

Plagiarism in the Classroom

All of the following are considered plagiarism

- Turning in someone else's work as your own
- Copying words or ideas from someone else without giving credit
- Failing to put a quotation in quotation marks
- Giving incorrect information about the source of a quotation
- Changing words but copying the sentence structure of a source without giving credit
- Copying so many words or ideas from a source that it makes up the majority of your work, whether you give credit or not
- Using your own work for more than one course without the instructor's knowledge (e.g. handing in a paper for Socials Studies and using this same paper, or a selection of it, for English).

In addition

- As outlined in the University of British Columbia's student planner, "students must ensure that when they seek assistance from a learning specialist or anyone else that the work they submit is actually their own."
- Changing the words of an original source is not sufficient to prevent plagiarism. If you have retained the essential idea of an original source, and have not cited it, then no matter how drastically you may have altered its context or presentation, you have still plagiarized.
- Most cases of plagiarism can be avoided, however, by citing sources. Simply acknowledging that certain material has been borrowed, and providing your audience with the information necessary to find that source, is usually enough to prevent plagiarism.

Consequences & Punishments for Plagiarism

As with any wrongdoing, the degree of intent (see below) and the nature of the offense determine its status. When plagiarism takes place in an academic setting, it is most often handled by the individual instructors and the academic institution involved. If, however, the plagiarism involves money, prizes or job placement, it constitutes a crime punishable in court.

Academic Punishments

Most colleges and universities have zero tolerance for plagiarists. In fact, academic standards of intellectual honesty are often more demanding than governmental copyright laws. If you have plagiarized a paper whose copyright has run out, for example, you are less likely to be treated with any more leniency than if you have plagiarized copyrighted material. A plagiarized paper almost always results in failure for the assignment, frequently in failure for the course, and sometimes in expulsion.

Legal Punishments

Most cases of plagiarism are considered misdemeanors, punishable by fines of anywhere between \$100 and \$50,000 – and up to one year in jail.

Institutional Punishments

Most corporations and institutions will not tolerate any form of plagiarism. There have been a significant number of cases around the world where people have lost their jobs or have been denied positions as a result of plagiarism.

At Fraser Academy general consequences are as follows:

- 1st time offense– Receive a “zero” on that assignment and a warning
- 2nd time offense– Receive a “zero,” a meeting with your teacher, the administration and your parents, in-school suspension and a letter in your file
- 3rd time offense– Receive all of the consequences of a 2nd-time offense as well as possible suspension or expulsion

Types of Plagiarism

Anyone who has written or graded a paper knows that plagiarism is not always a black-and-white issue. The boundary between plagiarism and research is often unclear. Learning to recognize the various forms of plagiarism, especially the more ambiguous ones, is an important step in the fight to prevent it.

Table 1. Types of Plagiarisms for cases where sources have not been cited

- The Ghost Writer
The writer turns in another’s work, word-for-word, as his or her own.
- The Photocopy
The writer copies significant portions of text straight from a single source, without alteration.
- The Potluck Paper
The writer tries to disguise plagiarism by copying from several different sources, tweaking the sentences to make them fit together while retaining most of the original phrasing.
- The Poor Disguise
Although the writer has retained the essential content of the sources, he or she has altered the paper’s appearance slightly by changing key words and phrases.
- The Labour of Laziness
The writer takes the time to paraphrase most of the paper from other sources and make it all fit together, instead of spending the same effort on original work.
- The Self-Stealer
The writer “borrows” generously from his or her previous work, violating policies concerning the expectation of originality adopted by most academic institutions.

Table 2. Types of Plagiarism for cases of where sources have been cited

- **The Forgotten Footnote**
The writer mentions an author's name for a source, but neglects to include specific information on the location of the material referenced. This often masks other forms of plagiarism by obscuring source locations.
- **The Misinformer**
The writer provides inaccurate information regarding the sources, making it impossible to find them.
- **The Too-Perfect Paraphrase**
The writer properly cites a source but neglects to put in quotation marks text that has been copied word-for-word, or close to it. Although attributing the basic ideas to the source, the writer is falsely claiming original presentation and interpretation of the information.
- **The Resourceful Citer**
The writer properly cites all sources, paraphrasing and using quotations appropriately. What is the catch? The paper contains almost no original work! It is sometimes difficult to spot this form of plagiarism because it looks like any other well-researched document.
- **The Perfect Crime**
Well, we all know it doesn't exist. In this case, the writer properly quotes and cites sources in some places, but goes on to paraphrase other arguments from those sources without citation. This way, the writer tries to pass off the paraphrased material as his or her own analysis of the cited material.

Citations and avoiding Plagiarism

What is Citation?

A "citation" is the way you tell your readers that certain material in your work came from another source. It also gives your readers the information necessary to find that source again, including:

- Information about the author
- The title of the work
- The name and location of the company that published your copy of the source
- The date your copy was published
- The page numbers of the material you are borrowing

When do you need to cite?

- Whenever you borrow words or ideas, you need to acknowledge their source. The following situations almost always require citation:
 - Whenever you use quotes
 - Whenever you paraphrase
 - Whenever you use an idea that someone else has already expressed
 - Whenever you make specific reference to the work of another
 - Whenever someone else's work has been critical in developing your own ideas

Do you have to cite sources for every fact you use?

No. You do not have to cite sources for facts that are not the result of unique individual research. Facts that are readily available from numerous sources and generally known to the public are considered “common knowledge,” and are not protected by copyright laws. You can use these facts liberally in your paper without citing authors. If you are unsure whether or not a fact is common knowledge, you should probably cite your source just to be safe.

Can you use material if you cite the source?

You are allowed to borrow ideas or phrases from other sources provided you cite them properly and your usage is consistent with the guidelines set by fair use laws. As a rule, however, you should be careful about borrowing too liberally – if the case can be made that your work consists predominantly of someone else’s words or ideas, you may still be susceptible to charges of plagiarism.

Does it matter how much was copied?

Not in determining whether or not plagiarism is a crime. If even the smallest part of a work is found to have been plagiarized, it is still considered a copyright violation, and its producer can be brought to trial. However, the amount that was copied probably will have a bearing on the severity of the sentence. A work that is almost entirely plagiarized will almost certainly incur greater penalties than a work that only includes a small amount of plagiarized material.

Does intention matter?

Ignorance of the law is never an excuse. So even if you did not realize you were plagiarizing, you may still be found guilty. However, there are different punishments for willful infringement, or deliberate plagiarism, and innocent infringement, or accidental plagiarism. To distinguish between these, courts recognize what is called the good faith defense. If you can demonstrate, based on the amount you borrowed and the way you have incorporated it in your own work, that reasonably believed what you did was fair use, chances are that your sentence will be lessened substantially.

How do you cite sources?

This depends on what type of work you are writing, how you are using the borrowed material, and the expectations of your instructor. Always consult your instructor to determine the form of citation appropriate for your paper. You can save a lot of time and energy simply by asking, “How should I cite my sources,” or “What style of citation should I use?” before you begin.

From the FA English Department

Please use the MLA (Modern Language Association) style of documentation, unless otherwise instructed.



PLAGIARISM POLICY

From the Science Department

Please use the APA (American Psychological Association) style of documentation, unless otherwise instructed.

Assistance with methods of parenthetical citation Purdue online Writing Lab <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/search.php>

There are also many on-line tools that can help students and faculty with correct citations in documents such as Easybib, bibme, Citation Machine amongst others.

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