

An overview of academic misconduct

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(National and university standards included)

Contents

1. Definition of academic norm.....	2
2. Definition and main forms of academic misconduct.....	2
2.1. Definition of academic misconduct.....	2
2.2. The main forms of academic misconduct.....	2
3. Students obligations and penalties for academic misconduct.....	3
4. Penalties for academic misconduct in Tsinghua University.....	3
5. Understanding academic misconduct.....	4
5.1. Plagiarism.....	4
5.2. Falsification and fabrication.....	5
5.3. Duplicate submission and repetitive submission.....	5
5.4. Purchasing, selling and ghost-writing academic papers.....	6
5.5. Providing false academic information.....	6
5.6. Improper authorship.....	6
5.7. Misusing academic authority and prestige.....	6
5.8. Violation of experiment regulations.....	7
6. Examples of citation.....	7

1. Definition of academic norm

An academic norm is a set of regulations that must be followed by members of an academic community when conducting academic activities. It is a necessity to ensure the academic community run scientifically, efficiently and fairly. It originates conventionally from academic activities and is a relatively independent system of academic regulation.

The academic norm is the basic regulations of academic activities designed according to the academic development pattern. It reflects the long-standing experience in academic activities and should be followed by all members of academic communities.

2. Definition and main forms of academic misconduct

2.1. Definition of academic misconduct

The Prevention and Disposition of Academic Misconduct in Higher Educational Institutions

"This 40th document issued by the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China has been implemented since September 2016. It defines academic misconduct as the behaviors of universities and its faculty, administrative staff and students that violate the academic norm and integrity in academic research and relevant activities."

2.2. The main forms of academic misconduct

The Prevention and Disposition of Academic Misconduct at Tsinghua University

Term 22:

One commits academic misconduct if he/she has demonstrated one of the following behaviors in academic research and related activities:

- Plagiarizing others' academic achievements.
- Falsifying others' research findings.
- Fabrication of research data, documents, cited literature or annotations or presenting fictional research findings.
- Authorizing academic papers or research in which one did not participate, misusing others' authorship without consent, using a fictional name as co-author, or not acknowledging others' contribution in a collaborated research.
- Providing false information in applying for new projects, achievements or awards or in reviewing academic positions and degrees.
- Purchasing or selling academic papers; hiring ghostwriters or ghost-writing for someone else.
- Other behaviours that are seen as academic misconduct in accordance with the regulations of relevant academic organizations or research institutions.

Term 23

When one commits any form of academic misconduct and has any of the following circumstances, it will be taken as a serious case:

- If the academic misconduct has caused further damage to the community
- If the process includes financial transfer or exchange
- If there is any retaliation against the informant

- If there is any organizational behavior of academic misconduct
- If one has committed academic misconduct multiple times
- Other cases of academic misconduct that result in further negative impact to the community

3. Students obligations and penalties for academic misconduct

From the Student Regulations in Higher Educational Institutions

Chapter two, Term 7:

The students should perform the following obligations in their study at the university:

Abide faithfully by the academic norms and complete the academic requirements.

Chapter three, Section two, Term 20:

The university should organize educational sessions on integrity for students and keep record of such in their studies, research and personal value. The university should also establish a supervision and punishment mechanism for academic dishonesty. For those who exhibit severe dishonesty, the university will apply administrative sanctions according to related regulation. For those who violate academic integrity, the university will apply sanctions on his/her degree, title and awards.

Chapter three, Section seven, Term 37:

Diplomas and degrees obtained through any form of academic misconduct or any other illegitimate approach will be revoked by the university.

If the revoked diplomas and degrees are already registered, the university shall cancel the registration and report the case to the relevant administrative department.

Chapter five, Term 52:

The students' academic status will be cancelled if he/she has any of the following conditions:

Committing serious academic misconduct in his/her graduation project or published research; ghost-writing, purchasing or selling academic papers.

4. Penalties for academic misconduct in Tsinghua University

- For students who commit academic misconduct, the university will impose corresponding sanctions in accordance with the relevant provisions of student management.
- If the misconduct is directly related to the acquisition of a degree, the degree-conferring unit will defer or cancel the conferment or revoke the already awarded degree.

Detailed rules for the Implementation of Disciplinary Regulations at Tsinghua University

Term 20:

If any of the following forms of academic misconduct is affirmed by the academic committee, the university will take disciplinary actions:

- Plagiarizing others' academic achievements;
- Falsifying others' research findings;

- Fabrication of research data, documents, cited literature or annotations, or presenting fictional research findings;
- Authorizing academic papers or research in which one did not participate, misusing others' authorship without consent, using a fictional name as co-author, or not acknowledging others' contribution in a collaborated research;
- Providing false information in applying for projects, achievements or awards or in reviewing academic positions and degrees;
- Purchasing or selling academic papers; hiring ghost-writers or ghost-writing for someone else;
- Other forms of academic misconduct.

5. Understanding academic misconduct

5.1. Plagiarism

Definition

- Plagiarism is presenting another person's work as one's own. In academic activities, taking others' academic points of view, thoughts, words, or written work as one's own is considered plagiarism.
- Plagiarism also means including another person's written work into one's own work without acknowledgement. Intentionally using another person's published or unpublished work as one's own work for publishing or translating, paraphrasing another person's work in one's own work without acknowledgement is considered plagiarism.

The forms of plagiarism

- In Higher Educational Institution's Guidance of Academic Norm in Scientific Research issued by the Ministry of Education, plagiarism includes the 8 following situations:
 - Copying the arguments, opinions or conclusions in another person's copyrighted work without providing a reference.
 - Stealing the survey data, experiment data or charts of another person's research.
 - Stealing the original concepts, definitions, methods, theories or formulas from another person's copyrighted work.
 - Directly citing the words, sentences from another person's work without clear acknowledgement.
 - Copying or slightly paraphrasing the entire paragraphs from another person's work.
 - Copying the full text of another person's work.
 - Combining others' research findings as one's own without citing them.
 - Using the full text or part of one's own published works without citing them in the references. (self-plagiarism)

Comparing citation and plagiarism

For direct citation, there are two conditions in which plagiarism is committed: first, not acknowledging the source of cited literature; second, not using quotation marks or other methods (including using colons, changing the format or font) that clearly differentiates another person's statements from one's own statements.

The detailed standard is as follows:

- Using quotation marks and citing the source: this is not considered plagiarism. However, if the cited part is too long and exceeds a certain percentage of the whole text, it may be seen as overuse of citation, which is also a form of academic misconduct.
- Citing the source but not using quotation marks: this is non-standard and can even be seen as plagiarism. The cited part should be controlled in length and should also be paraphrased.
- Using citation marks but not citing the source: this is non-standard and can even be seen as plagiarism. This behaviour is often considered as a grey zone and is advised to be avoided.
- Neither using the citation marks nor citing the source: this is definitely considered as plagiarism and has 8 specific forms, which are stated in the previous section.
- The discussion above is only applicable for direct citation. For indirect citation, the author should cite the source and properly paraphrasing the cited part to avoid plagiarism. There are different standards and examples of paraphrasing in universities around the world, which will be explained in the Appendix.

5.2. Falsification and fabrication

Definition

- Falsification refers to using false approaches to change or misinterpret theories or policies. The falsification in academic research tends to be changing the theories or data of a study.
- Fabrication refers to inventing a fictional thing in order to achieve an advantage. Fabrication in academic research tends to be using fictional data or findings in a study.

5.3. Duplicate submission and repetitive submission

Definition

- Duplicate submission refers to the attempt of an author to simultaneously or successively publish one academic paper or similar academic papers in two or several journals during the reviewing period (in which one should not submit the academic paper to a different journal). This is also applicable beyond the reviewing period when the author knows that his/ her academic paper will be published or is already published.
- Repetitive submission refers to the repetition of contents (including hypothesis, methodology, sample, data, charts, text and conclusions) when submitting academic papers to different journals without cross-reference or indexes.

Q&A

- **How to differentiate duplicate submission and repetitive submission?**
The duplicate submission may not be intentional. It can be caused by the mistakes in communication with journal editors. Repetitive submission is often intentional, and the author tends to change the title or subtitles to disguise.
- **How do we avoid duplicate submission and repetitive submission?**
For the same experiment and data, publishing the analysis from different perspectives and different conclusions is not considered duplicate submission or repetitive submission. However, one is advised to integrate his/ her research into one long academic paper rather than split the study into several academic papers.

5.4. Purchasing, selling and ghost-writing academic papers

Definition

- This includes having one's own academic paper completed by a third party. Usually, the ghost-writing companies will post its writers' work on their platforms for sale, and this results in the purchase and selling of academic papers. Since July 2018, the Ministry of Education strictly forbids the purchasing, selling and ghost-writing of academic papers. Students who commit such misconducts will be expelled from their student status, and their diplomas and degree certificate will be revoked.
- Since some scholars with high-quality research are not proficient enough with their English, it is okay to have a third party translate their academic paper for publishing with acknowledgement. However, it should be noted that the English translation of an already published Chinese academic paper should not be submitted again, for that will cause duplicate submission.

5.5. Providing false academic information

Definition

- This refers to providing false evidence of publication, fabricating academic experience and achievement, faking or altering reference letters, transcripts or other documents and exaggerating or understating research findings. Such behaviour is often seen in applying for new projects, achievements or awards and reviewing academic positions.

5.6. Improper authorship

Definition

Improper authorship refers to the condition in which the authorship or ranking of an author does not fit his/ her actual contribution to the research, or the information of an author is false. The main forms of improper authorship are as follows:

- Excluding those who substantially contributed to the research from the author list;
- Including those who did not contribute to the research into the authorship;
- Including a person into the author list without authorization;
- Providing false information about an author's title, institution, educational background or academic experience;
- The ranking of an author does not fit his/her actual contribution.

Note:

- Improper authorship is an issue that tends to be overlooked by scholars. We should pay attention and not sign irrelevant academic papers.

5.7. Misusing academic authority and prestige

Definition

- Academic authority refers to the power given to scholars or academic institutions for their use. Scholars and academic institutions are the subject of academic authority, which is a relative power obtained through the competition within an institution or among individuals.

- Misusing academic authority and prestige includes deliberately exaggerating or understating academic achievements, publishing research findings without peer or institutional review, using one's authority and prestige to seek unjust benefit for individual or institution, etc.

5.8. Violation of experiment regulations

Definition

- This includes violating the national security regulation on dangerous chemicals and radioactive materials. This also includes violating current laws and ethics in research involving human subjects as well as any infringement of their legal rights, privacy and right of consent.

6. Examples of citation

The following examples by MIT show the proper format of citation and plagiarized format of the same source.

Cited the source but did not use the quotation mark

麻省理工学院关于正确引用、改述及抄袭的示例 [20]

标注了出处，但未对直接引用的文字加引号

原文	样文	抄袭
<p>Because of their unique Lester perspective, Americans fear globalization less than anyone else, and as a consequence they think about it less than anyone else. When Americans do think about globalization, they think of the global economy as an enlarged version of the American economy.</p> <p>Source: Thurow, L (1993). <i>Fortune Favors the Bold</i> (p.6). New York: Harper Collins.</p>	<p>Thurow (1993) asserts that the American reaction to globalization is different from that of the rest of the world in that "American's fear globalization less than anyone else, and as a consequence... think about it less than anyone else" (p. 6).</p> <p>这是准确的引用, 因为:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 作者标注出了出处; · 用自己的文字进行了间接引用; · 对直接引用的文字加了引号。 <p>(完整的Thurow参考文献列在参考书目中)</p>	<p>The American view of globalization is unlike that of the rest of the world.</p> <p>Because of their unique perspective, Americans fear globalization less than anyone else, and therefore think about it less than anyone else (Thurow, 1993).</p> <p>这是抄袭, 因为:</p> <p>尽管作者标注了出处, 但是他对直接引用的文字没有加引号。这会让读者误以为这些文字是作者的, 而不是原作者的。</p>

This is a proper citation because:

- The author cited the source;
- The author used paraphrase for indirect citation;
- The author used quotation marks for direct citation;

This is plagiarism because:

Although the author cited the source, he/she did not use quotation marks. This may mislead the readers in thinking the cited part is the author's own words.

Cited the source and paraphrased, but there are still some direct citations without quotation marks

标注了出处，也做了改述，但改述不彻底，照抄了若干词组而没有加引号

原文	样文	抄袭
Because of their unique Lester perspective, Americans fear globalization less than anyone else, and as a consequence they think about it less than anyone else. When Americans do think about globalization, they think of the global economy as an enlarged version of the American economy. Source:Thurrow, L (1993). Fortune Favors the Bold (p. 6). New York: Harper Collins.	Lester Thurow, (1993) maintains that because Americans see globalization simply as a bigger form of their own economy, they are less concerned about it than is the rest of the world. 这样的改述是可以接受的，因为： 作者保留了原文的意思，没有照搬原文的文字或结构。有些词如globalization是共性词汇 (generic terms)，很难用其他同义词替代。不加引号地使用这些词汇，是允许的。(完整的Thurow参考文献列在参考书目中)	According to Lester Thurow(1993), Americans fear globalization less than people from other countries and as a consequence spend less time thinking about it. Indeed, Americans see globalization as an enlarged version of their own economy. 这是抄袭,因为： 虽然作者标注了出处,也用同义词对原文进行了改述,但其中作者照抄了若干词组,也构成抄袭。

This is an acceptable paraphrase because:

The author kept the idea of original text but did not copy the original wording or structure. Some words such as “globalization” are generic terms and are difficult to find substitutions. Therefore, it is allowed to use these words without quotation marks.

This is plagiarism because:

Although the author cited the source and paraphrased the original text using synonyms, he/she still copied some phrases which qualifies as plagiarism.

Cited the source and paraphrased, but there are still direct citations without quotation marks

标注了出处，也做了改述，但改述不彻底，照抄了若干词组而没有加引号

原文	样文	抄袭
<p>We do not yet understand all the ways in which brain chemicals are related to emotions and thoughts, but the salient point is that our state of mind has an immediate and direct effect on our state of body.</p> <p>Source: Siegel, B. (1986). Love, Medicine and Miracles (p. 69). New York: Harper and Row.</p>	<p>Siegel (1986) writes that although the relationship between brain chemistry and thoughts and feelings is not fully understood, we do know that our psychological state affects our physical state.</p> <p>这是可接受的改述,因为:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">· 标注了出处;· 使用了同义词;· 改变了句子的结构;· 改变语态。	<p>Siegel (1986) writes that the relationship between the chemicals in the brain and our thoughts and feelings remains only partially understood. He goes on to say, however, that one thing is clear: our mental state affects our bodily state.</p> <p>这是不可接受的改述,因为: 虽然作者标注了出处,也在某些地方用同义词进行了改述,但是:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">· 作者完全保留着原文句子的结构;· 若干词汇或词组与原文完全一样。因而,构成了抄袭。

This is an acceptable paraphrase because:

- It cited the source;
- It used the synonyms;
- It changed the sentence structure;
- It changed the voice.

This is an unacceptable paraphrase because:

- Although the author cited the source and paraphrased the original text using synonyms:
- The author kept the structure of the original text;
- Some words and phrases are the same as the original text, which qualifies as plagiarism.

普林斯顿大学关于抄袭的形式及示例教学 [21]

逐字剽窃，或者对直接引用的文字没有标注出处

原文	样文	抄袭
<p>From time to time this submerged or latent theater in becomes almost overt. It is close to the surface in Hamlet's pretense of madness, the "antic disposition" he puts on to protect himself and prevent his antagonists from plucking out the heart of his mystery. It is even closer to the surface when Hamlet enters his mother's room and holds up, side by side, the pictures of the two kings, Old Hamlet and Claudius, and proceeds to describe for her the true nature of the choice she has made, presenting truth by means of a show. Similarly, when he leaps into the open grave at Ophelia's funeral, ranting in high heroic terms, he is acting out for Laertes, and perhaps for himself as well, the folly of excessive, melodramatic expressions of grief.</p> <p>Source: Alvin Kernan, The Playwright as Magician. New Haven: Yale University</p>	<p>Almost all of Shakespeare's Hamlet can be understood as a play about acting and the theater. For example, there is Hamlet's pretense of madness, the "antic disposition" that he puts on to protect himself and prevent his antagonists from plucking out the heart of his mystery. When Hamlet enters his mother's room, he holds up, side by side, the pictures of the two kings. Old Hamlet and Claudius, and proceeds to describe for her the true nature of the choice she has made, presenting truth by means of a show. Similarly, when he leaps into the open grave at Ophelia's funeral ranting in high heroic terms, he is acting out for Laertes, and perhaps for himself as well, the folly of excessive, melodramatic expressions of grief.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 作者没有标明出处 · 作者大段照抄了原文中的句子，而没有加引号。 <p>如何改正：</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 标注出处； · 对引用的文字加引号。

The examples by Princeton University on different forms of plagiarism

Word-by-word plagiarism, or not adding sources for direct citations

Plagiarism:

- The author did not cite the source;
- The author quoted a lot from the original text without using quotation marks;

How to amend:

- Cite the sources;
- Use quotation marks for direct quotation.

Quoted paragraphs, sentences and phrases without citing the sources

摘取了段落、句子或词组，但没有标注出处

原文	样文	抄袭
<p>From time to time this submerged or latent theater in becomes almost overt. It is close to the surface in Hamlet's pretense of madness, the "antic disposition" he puts on to protect himself and prevent his antagonists from plucking out the heart of his mystery. It is even closer to the surface when Hamlet enters his mother's room and holds up, side by side, the pictures of the two kings, Old Hamlet and Claudius, and proceeds to describe for her the true nature of the choice she has made, presenting truth by means of a show. Similarly, when he leaps into the open grave at Ophelia's funeral, ranting in high heroic terms, he is acting out for Laertes, and perhaps for himself as well, the folly of excessive, melodramatic expressions of grief.</p> <p>Source: Alvin Kernan, <i>The Playwright as Magician</i>. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979.pp.102-103.</p>	<p>Almost all of Shakespeare's Hamlet can be understood as a play about acting and the theater. For example, in Act 1, Hamlet adopts a pretense of madness that he uses to protect himself and prevent his antagonists from discovering his mission to revenge his father's murder. He also presents truth by means of a show when he compares the portraits of Gertrude's two husbands in order to describe for her the true nature of the choice she has made. And when he leaps in Ophelia's open grave ranting in high heroic terms, Hamlet is acting out the folly of excessive, melodramatic expressions of grief.</p>	<p>该样文,无论是内容还是结构,几乎完全是从原文照搬过来的。尽管作者对原文进行若干的改写,但有若干短语是从原文摘取的,所以是抄袭。作者即使从原文中摘取很短的短语,把它们加入到自己的句子中,也需要对那些短语加引号,并标注出处。在这个例子中,作者即使对整个段落进行了改写,哪怕只照抄了原作者的一个词组“high heroic terms”,而没有加引号,没有标注出处,那也构成抄袭。</p> <p>如何改正:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 标注出处; · 对照抄的文字加引号;如果觉得加引号的文字太多,则要进一步改写。

Plagiarism:

- The example text is almost an entire copy of the original text. Although the author did some paraphrasing, there are still some parts that are same as the original text, which makes it a plagiarized work. Even when the author copies very short phrases from the source, he/she still needs to put quotation marks on them and cite the source. In this example, even though the author did paraphrase the whole passage and only copied one phrase “high heroic terms” without citing the source or using the quotation marks, he/she still committed plagiarism.

How to amend:

- Cite the source;
- Put quotation marks on directly quoted texts. If the quoted text is too long, consider paraphrasing it.

Paraphrased the original text but kept the structure

改述了原文但同时保留了原文的结构不变

原文	样文	抄袭
<p>From time to time this submerged or latent theater in becomes almost overt. It is close to the surface in Hamlet's pretense of madness, the "antic disposition" he puts on to protect himself and prevent his antagonists from plucking out the heart of his mystery. It is even closer to the surface when Hamlet enters his mother's room and holds up, side by side, the pictures of the two kings, Old Hamlet and Claudius, and proceeds to describe for her the true nature of the choice she has made, presenting truth by means of a show. Similarly, when he leaps into the open grave at Ophelia's funeral, ranting in high heroic terms, he is acting out for Laertes, and perhaps for himself as well, the folly of excessive, melodramatic expressions of grief.</p> <p>Source: Alvin Kernan, <i>The Playwright as Magician</i>. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979.pp.102-103.</p>	<p>Almost all of Shakespeare's Hamlet can be understood as a play about acting and the theater. For example, in Act 1, Hamlet pretends to be insane in order to make sure his enemies do not discover his mission to revenge his father's murder. The theme is even more obvious when Hamlet compares the pictures of his mother's two husbands to show her what a bad choice she has made, using their images to reveal the truth. Also, when he jumps into Ophelia's grave, hurling his challenge to Laertes, Hamlet demonstrates the foolishness of exaggerated expressions of emotion.</p>	<p>作者完全改写了原文的文字表述,已经消除了原文文字的任何痕迹,但是,这段文字的主要思想例子的选择和次序,以及句子的基本结构,完全都来自原文。这也构成抄袭。在改述时,必须:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">· 用自己的文字和结构;· 在段落的末尾标注出处,以表明这些内容不是自己的原创。

Plagiarism:

The author completely paraphrased the wording of the original text. However, the main ideas, the choice and order of examples and the sentence structures are still same as the source. This is also plagiarism. When paraphrasing, one should:

- Use his/her own wording and structure;
- Cite the source at the end of paragraph to show that it is not original.