

Ethics: Avoiding Plagiarism

The UVSC "Students Rights and Responsibilities" state, "Each student is expected to maintain academic ethics and avoid dishonesty in all its forms, including but not limited to, cheating and plagiarism..." (UVSC Catalog 2003-2004, 29).

What is Plagiarism?

Plagiarism is defined as "the act of appropriating any other person's or group's ideas or work (written, computerized, artistic, etc.) or portions thereof and passing them off as the product of one's own work in any academic exercise or activity" (UVSC Catalog 2003-2004, 29).

Plagiarism can be done intentionally or unintentionally.

Types of plagiarism include the following:

- Passing off material partially or completely written by someone else as your own work. It does not matter if the material is purchase, borrowed, or stolen; it is still plagiarism.
- Summarizing (briefly stating an author's main ideas), paraphrasing (putting the author's words into your own words), or quoting (copying specific words, sentences, and/or paragraphs) without crediting the source, accurately citing the information, or fairly representing the author's intentions.
- Using facts (statistics, research findings, graphics, etc.) that are not common knowledge without citing the source you obtain them from.

You need to give credit for anything that is not common knowledge. Common knowledge is information that can easily be found in a wide variety of resources (i.e. birth dates or places).

Why Should I Give Credit To Other Authors

Giving credit to authors adds to your credibility as a writer. It demonstrates you have done research and know what other people are saying about your subject. Responding to their ideas gives you credibility and establishes that you are trying to participate in the

academic discussion. Providing citations also gives your reader the opportunity to refer to your sources for further information. Plagiarism destroys credibility because ideas are owned by the person who originated them, and using another author's ideas constitutes dishonest behavior. Using your own ideas will create pride and ownership in your own work.

How Do I Avoid Plagiarism?

Be accurate in note taking and when cutting and pasting from the Internet.

- Distinguish between quotes, paraphrases, and summaries.
- Clarify the source of each quote or paraphrase. Include author, title of work, page numbers, and all pertinent publication information, such as publisher, date and location of publication, etc.

Be careful when writing your paper.

- Quotes, paraphrases, summaries, and ideas from other author all need to be cited.
- Paraphrases and summaries need to be in your own words and must be true to the author's ideas.
- Quotes must be in quotation marks, use the exact wording as the original quote, and convey the meaning intended by the author.

REMEMBER: When in doubt, cite the material.

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