

Avoiding Plagiarism: Attributes of highly suspicious essays

Consider some of the attributes that make faculty worry a piece of writing is not the student's own:

- * papers that are barely “on topic” (a paper that discusses ADA compliance in Big Ten college hiring when the assignment was to write about the establishment of the ADA in a course about the Congress)
- * papers that far exceed the page requirement of the assignment
- * papers that exceed the scope of the assignment (for instance, a literature paper that connects the assigned novel to a novel not covered in class)
- * unusual quality of prose—either poorer or better than the writer's previous work generally
- * uneven quality of prose—oscillating from poor to good in terms of how well points are organized, reasoned, or supported
- * uneven style or correctness—fluctuation in syntactic sophistication or in the narrative voice of the essay, or severe fluctuation of grammar/spelling usage
- * unusual style—may be paragraphed like a newspaper account; may use popular magazine-style introductions
- * use of vocabulary that is beyond that usually included in the writer's work
- * bibliographies that do not match sources cited in the paper
- * discussion of sources in the text that do not appear in the bibliography
- * use of quotations that are not attributed in the text
- * a student's failure to hand in a draft (taking the consequences) but then producing, for partial credit, a final draft that has many if not all of the characteristics cited above.

(information above taken from Purdue OWL resource center—<http://owl.english.purdue.edu>)

If you think a student has plagiarized a portion of a paper, follow the following guidelines:

1. **Do NOT confront the student!** Let the Judicial Board notify the student and mediate any plagiarism case.
2. Try to find the source material (typing in sections of the text to google.com usually brings good results).
3. Bring a copy of the paper and the source material to Sharyn Tighe, Dir. of Student Life, x 1201. She will notify the student and the J-Board