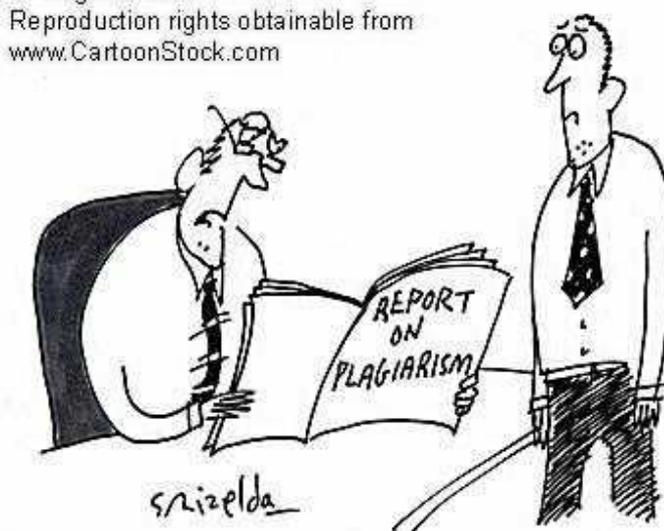


ECP Student Guide to Plagiarism

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'YOU'VE COPIED ALL THIS OFF
THE INTERNET...'

Adapted from:

<http://www.chem.uky.edu/Courses/common/plagiarism.html>

and

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

Plagiarism: Definitions, Examples and Penalties

The University of Kentucky

Department of Chemistry

University Definition

As indicated in the excerpt below, plagiarism is more than simply copying someone else's lab report. Possible penalties for academic offenses such as plagiarism or cheating on exams range from an "E" for the course (**the minimum penalty!**) to expulsion from the University.

6.3.1 PLAGIARISM

All academic work, written or otherwise, submitted by students to their instructors or other academic supervisors, is expected to be the result of their own thought, research, or self-expression. In cases where students feel unsure about a question of plagiarism involving their work, they are obliged to consult their instructors on the matter before submission.

When students submit work purporting to be their own, but which in any way borrows ideas, organization, wording or anything else from another source without appropriate acknowledgment of the fact, the students are guilty of plagiarism.

Plagiarism includes reproducing someone else's work, whether it be a published article, chapter of a book, a paper from a friend or some file, or whatever. Plagiarism also includes the practice of employing or allowing another person to alter or revise the work which a student submits as his/her own, whoever that other person may be. Students may discuss assignments among themselves or with an instructor or tutor, but *when the actual work is done, it must be done by the student, and the student alone.*

When a student's assignment involves research in outside sources or information, *the student must carefully acknowledge exactly what, where and how he/she has employed them. If the words of someone else are used, the student must put quotation marks around the passage in question and add an appropriate indication of its origin. Making simple changes while leaving the organization, content and phraseology intact is plagiaristic.* However, nothing in these Rules shall apply to those ideas which are so generally and freely circulated as to be a part of the public domain.

Procedures and Penalties

The University clearly defines the procedures that are to be followed when an instructor encounters a case of possible plagiarism. Please note that instructors and Department chairs are obligated to follow through on such suspicions.

*The **MINIMUM** University penalty for plagiarism is an **E** in the course.*

The following abridged excerpt from the [Student Rights and Responsibilities](#) handbook is provided for your benefit. Please consult this handbook for additional details.

6.4.0 DISPOSITION OF CASES OF ACADEMIC OFFENSES

6.4.1 RESPONSIBILITY OF INSTRUCTOR AND DEPARTMENT CHAIR

An instructor who suspects that a student has committed an academic offense shall consult with the department chair, or the designee of the chair, as soon as practical after the instructor develops the suspicion. If the instructor is also the department chair, he or she shall consult with the Dean or the college's designee. Prior to consultation, however, the instructor may take action to prove or detect an academic offense or preserve evidence of same. In taking such action the instructor should minimize disruption and embarrassment to the student(s).

The instructor and department chair shall decide on an appropriate penalty. If there is disagreement the department chair shall prevail. The instructor and department chair may impose **one or more** of the following penalties in the event they determine an academic offense has occurred.

- A. Assign a grade of E for the course in which the offense occurred (the minimum penalty).*
- B. Recommend to the Dean of their college or to the Dean of the Graduate School, if appropriate, that the student be suspended, dismissed or expelled.*

Examples of Plagiarism

Below are some examples of plagiaristic acts. This list is by no means a comprehensive, but simply contains the most common occurrences and misperceptions about plagiarism. If you have any doubt whatsoever whether your use of materials is plagiaristic, consult with the instructor of your course **before** you turn in the assignment.

● **Example 1:** Direct copying from original sources.

Most commonly, this involves using one or more sentences verbatim from your original source (with or without footnotes). This is completely unacceptable. If you copy your source text you **must** put the passage in quotes or offset the passage. However, extensive

quoting of this nature is generally frowned upon in scientific writing and indicates that you have made little original contribution to the work.

Do not be fooled into thinking that you can copy sentences from textbooks or journal articles and get away with it. The shift in your writing style is usually quite obvious as is the ease with which you suddenly start discussing unfamiliar terms or concepts. Your instructors know far more about the subject material than you do and are quite familiar with the common sources of information on each subject.

The best way to avoid accidental copying (it is still a violation whether you meant to or not), is to read the passage and then **express it in your own words**. Afterwards, compare your text to the original and make sure that they are sufficiently different. Take care to avoid paraphrasing (simple rewording, [Example 3](#)).

● **Example 2:** Direct copying from original sources, but with footnotes

Assembling sentences or passages from various documents and putting a footnote at the end of each sentence or paragraph is still plagiarism. None of the words in the passage are your own (and probably very little of the organization, too).

Consider: One could not copy a \$75 text, put a footnote after each sentence and then sell it as his own original textbook for \$35. Likewise, you can not do the same with a lab report or other assignment.

● **Example 3:** Rewording a sentence (paraphrasing)

This is one of the most common mistakes that students make. You can **not** simply reword a sentence. This is best shown by example. Consider the following sentence from Angelici (*Synthesis and Technique in Inorganic Chemistry*, p 46):

"Those complexes that contain unpaired electrons are attracted into a magnetic field and are said to be paramagnetic, while those with no unpaired electrons are repelled by such a field and are called diamagnetic"

The following permutations are **unacceptable** changes in wording:

- "Complexes that contain unpaired electrons are those that are attracted to a magnetic field. These are called paramagnetic, while those with no unpaired electrons are repelled by a magnetic field and are said to be diamagnetic."
- "Those complexes that contain paired electrons are repelled by a magnetic field and are said to be diamagnetic, whereas those with no paired electrons are attracted to such a field and are called paramagnetic."
- "Compounds that have unpaired electrons are attracted to a magnetic field and are called paramagnetic. Compounds with no unpaired electrons are repelled by this field and are said to be diamagnetic."

Yes, sometimes there is no good way to make the sentence substantially different and still convey the information with the same effectiveness. It is perhaps OK to do this once or

twice in an assignment, but certainly no more than that. Remember, the wording must be your own! Express information in your own words.

Remember: *Paraphrasing is plagiarism!!!*

● **Example 4: Borrowing organization**

This is also fairly common because many introductions, for example, tend to follow the same pattern of organization. However, beyond the first sentence or two, there is plenty of room for divergence.

Avoid the trap of following the organization and content of your source too closely by making sure that you collate the ideas to be presented and then express them in your own fashion. You may still follow elements of another author's organization, but make sure that you haven't copied sentences verbatim or [paraphrased](#) the original work!

● **Example 5: Submitting someone else's work**

ALL work submitted must be your own, even if you worked with a lab partner, unless specified otherwise by the instructor. Here are a few of the more common examples:

- Copying someone's homework and turning it in as your own.

This is easily detected, easily proved and will be harshly punished. You can work together on assignments, but whatever you turn in must be your own work.

- Identical passages in laboratory reports.

You and your lab partner (unless otherwise indicated) are to prepare **independent** laboratory reports. **ALL** aspects of the written report should differ. Even the Experimental section should differ because you need to express what you did in your own words!

- Copying or using a laboratory report from a previous semester.

This is a great way to find out firsthand what it is like to be suspended or expelled from the University. Direct copying or even using an old lab report as a template are violations. Contrary to what you may think, this is also easily detected. Students have unique writing styles that can be easily spotted. In addition, some instructors photocopy old lab reports at random.

- Submitting someone else's computer input/output as your own

Assignments that require you to generate computer input or output files as part of the assignment are usually assigned on an individual basis. Copying another student's files or printouts is plagiarism. If you work on the assignment with a lab partner, you must **BOTH** have made a contribution to the work done on the computer -- one person can not do it and simply give it to his/her partner.

● **Example 6:** Failing to reference/footnote source material

Anytime you present a new fact that is not immediately obvious to someone in the field (or at your level of knowledge), you should provide a footnote reference to the source material. Ideally, this will be a reference to the primary literature (usually a scientific journal or sometimes a book).

Some examples of items that need to be referenced/footnoted:

- Data obtained by other researchers such as melting points, NMR shifts etc.
- Any sentence or passage that is used verbatim or [paraphrased](#). Caution: do not overuse this option (see [Example 2](#) above).
- Concepts, ideas or conclusions that are not intuitively obvious and are not your own.
- Drawings, charts, graphs etc. that you copied from elsewhere.
- Laboratory procedures followed; usually your lab manual or an original research article.
- Almost anything else that is not your own work.

Statements such as "benzene is aromatic" do not need to be footnoted, but something such as "ferrocene is an aromatic molecule which has been shown to be more reactive than benzene in aromatic substitution reactions" requires a footnote. In the previous example the phrase "has been shown" should elicit the response "BY WHOM???" Whenever you can ask a question like this, you probably need to footnote.

Bottom line: If it isn't your work and/or you aren't sure what to do, footnote it. Ask your instructor BEFORE you turn in the work.



WRITING TUTORIAL SERVICES

INDIANA UNIVERSITY

Plagiarism: What It is and How to Recognize and Avoid It

What is Plagiarism and Why is it Important?

In college courses, we are continually engaged with other people's ideas: we read them in texts, hear them in lecture, discuss them in class, and incorporate them into our own writing. As a result, it is very important that we give credit where it is due. Plagiarism is using others' ideas and words without clearly acknowledging the source of that information.

How Can Students Avoid Plagiarism?

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.

These guidelines are taken from the [Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct](#).

How to Recognize Unacceptable and Acceptable Paraphrases

Here's the ORIGINAL text, from page 1 of *Lizzie Borden: A Case Book of Family and Crime in the 1890s* by Joyce Williams et al.:

The rise of industry, the growth of cities, and the expansion of the population were the three great developments of late nineteenth century American history. As new, larger, steam-powered factories became a feature of the American landscape in the East, they transformed farm hands into industrial laborers, and provided jobs for a rising tide of immigrants. With industry came urbanization the growth of large cities (like Fall River, Massachusetts, where the Bordens lived) which became the centers of production as well as of commerce and trade.

Here's an UNACCEPTABLE paraphrase that is **plagiarism**:

The increase of industry, the growth of cities, and the explosion of the population were three large factors of nineteenth century America. As steam-driven companies became more visible in the eastern part of the country, they changed farm hands into factory workers and provided jobs for the large wave of immigrants. With industry came the growth of large cities like Fall River where the Bordens lived which turned into centers of commerce and trade as well as production.

What makes this passage plagiarism?

The preceding passage is considered plagiarism for two reasons:

- the writer has only changed around a few words and phrases, or changed the order of the original's sentences.
- the writer has failed to cite a source for any of the ideas or facts.

If you do either or both of these things, you are plagiarizing.

NOTE: This paragraph is also problematic because it changes the sense of several sentences (for example, "steam-driven companies" in sentence two misses the original's emphasis on factories).

Here's an ACCEPTABLE paraphrase:

Fall River, where the Borden family lived, was typical of northeastern industrial cities of the nineteenth century. Steam-powered production had shifted labor from agriculture to manufacturing, and as immigrants arrived in the US, they found work in these new factories. As a result, populations grew, and large urban areas arose. Fall River was one of these manufacturing and commercial centers (Williams 1).

Why is this passage acceptable?

This is acceptable paraphrasing because the writer:

- accurately relays the information in the original uses her own words.
- lets her reader know the source of her information.

Here's an example of quotation and paraphrase used together, which is also ACCEPTABLE:

Fall River, where the Borden family lived, was typical of northeastern industrial cities of the nineteenth century. As steam-powered production shifted labor from agriculture to manufacturing, the demand for workers "transformed farm hands into industrial laborers," and created jobs for immigrants. In turn, growing populations increased the size of urban areas. Fall River was one of these hubs "which became the centers of production as well as of commerce and trade" (Williams 1).

Why is this passage acceptable?

This is acceptable paraphrasing because the writer:

- records the information in the original passage accurately.
- gives credit for the ideas in this passage.
- indicated which part is taken directly from her source by putting the passage in quotation marks and citing the page number.

Note that if the writer had used these phrases or sentences in her own paper without putting quotation marks around them, she would be **PLAGIARIZING**. Using another person's phrases or sentences without putting quotation marks around them is considered plagiarism **EVEN IF THE WRITER CITES IN HER OWN TEXT THE SOURCE OF THE PHRASES OR SENTENCES SHE HAS QUOTED.**

Plagiarism and the World Wide Web

The World Wide Web has become a more popular source of information for student papers, and many questions have arisen about how to avoid plagiarizing these sources. In most cases, the same rules apply as to a printed source: when a writer must refer to ideas or quote from a WWW site, she must cite that source.

If a writer wants to use visual information from a WWW site, many of the same rules apply. Copying visual information or graphics from a WWW site (or from a printed source) is very similar to quoting information, and the source of the visual information or graphic must be cited. These rules also apply to other uses of textual or visual information from WWW sites; for example, if a student is constructing a web page as a class project, and copies graphics or visual information from other sites, she must also provide information about the source of this information. In this case, it might be a good idea to obtain permission from the WWW site's owner before using the graphics.

Strategies for Avoiding Plagiarism

1. Put in **quotations** everything that comes directly from the text especially when taking notes.
2. **Paraphrase**, but be sure you are not just rearranging or replacing a few words.

Instead, read over what you want to paraphrase carefully; cover up the text with your hand, or close the text so you can't see any of it (and so aren't tempted to use the text as a "guide"). Write out the idea in your own words without peeking.

3. **Check your paraphrase** against the original text to be sure you have not accidentally used the same phrases or words, and that the information is accurate.

Terms You Need to Know (or What is Common Knowledge?)

Common knowledge: facts that can be found in numerous places and are likely to be known by a lot of people.

Example: John F. Kennedy was elected President of the United States in 1960.

This is generally known information. **You do not need to document this fact.**

However, you must document facts that are not generally known and ideas that interpret facts.

Example: According to the American Family Leave Coalition's new book, *Family Issues and Congress*, President Bush's relationship with Congress has hindered family leave legislation (6).

The idea that "Bush's relationship with Congress has hindered family leave legislation" is not a fact but an *interpretation*; **consequently, you need to cite your source.**

Quotation: using someone's words. When you quote, place the passage you are using in quotation marks, and document the source according to a standard documentation style.

The following example uses the Modern Language Association's style:

Example: According to Peter S. Pritchard in *USA Today*, "Public schools need reform but they're irreplaceable in teaching all the nation's young" (14).

Paraphrase: using someone's ideas, but putting them in your own words. This is probably the skill you will use most when incorporating sources into your writing. Although you use your own words to paraphrase, you must still acknowledge the source of the information.

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