spot these tasks from a mile away as Wikipedia’s word choice tends to be far too complex for the average school pupil, especially in lower grades like primary school, and clearly does not present to be the student’s own words. Although, after watching the two prescribed videos, I realized that many teachers may actually use a plagiarism detection tool. This had never occurred to me before.

So from what I understand about this new term, in the grander scale, Academic Integrity is a community developed way of thinking. It is a concept designed by the academic and scientific community over time that provides a set of general principles to guide you in how you write your work. These principles are enforced through peer pressure, as breaking these principles results in exclusion from your peers as you are not up to standard with everyone else and can cause your peers harm. For example, if someone spent hours formulating a new mathematical concept, and spent hours writing a paper discussing the groundbreaking idea, they deserve acknowledgement for that hard work as it contributed to bettering the scientific community and enables us all to learn more. If I then plagiarize that paper, and claim the groundbreaking mathematical concept is my own, not only do I harm the person who wrote it by stealing their rewards for their contribution to the world, but I disgrace myself in the eyes of the community as I have not contributed anything. So, in summary, Academic Integrity in my eyes is a principled approach that helps you to respect other people’s work and gain respect from other people for your work in a peer environment where our hard work is shared so that all of us can collaborate, work together, build on one another’s ideas and progress together.

I think Academic Integrity and Ethics work hand in hand. In my view, Ethics are a personalized approach to achieving Academic Integrity. I see Ethics as the set of values I need to develop my character, my viewpoint, my personality, to adopt so that I can write with Academic Integrity and be successful in the greater community of my peers. For example, if the reason I plagiarized that groundbreaking mathematical formula was because I was too lazy to work hard and come up with my own, original idea, or too greedy to collaborate with someone else and share the shine, then I need to reevaluate my Ethics. Some Ethics I may look into learning in this example would be grit, determination, humbleness, collaboration and creativity. Having poor Ethics in my opinion is what leads to a lack of Academic Integrity. Adding these Ethics to my own personalized code of conduct would no doubt prevent me in future from plagiarizing again.

To succeed in an ever connected world where collaboration is key Academic Integrity and Ethics are important. We work more in teams, building on decades of information gathered by other people than we do on our own these days, and we must find ways to do so harmoniously. If we all develop our own set of Ethics to conduct ourselves with as much Academic Integrity as we are capable of, we would realize that plagiarism doesn’t benefit us, or the community, and that the only we can learn and grow, and ad to the communities’ knowledge as a whole, is by working honestly.