

How Not To Finish Your Education Early

Plagiarism and the Alternatives

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Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct

<http://www.indiana.edu/~code/code/>

Covers academic and personal misconduct on and off campus.

Focus today is on plagiarism.

Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct

<http://www.indiana.edu/~code/code/>

Academic misconduct

Cheating

Fabrication

Plagiarism

Interference

Violation of Course Rules

Facilitating Academic Dishonesty

Definition of Plagiarism

The Indiana University *Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct* (1998) indicates that students may be disciplined for several different kinds of academic misconduct. These include cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, interference, and violation of course rules. In particular the code states:

“A student must not adopt or reproduce ideas, words, or statements of another person without appropriate acknowledgment. A student must give credit to the originality of others and acknowledge an indebtedness whenever he or she does any of the following:

- a. Quotes another person's actual words, either oral or written;**
- b. Paraphrases another person's words, either oral or written;**
- c. Uses another person's idea, opinion, or theory; or**
- d. Borrows facts, statistics, or other illustrative material, unless the information is common knowledge.”**

Self copying

At SPEA, use of the same material for more than one class is also considered plagiarism.

You may not use papers, briefs, or other created material to fulfill requirements in more than one class.

If you are concerned that material you created for one class may be too similar to material you plan to create for another class, check with your instructor.

If plagiarism is discovered

A faculty member who encounters plagiarism in a student's work has a full range of options,

- from requiring the work to be resubmitted, often for a lesser grade,
- to failing the assignment,
- to failing the student in the course,
- to recommending expulsion of the student from the University.

A faculty member who encounters plagiarism is supposed to report it to the Program Office, and file a report to the student's file.

Students who believe they have been unfairly accused can appeal to the MPO program directors or to Dean Heim.

Why all the fuss about plagiarism?

First, plagiarism is illegal. It is a violation of intellectual property rights laws within the US and internationally. It represents theft of words, ideas, opinions, artistic material or other products of the mind.

Second, plagiarism represents shoddy scholarship. Part of intellectual development is knowing where ideas came from. Plagiarism separates ideas from their origins.

Finally, plagiarism demonstrates poor grasp of concepts. We can train parrots to repeat words. We have higher aspirations for you. The ability to bring properly cited ideas together, to paraphrase them so that you can bring the arguments together in your own words – these are the skills we want you to learn here. Plagiarism does nothing to develop these skills.

However, attitudes about “plagiarism” vary among cultures

In some cultures, young students are forbidden to use their own words and thoughts because they are untrained and cannot possibly know as much as their elders.

In these cultures, young people are often trained in existing knowledge by being required to repeat it verbatim, so that there can be no confusion or error introduced by their untrained minds. This “plagiarism” is not a crime, but a means of proper respect and orderly learning. Original thinking is delayed until after students have mastered existing knowledge.

In the US and elsewhere ...

The system in the US (and many other places) is not so different. Your term papers and essays will largely build on the ideas of others. But you are strongly encouraged to restate these ideas in your own words (also a means of demonstrating correct understanding), and to interweave ideas from several sources in order to draw conclusions.

As you incorporate the ideas (and occasionally words) of other scholars, you must properly acknowledge them. Failure to do so is the most common source of plagiarism among graduate students. It may not be malicious, but it is still plagiarism.

Copying is standard practice in some situations . . .

Contracts and other official and legal documents often contain large sections of “boilerplate” – language that is cut and pasted over and over into many different documents.

Annual reports may simply be updated and modified as needed from year to year, but left unchanged where changes are not needed.

. . . but these are mostly not intellectual undertakings for which someone needs to be given credit. And they are not assignments for grades in class.

So how do you avoid plagiarizing if you're always using other peoples' thoughts, words, and images?

Every time you paraphrase information from another article, book, website, or other source, you need to provide a citation to the source (Zhang and Kim 2015).

Every time you use exact words (quote) from a source, you must use quotation marks to show that the words are not yours. You must provide a citation to the source that includes the page number “so someone else can find the quote to see its context and to check its accuracy” (Valdez 2018, p 458).

Unless it's a newly created word, or a word used in a new or unusual way, you may “borrow” a single word (or two) without using quotation marks, but should still cite the source of the idea.

If you are using a single source for several sentences in the same paragraph, you do not need to cite the source after every sentence. But if you start a new paragraph, re-cite the source at the beginning of the new paragraph. And if you change from source A to source B and back to source A all in one paragraph, you will need three citations – once for A, once for B, and a second time for A.

Position your citation so that it most clearly shows which information is associated with each reference. This may mean just listing references at the end of a sentence. But it may mean putting references with individual list items.

Effective biodiversity conservation in the face of climate change is beyond the scope of even the largest protected areas (Magness et al. 2011). Collaborative efforts are needed to ensure the level of redundancy, connectivity, and overall system resilience necessary to conserve species and ecosystem functions (Griffith et al. 2009, AFWA et al. 2012). The landscape conservation cooperatives (LCCs; www.doi.gov/lcc/index.cfm), a network of collaborative teams, can serve as leaders in creating regional coalitions and LCDs if they can overcome important challenges of funding and durability (Moore et al. 2011, Meretsky et al. 2012, Aycrigg et al. 2013).

Examples of promising USFWS landscape initiatives include conservation coordination for the Nebraska sandhills (USFWS 2012), restoring native vegetation in the Dakota prairie portions of the NWRS (Grant et al. 2009), and identifying strategies to restore aquatic connectivity for native fish migrations in the Great Lakes Basin (Januchowski-Hartley et al. 2013). Three national forests in the Pacific Northwest have already undertaken a similar coordinated planning effort (Joyce et al. 2008).

From Fischman RL, Meretsky VJ, Babko A, Kennedy M, Liu L, Robinson M, Wambugu, S. 2015. Planning for Adaptation to Climate Change: Lessons from the US National Wildlife Refuge System. *BioScience* 64:993-1005.

What about really obvious stuff that everyone knows?

First, you need to know who “everyone” is. Ask whether the paper is to be written for the instructor, for an audience at the level of your classmates, or for some other audience.

If the information really is terribly obvious for your audience, you probably don’t need to reference the source. But be sure it’s really true, not some popular “myth” that “everyone knows.”

Examples of statements for which you may not need to cite a source:

George Washington was the first president of the United States.

In Vietnam, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (website optional) is responsible for managing land and water resources.

There are 12 grades in U.S. primary education.

If your outgo exceeds your income then your upkeep will be your downfall.

How do I know what format to use for citations in my papers?

Styles vary among fields – you'll need to ask your instructor.

Some fields use (1), some use ¹, some use (Yee 2013, Kim and O'Leary 2014, Rimas et al. 2015). *[note the different forms for one, two, and three or more authors]*

But very few fields in SPEA will use a style, commonly taught in US high schools, of author and page number (Gupta 135).

Styles also vary for the citations that give the information about the articles, books, and websites. For example, law papers often use superscripts^{13, 14}, and put the literature citations in footnotes; science papers usually use in-text citations (Adeyemi 2018) and put the full citations in a Literature Cited section at the end of the paper.

Citing websites as sources is always amusing because they vary so much in format. Check with your instructors for details for your classes.

What about citations in the sources I'm reading?

Suppose you are reading a book by Fernandez (2018), in which she discusses information from Smith (2012). You want to use the information that originally came from Smith in your own paper.

Properly, you should go and find the paper by Smith. You should read it to be sure that Fernandez got the right citation and properly represented Smith's ideas. Then you just cite Smith (Smith 2012).

If time, language, or circumstances dictate that you cannot read Smith, then the proper method of citing the information that Smith originally provided is to use the citation (Smith 2012 in Fernandez 2018). This acknowledges the authors properly, and gives warning that you have not confirmed that the information Fernandez attributes to Smith is actually in Smith's paper.

What about sources in other languages?

Check with your professor. If you are allowed to use non-English sources, you will need to find a way to represent the citation in the English alphabet, and your professor may want you to provide a translation of the title into English.

Plagiarism Quiz

<http://www.indiana.edu/~tedfrick/plagiarism/index2.html>

Click on “Let’s See If You Understand” at bottom.

How much do I need to rearrange the original to create an acceptable paraphrase?

The best way to get good paraphrasing:

- 1) do all your reading, taking notes as you go
- 2) write a quick outline
- 3) start fleshing out the paper, writing as much as you possibly can with only your thoughts, and *occasionally* your notes. Write partial sentences with holes if necessary, but don't leave entire sentences out.

(continued)

How much do I need to rearrange the original to create an acceptable paraphrase?

4) check your references for places you need detailed specifics you didn't have from memory or notes

5) fill in the holes in your sentences, using the sentence structure you wrote earlier. don't let the source pull you away from your own style, or change the direction of the paragraph or sentence that you're working with. Quote seldom.

6) when in doubt, rewrite, consult an honest friend, or ask your instructor.

What about online paraphrasing sites?

Yes, there are online paraphrasing tools. They stink. They produce appallingly bad sentences that are good for amusement purposes but definitely not for quality writing. Most seem to use online thesaurus entries, rather randomly.

These tools cannot know the audience for whom you're writing, they cannot know the context of the material they are paraphrasing, and they cannot see the bigger picture of the overall product you are creating.

Paraphrasing is one of the most important skills you will learn as a professional. It won't be easy all the time – you'll need to work at it, like any other useful skill.

Sometimes you will encounter passages that you find very difficult to paraphrase. Take a moment to work with a professor on these. They are just advanced examples of a skill you want to perfect – invest a little time in them.

Learning more about good writing, citing, etc.

Some of you will not have done significant academic writing, or may generally have difficulty writing.

Students who are unsure of their writing skills may find the following book useful: *Academic Writing for Graduate Students* by Swales and Feak. It is written specifically for students who don't speak English as a first language, and because of this, it takes particular care to explain writing concepts.

Another traditional favorite for science students is *How to Write and Publish a Scientific Paper* by Robert Day.

A classical reference for solid writing is *Elements of Style* by Strunk and White. Written in 1979, it remains surprisingly relevant, as well as being short and sweet – suitable for leaving in the bathroom for quick reading breaks. You can buy a copy for about \$1.

How-to information

In addition to the books suggested on the previous page, there are many university websites that provide information on how to write well. Try a search using “academic writing” or “technical writing” as your search phrase.

Be sure the advice is relevant for your classes. Some of your professors will have specific guidelines, and some fields (law, for example) have do not always use standard academic writing standards.

Many websites provide information on avoiding plagiarism. But you can also learn about specifics such as writing good topic sentences, organizing an essay or paper, writing abstracts, developing an argument effectively, etc.

For focused help on your writing, visit

<http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/>

or Ballantine 206 and work with the Writing Tutorial Service.

To schedule a tutoring session, call **855-6738**. Tell them what kind of writing you need help with, and they will have a person with the appropriate training to work with you. These people will not correct your paper in detail, but will help with general structure and style, and can provide training material if you need help with specific areas – punctuation, topic sentences, etc.

Questions?

image
website
info is
hidden
under
image



The question mark butterfly

For advising needs . . .

I will be available in my A321 office in the Master's Programs Office on

Wednesday from 1:30-2:30 and on

Thursday from 2:30-4.

You can make an appointment by emailing oneillmp@Indiana.edu or you are welcome to just stop by, if you can wait if I have someone with me.

During the semester I will have regular walk-in and appointment office hours. The times will be posted on my office door. You can also make appointments outside of regular office hours, if those hours don't work for you. Email oneillmp@Indiana.edu .

I am available to discuss scheduling, issues with classes and instructors, life choices, or any other topic with which I can help.