

WRITING CENTER TIP SHEET

Plagiarism Basics

What is Plagiarism?

Plagiarism is defined as “n 1: a piece of writing that has been copied from someone else and is presented as being your own work 2: the act of plagiarizing; taking someone's words or ideas as if they were your own” (dictionary.com).

There are two kinds of plagiarism: intentional and unintentional. BOTH types are technically unethical and unacceptable in an academic community, and both carry serious ramifications.

Intentional plagiarism occurs when the writer purposely tries to pass off another’s work as his or her own. This could take the shape of buying a paper from someone, downloading a paper off the Internet, using sections of a published article, book or newspaper without giving source information, and hiring someone to write your paper.

Unintentional plagiarism occurs when the writer mistakenly attributes sources or does so improperly. For example: paraphrasing a source too closely, attributing a quote from one source to another, leaving a source off of a bibliography.

Turning in a plagiarized paper, or a paper containing plagiarized sections, is a violation of Academic Honesty codes and the writer will be reviewed in front of the judicial board to determine the consequences of his or her actions.

How to avoid plagiarism

When taking notes, specify:

- _ which ideas belong to you (write ME in the margin of the notepaper)
- _ which ideas are directly quoted from a source (write Q-*author’s name* in the margin of notepaper)
- _ which ideas are paraphrased (write P-*author’s name* in the margins of the notepaper)

When writing your paper, be sure to:

- _ enclose quotation marks around all writing taken word for word from another source, and put the author’s last name in ()s after the quote
- _ put the author’s last name in ()s after a paraphrased section

When creating a Works Cited page, check:

- _ to see if you have included every book, article or piece of artwork that you used when researching, even if you didn’t quote directly from the work
- _ to make sure that you have all the required information (usually title, author, publisher, city of publication, copyright date, and page number) for each text

Ask questions

If you’re unsure whether or not something should be quoted, or how to document appropriately, *ask an instructor or visit the Writing Center*. Better to be safe...