



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT DALLAS

Judicial Affairs

Avoiding The Big Four

Plagiarism: What Every Student Should Know

Every student will be held responsible for reading and understanding the following statement.

To submit to your instructor a paper or comparable assignment that is not truly the product of your own mind and skill is to commit plagiarism. To put it bluntly, plagiarism is the act of stealing the ideas and/or expression of another and representing them as your own. It is a form of cheating and a kind of scholastic dishonesty which can incur severe penalties. It is important, therefore, that you understand what constitutes plagiarism, so that you will not unwittingly jeopardize your college career.

The most obvious form:

Plagiarism can take several forms. The most obvious form of plagiarism is the purchase of prepared papers from commercial term paper companies and the submission of such papers as one's own work.

Proper footnoting essential:

A second obvious form of plagiarism is a word-for-word copying of someone else's work, in whole or in part, without appropriate acknowledgement, whether that work be a magazine article, a portion of a book, a newspaper piece, another student's paper, or any other composition not your own. Any such verbatim use of another's work must be acknowledged by (1) appropriate indentation or enclosing all such copied portions in quotation marks and by (2) giving the original source in a footnote. As a general rule, you should make very little use of directly quoted matter in your research paper. If you do not know how to footnote properly, ask your instructor for guidance. In addition, proper footnote style for many academic departments is outlined by the MLA Style Sheet or K.L. Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*. These and similar publications are available in the library or in the University Bookstore. **UTD requires dissertation and thesis students to use *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations - Sixth Edition* when formatting their papers. This resource is available at the UTD Bookstore and the UTD Library.**

Paraphrasing vs. original work

A third form of plagiarism is the paraphrasing for the structure and language of another person's work. Changing a few words of another's composition, omitting a few sentences, or changing their order does not constitute original composition and therefore can be given no credit. If such borrowing or paraphrasing is ever necessary, the source must be scrupulously indicated by footnotes. How then you may ask, can I be original? Am I to learn nothing from others? There are several answers to such questions. Of course you have come to the University to learn, and this means acquiring ideas and exchanging opinions with others. But no idea is ever genuinely learned by copying it down in the phrasing of somebody else. Only when you have the thought through an idea in terms of your own experience can you be said to have learned; and when you have done that, you can develop it on paper as the product of your own mind.

Using the instructor as a resource

If an assignment baffles you, discuss it with your instructor. And if you are directed to use printed sources, consult your instructor about how to proceed. There is an art to taking notes for research; careless note taking can lead to plagiarism.

The consequences of plagiarism

Why be so concerned about plagiarism? Because it defeats the ends of education. If students were given credit for work that is not their own, then course grades would be meaningless. A college degree would become a mere sheet of paper and the integrity of the University would be undermined. To protect conscientious students, therefore, and to guarantee the quality of their education, the University assesses heavy penalties against those who plagiarize. The *Rules and Regulations* of the Board of Regents of the University of Texas System and the University's *Handbook of Operating Procedures* provide penalties for plagiarism which range from an "F" grade to dismissal from the University. If these penalties seem severe, remember that your integrity and the integrity of the University itself are at stake. These rules and regulations are available to students from the

Dean of Students and the Office of Student Life (SU1.602), where staff are available to assist students in their understanding of the various rules and regulations governing student conduct. Finally, the University cannot prevent students from plagiarizing, but it can make sure that they know what plagiarism is, what the penalties for it are, and in what jeopardy it places future careers. Hence this statement. Read it carefully. If you do not understand it fully, consult your instructor. And, if you have any doubts about the originality of a paper you have written or a comparable assignment, see your instructor before you turn it in.

Collusion

In class or out-of-class academic exercises are representations of a student's individual aptitude and scholarly achievement. Each student is expected to exercise independent scholarly thought, expression and aptitude. While there is much to be gained through a well-functioning study group, participating in an act of collusion will prove detrimental. Absent specific authorization from the course instructor, each academic exercise is presumed to be prepared and submitted by one student acting individually and not in concert with others.

Acts of collusion can be purposeful or unintentional. Common examples are:

- two students in the same class submitting a substantially similar essay, homework or computer program assignment
- one student providing another with a copy of a completed assignment, only to have the assignment duplicated and submitted for credit with a new name
- study or lab partners submitting duplicate solution reports

Cheating

Attempting to or succeeding in gaining an unfair advantage in the academic arena is an act of scholastic dishonesty. Whether it is copying from another student's exam paper, knowingly using or buying homework solutions or submitting a substantial portion of the same academic work more than once without prior written authorization from the instructor, cheating is a violation of the rules and will not be condoned at U. T. Dallas.

The motivation to cheat is varied among college students. Sometimes the motivation originates with the desire to secure admission into a graduate or professional school or to enhance employment opportunities or continuing eligibility for financial assistance. Significant motivating factors to some, but to the student with personal honor and integrity they are not sufficient to jeopardize a higher education investment.

False References

Proper citation of references is generally addressed by the assigned or adopted writing style manual. However, occasionally, papers are submitted that contain false references. The following represent the most common occurrences of false references:

- references cited within the text body are omitted in an ending bibliography or end notes page
- entries contained in the end notes listing are not cited within the body of the text
- information contained within the reference is fabricated
- the entire reference is fabricated

Minimize the opportunity for an allegation of scholastic dishonesty for using false references by incorporating the following into your preparation:

- allow sufficient time to thoroughly research and gather all information necessary for proper citation and reference format
- learn what the prescribed writing style requires for references and use it
- double check the completed document with your research notes for accuracy

For Examples of Scholastic Dishonesty, click [here](#).

Updated: January 8, 2007