

Quick Guide to Plagiarism

What is plagiarism, how do you recognize it and how do you avoid it

Plagiarize – to take (ideas, writings, etc.) from (another) and pass them off as one’s own. Neudeldt, Victoria. Webster’s New World Dictionary. Ed. New York: Prentice Hall, 1994.

From CCBC’s Code of Academic Integrity: “Each student has a responsibility to submit work that is uniquely his or her own, or to provide clear and complete acknowledgment of the use of work attributable to others.”

“You have plagiarized if you:

- Took notes without differentiating summaries, paraphrases or quotations from others work or ideas and then presented wording from the notes as if they were your own.
- Copied text from the Web and pasted it into your paper without quotation marks or citation.
- Presented facts without saying where you found them.
- Repeated or paraphrased wording without acknowledgment.
- Took someone’s unique or particularly apt phrase without acknowledgment.
- Paraphrased someone’s argument or presented someone’s line of thought without acknowledgment.
- Bought or otherwise acquired a research paper and handed in part or all of it as your own.”

Gibaldi, Joseph. MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, Sixth Edition, Modern Language Association of America, 2003.

“To avoid plagiarism, you must give credit whenever you use:

- another person’s idea, opinion, or theory;
- any facts, statistics, graphs, drawings – any pieces of information – that are not common knowledge;
- quotations of another person’s actual spoken or written words; or
- paraphrase of another person’s spoken or written words.”

Plagiarism: What It is and How to Recognize and Avoid It. April 2004. Indiana Univ. 29 August 2005< <http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml>>.

You must give credit by properly citing, using one of the recommended citation styles – MLA, APA or Chicago, to name a few of the more common. You can find guides to each of these citation styles in the library.

It should be noted that you cannot avoid plagiarism by simply switching around the order of another person’s words, or changing a few words in a sentence or paragraph – this would be paraphrasing. The goal is to translate the idea into your own words while maintaining the accuracy of the information. You must still cite the source of the information – even when paraphrasing. Remember – when in doubt, Cite!