

Plagiarism

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What Is Plagiarism?

Definition: *In an instructional setting, plagiarism occurs when a writer deliberately uses someone else's language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source.*

Plagiarism or the Misuse of Sources

1. submitting someone else's text as one's own **or** attempting to blur the line between one's own ideas or words and those borrowed from another source;
 2. carelessly **or** inadequately citing ideas and words borrowed from another source.
- Such discussions conflate.

Guilt of Academic Misconduct

Students who are fully aware that their actions constitute plagiarism:

1. copying published information into a paper without source attribution for the purpose of claiming the information as their own, or
2. turning in material written by another student—are guilty of academic misconduct.

Causes of Plagiarism

- Students may fear failure or fear taking risks in their own work.
- Students may have poor time-management skills or they may plan poorly for the time and effort required for research-based writing, and believe they have no choice but to plagiarize.
- Students may view the course, the assignment, the conventions of academic documentation, or the consequences of cheating as unimportant.
- Teachers may present students with assignments so generic or unparticularized that students may believe they are justified in plagiarizing.
- Instructors and institutions may fail to report cheating when it does occur, or may not enforce appropriate penalties.

Not Guilty

- Students may not know how to integrate the ideas of others and document the sources of those ideas appropriately in their texts.
- Students will make mistakes as they learn how to integrate others' words or ideas into their own work because error is a natural part of learning.
- Students may not know how to take careful and fully documented notes during their research.
- Teachers may define plagiarism differently or more stringently than have instructors or administrators in students' earlier education or in other writing situations.
- College instructors may assume that students have already learned appropriate academic conventions of research and documentation.
- College instructors may not support students as they attempt to learn how to research and document sources; instead, instructors may assign writing that requires research and expect its appropriate documentation, yet fail to appreciate the difficulty of novice academic writers to execute these tasks successfully.
- Students from other cultures may not be familiar with the conventions governing attribution and plagiarism in American colleges and universities.
- In some settings, using other people's words or ideas as their own is an acceptable practice for writers of certain kinds of texts (for example, organizational documents), making the concepts of plagiarism and documentation less clear cut than academics often acknowledge and thereby confusing students who have not learned that the conventions of source attribution vary in different contexts.

Prevention

1. Explain Plagiarism and Develop Clear Policies

- Talk about the underlying implications of plagiarism.
- Include in your syllabus a policy for using sources, and discuss it in your course. Define
- Establish an honor code to which all students subscribe.

2. Improve the Design and Sequence of Assignments

- Design assignments that require students to explore a subject in depth.
- Start building possible topics early.
- Consider establishing a course theme, and then allow students to define specific questions about that theme (like "literacy" or "popular culture")
- Develop schedules for students that both allow them time to explore and support them as they work toward defined topics.
- Support each step of the research process.
- Make the research process, and technology used for it, visible.

3. Attend to Sources and the Use of Reading

- Ask students to draw on and document a variety of sources.
- Show students how to evaluate their sources.
- Focus on reading.

4. Work on Plagiarism Responsibly

- Distinguish between misuse of sources and plagiarism.

- Ask students for documentation (work in progress).
- Use plagiarism detection services cautiously.

5. Take Appropriate Disciplinary Actions

- Pay attention to institutional guidelines.
- Consider your goal.

(Council of Writing Program Administrators, January, 2003)

Penalty for Plagiarism

The penalty for plagiarism is usually determined by the instructor teaching the course. It could involve **failure for the paper**, and it could mean **failure for the entire course** and even **expulsion from school**.

Ignorance of the rules about plagiarism is no excuse, and carelessness is just as bad as purposeful violation.

Within schools and colleges that have a diverse student body, instructors should be aware that some international students from other cultures may have ideas about using outside resources that differ from the institution's policies regarding plagiarism; opportunities should be provided for all students to become familiar with institutional policies regarding plagiarism.

HONOR CODE

I. The Honor Committee

The Honor Committee is a group of students elected from the student body whose primary and indispensable duty is to instill the concept and spirit of the Honor Code within the student body. The secondary function of this group is to sit as a hearing committee on all alleged violations of the code.

II. Extent of the Honor Code

The Honor Code deals specifically with **cheating and attempted cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing.**

A. Cheating encompasses the following:

1. The willful giving or receiving of an unauthorized, unfair, dishonest, or unscrupulous advantage in academic work over other students.
2. The above may be accomplished by any means whatsoever, including but not limited to the following: fraud; deception; theft; trick; talking; signs; gestures; copying from another student; and the unauthorized use of study aids, memoranda, books, data, or other information.
3. Attempted cheating.

B. Plagiarism encompasses the following:

1. Presenting as one's own the words, the work, or the opinions of someone else without proper acknowledgment.
2. Borrowing the sequence of ideas, the arrangement of material, or the pattern of thought of someone else without proper acknowledgment.

C. Lying encompasses the following:

The willful and knowledgeable telling of an untruth, as well as any form of deceit, attempted deceit, or fraud in an oral or written statement relating to academic work. This includes but is not limited to the following:

1. Lying to administration and faculty members.
2. Falsifying any university document by mutilation, addition, or deletion.
3. Lying to Honor Committee members and counsels during investigation and hearing. This may constitute a second charge,

with the committee members who acted as judges during that specific hearing acting as accusers.

D. Stealing encompasses the following:

Taking or appropriating without the permission to do so, and with the intent to keep or to make use of wrongfully, property belonging to any member of the community or any property located on the university campus.