



PLAGIARISM POLICY

Why are we concerned about plagiarism?

Many educators are finding that the work submitted was not written in part or in its entirety by the student who submitted it. The Internet has made physically writing a paper almost obsolete. Why bother to write an essay when you can download one for free or order one tailor made for the assignment if you have a credit card?

So, why should we be concerned? For many reasons, the most practical being the student's academic future. Most colleges have swift and severe consequences for plagiarism, often including expulsion and permanent marks on the student's academic transcript. We explain this possibility to our students. If they choose to jeopardize their academic careers, they understand the consequences. What is so baffling to educators is that many students lack academic honesty and integrity. Many students don't see that copying work done by someone else is wrong. That it violates the basic relationship between teacher and student. That it harms one's personal character. That it is wrong. We want our students' parents to know what plagiarism is, what we expect our students to do to avoid plagiarism, and what our policy is for those who submit plagiarized work.

What is plagiarism?

According to The Nuts and Bolts of College Writing, "the Random

House dictionary defines plagiarism as the unauthorized use or close imitation of language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one's own original work."

Plagiarism includes:

- 1 Quoting material without attribution. The most obvious kind of plagiarism.
- 2 Passing off another's idea as your own, even if it's been reworded. Changing an original's wording doesn't avoid plagiarism. The underlying idea of plagiarism is unacknowledged borrowing of ideas, not specific words.
- 3 Imitating a passage's structure or argument without attribution. Suppose a source presents an assertion and three supporting points. If you adopt that particular structure, including the particular examples or supporting points, you need to provide a citation to the original. This holds even if you substantially revise the wording.
- 4 Concealing the extent to which you've borrowed from a text or other source. Citing a specific passage in a work doesn't give you license to draw on the rest of the work without citation. "This can be the nastiest kind of plagiarism because it's so sneaky."
(<http://www.nutsandboltsguide.com/plagiarism.html>).

What is not plagiarism?

Common and familiar knowledge need not be cited. Students have a difficult time with this idea. If they learn it through research, then it is probably not common knowledge and must be cited.

Two examples of common knowledge that don't have to be cited are:

- 1 George Washington was the first president of the United States.
- 2 Sesame Street is a very popular television program for young children.

Two examples of not so common or familiar knowledge are:

- 1 Shakespeare was born in 1564 in Stratford-upon-Avon, to a family originally from Arden (Levi 2,8).
- 2 Sesame Street's name was supposed to "conjure up a sense of excitement and adventure, as in the Arabian Nights command, 'Open Sesame!' Because the show was set in an urban street scene, Sesame Street seemed an ideal combination"(www.sesameworkshop.org).

What is citation and how do students cite their sources?

"Citation is the act of identifying sources. A citation names the author and work and provides sufficient bibliographic information to allow the reader to track down the original source"(http://www.nutsandboltsguide .com/plagiarism.html).

All AOC students are assigned a small and invaluable book titled A Guide to MLA Documentation by Joseph Trimmer. The guide provides the information necessary to correctly document sources. It also includes a section on proper summarizing and paraphrasing techniques. Students are expected to read the entire guide and use it for all their assignments. A detailed class lesson will be given at the beginning of the fall semester to review citation procedures and policies.

AOC Policy:

Plagiarism offenses are cumulative for all classes, all semesters. A first offense in one class in one semester can be followed by a second offense in another class or semester.

The following consequences will always apply:

- 1 Assignment receives a failing grade.
- 2 Parent(s)/guardian(s) is notified.
- 3 All AOC faculty is notified.

Based upon the severity and type of plagiarism, any of the following consequences may apply:

- 1 Student may write future assignment(s) in the presence of a faculty/staff member.
- 2 Student is placed on academic probation.
- 3 Student signs a contract pledging not to plagiarize again.

If work indicates plagiarism is occurring in college course work, the proper COC officials will be notified.

Student and parent/guardian meet with the principal and teacher(s) to discuss

- Student's ethics and choices
- Possible class failure
- Possible failure to meet graduation requirements
- Options

Summary

Plagiarism is the stealing of intellectual property and is wrong. We want our students to understand that their integrity and honesty is as important to their academic success as their abilities to accomplish the tasks given through coursework. We hope we have your understanding and support.