

Avoiding Plagiarism

In order to avoid an allegation of plagiarism, a student must (1) understand the concept of plagiarism, (2) know the regulations on the University of Arkansas campus, and (3) learn about the resources available for avoiding plagiarism while completing course work.

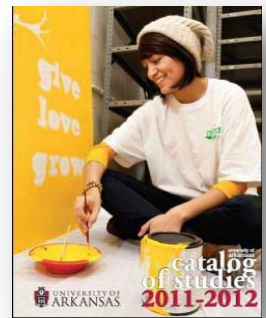
Plagiarism as a general concept

Plagiarism is the act of taking the ideas or writing of someone else and passing them off as one's own. Plagiarism can include the theft of other intellectual property such as research data, images, and recordings. The act of plagiarism has two fundamental parts: the perpetrator steals the work and then fraudulently presents it as original. In the university setting, where professionals devote entire careers developing ideas and publishing, the theft of ideas and language is a serious offense.

Plagiarism as defined at the University of Arkansas

In 2011, University of Arkansas faculty established new academic integrity guidelines and published the new rules and procedures in the *2011-12 Undergraduate Catalog of Studies*. Previous catalogs included the material under the heading of *Academic Honesty*. Provost Gaber also made the new guidelines available on her website: <http://provost.uark.edu/>.

The [provost's website](http://provost.uark.edu/) encourages all faculty members to include the following language in their course syllabi:



As a core part of its mission, the University of Arkansas provides students with the opportunity to further their educational goals through programs of study and research in an environment that promotes freedom of inquiry and academic responsibility. Accomplishing this mission is only possible when intellectual honesty and individual integrity prevail.

To avoid plagiarism, students must clearly understand their professors' expectations for academic integrity. Students also must understand the rules and regulations in the university code. We encourage students to read the *Catalog's* entire section on Academic Integrity, pages 401-04. In this part of the handout, we highlight a few important areas of the code related to plagiarism.

As defined under Level One Violations, plagiarism includes the submission of a paper without proper attribution for sources used in the paper. So, if your paper on global warming incorporates ideas from Al Gore's book, but you don't provide citations in the text for Mr. Gore's ideas, and you fail to document the use of his book in your bibliography, then your lack of attribution is a Level One Violation. Students should also take care to read the final sentence in the "plagiarizing" passage of the Academic Integrity Policy: students are warned that it is *their* responsibility to "understand the methods of proper attribution" and to provide attribution in all papers submitted. Ignorance of proper methods of attribution is not an acceptable defense against a plagiarism allegation.

Collaboration on any assignment for which the student has been specifically instructed to work independently is also a Level One Violation. As with all violations under the Academic Integrity Policy, this violation applies to work outside of the classroom, such as take home exams, research projects, and candidacy or comprehensive exams (a full list can be found on page 402 of the [2011-2012 UA Catalog of Studies](#)).

Another Level One Violation surprises many students. We call it the "no recycling clause" because it prohibits students from resubmitting work completed in a previous course without the "specific permission of the instructor." This rule means you can't submit a paper on *Hamlet* to your Comp II instructor this year and then submit the same paper to your World Lit instructor next year.

An important Level Two Violation to avoid is substituting as one's own any work prepared in part or in whole by another. Such an act goes to the root of the definition of plagiarism—stealing the work or ideas of someone else and claiming them as one's own. Examples of Level Two Violations are submitting a paper purchased from an Internet service, copying and pasting significant passages of a paper from electronic sources and presenting the language and ideas as one's own, or submitting a paper written by a classmate or a friend.

How do you avoid all these violations? First, do your own work, and don't recycle. Second, be careful and thorough when working with sources. Any idea, language, information, data, table, graph, image, or video you incorporate from a source requires citation, including all Internet sources. Students new to academic writing and proper methods of citation can get help. The following section directs you to a variety of resources to help you learn the proper techniques for providing proper attribution and avoiding plagiarism.

Resources for avoiding plagiarism

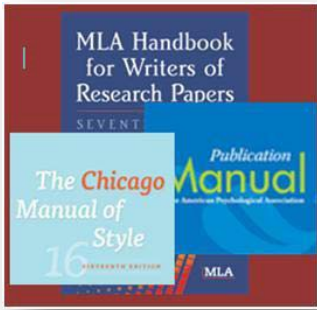
Too often, students fail to attend an important day of class: Day One! Your professor distributes the course syllabus, discusses policies and procedures, and, in many cases, talks about expectations for upholding academic integrity. Many professors discuss requirements for written papers, including citation styles and proper attribution. Although the university has a code and carefully defines acts considered academic dishonesty, students should pay close attention to the specific expectations of each and every professor. Day One is an important source of such information. Attend, listen carefully, take good notes, and ask questions.



If you are assigned a paper that requires skills and techniques with which you need assistance, start early and ask for help. Begin with your professor. Almost all professors hold office hours and assist students outside of class. Next, you can check with the subject librarian in your discipline. The Subject Specialists' page lists all the librarians by subject area at <http://libinfo.uark.edu/info/specialists.asp>. The Libraries' page on Citing Your Sources (right), has excellent links to citation resources and bibliography management.



<http://libinfo.uark.edu/reference/citingyoursources.asp>



As you advance in your major, you should acquire the style manual associated with your discipline. The most commonly used citation styles are MLA (Modern Language Association), APA (American Psychological Association), and Chicago. Each manual provides the user with comprehensive guidelines on citing sources in text, documenting sources at paper's end, formatting sample papers, and a wide variety of other style conventions. Additionally, each of the manuals has web support with supplemental information and tutorials for beginners.

Student writers must make sure that any language taken directly from their sources is enclosed in quotation marks and includes a citation. Failing to include quotation marks or to cite the source can result in a plagiarism allegation. Paraphrased ideas must be recast using the student writer's own language and sentence structures and must include citation. Writing a paraphrase that is too close to the language of the original or failing to provide citation is considered plagiarism under the university's code.

The Quality Writing Center (QWC) in Kimpel Hall offers students one-on-one tutoring appointments for assistance with any university writing assignment. If you need help with quotation or paraphrase, make an appointment with a QWC tutor by clicking the "schedule an appointment" homepage link: <http://qwc.uark.edu/>. The QWC also has a wide variety of handouts in the center and on their website (PDF download), including [#7 Integrating Quotations](#) and [#6 Paraphrase and Summary](#). The QWC's [Understanding and Avoiding Plagiarism Workshop](#) provides students with an in-depth review (and practice) of citation, summary, paraphrase, and quotation.



Wrap-up

Don't take unnecessary chances. As a university student, the stakes are higher, and so are the expectations that you will perform work with honesty and integrity. Make sure you understand what plagiarism is and how to avoid it. Read the rules in the *Catalog of Studies*. When you need help, consult the resources outlined in this handout: professor, research librarian, style manual, writing tutor, online handouts and resources, workshops. And start work on your major assignments early. Most bad decisions happen when students are under pressure.

Additional resources

[APA Style](#) (website of the American Psychological Association)

[MLA FAQ](#) (website of Modern Language Association)

[Chicago Manual of Style Online](#)

[The St. Martin's Tutorial on Avoiding Plagiarism](#)

[What is Plagiarism?](#) (video by Rutgers University Libraries)

[McGraw-Hill Avoiding Plagiarism Tutorial](#)

[EWC's How to Avoid Plagiarism](#) [Plagiarism.org](#)

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