

Attachment 2

Approved by the Plagiarism Definition Task Force on April 23, 2008

Revised June 25, 2008

DRAFT definition 6/25/08

Appendix F Section A. Cheating: Plagiarism.

1. Definition of Plagiarism.

Plagiarism is taking credit for someone else's ideas, work, or words. In a university setting, it means submitting academic, scholarly, or literary work in which you either claim or imply the material to be your own, when that is not the case. Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, eleventh edition, defines plagiarism simply: "to steal and pass off the ideas or words of another as one's own without crediting the source" (2003).

2. Avoidance of Plagiarism.

In practical terms, plagiarism could include:

- Buying a term paper, or copying another person's paper, even if she or he gives you permission.
- Cutting and pasting information from the Internet into your own paper without properly identifying it as a quotation and properly attributing the source.
- Using someone else's concept and presenting it as if it is your own original creativity, without acknowledging the source of the idea.

While some acts of plagiarism are obvious attempts to deceive, like buying a term paper, others result from sloppy scholarship or failure to follow proper format for crediting sources. For example:

- If you copy directly from another source and acknowledge it in your bibliography or list of works cited, yet fail to put it in quotation marks, this is plagiarism. The reason is because, although you have indicated that the idea is someone else's, the lack of quotation marks implies that the words are your own.
- Paraphrasing is summarizing a source so that you have re-written the material in your own words but maintained the original author's ideas. When you paraphrase, you do not need to put the words in quotation marks, but you do need to properly attribute the original source. Paraphrasing does not mean simply changing one or two words, or leaving out a sentence, while the rest remains the same. Even if you identify the original author, but have used faulty paraphrasing that retains too much of the original, the result is inadvertent plagiarism.

- If you use another researcher's specific methodology, you should acknowledge doing so. While some research protocols are widespread and general enough to need no citation, if the protocol, analysis, or technique can be attributed to a specific publication it should be cited.
- Works of visual art and design, and images of the work, cannot be misrepresented as original work by another. Such images cannot be used in part or whole without permission of the artist.

3. Discipline-specific Guidelines.

Different departments and disciplines may have specific guidelines and standards for how to properly acknowledge and document sources. For example, some departments will require students to use a certain citation format, such as MLA, APA, or CMS. If instructors or departments have specific requirements concerning citation or paraphrasing, it is their responsibility to make these requirements clear to the students. If students have any question about how to properly attribute work, it is their responsibility to ask the instructor. Departments that encourage collaborative learning and scholarship should make clear to students what constitutes fair academic collaboration, and what constitutes academic dishonesty.

4. Academic Community.

The ethical standards outlined above apply throughout the academic community. These guidelines apply to faculty and research assistants in their possible use of students' and colleagues' research and ideas, as well as to students' use either of source materials and authorities or of other students' ideas and work.