Yuba College Writing & Language Development Center

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using someone else's work or ideas without giving proper credit to the original author. Consequences of plagiarism include failing an assignment, failing a course, academic probation, expulsion, or a revoked degree. You can also potentially lose scholarships and financial aid.

Types of Plagiarism

There are seven different types of plagiarism. The most commonly known version is direct plagiarism. However, the different types are as follows:

Direct Plagiarism:

This type of plagiarism is when a student directly takes the work of other people and puts it into their assignment without attribution.

Example:

Without citing the ideas or words that come from Carol Dweck's "Brainology," a student writes the following:

A fixed mindset makes challenges threatening for students (because they believe that their fixed ability may not be up to the task) and it makes mistakes and failures demoralizing.

To fix the plagiarism, the student revises the sentence as follows:

In her essay "Brainology," Carol Dweck explains, "A fixed mindset makes challenges threatening for students (because they believe that their fixed ability may not be up to the task) and it makes mistakes and failures demoralizing…" (1).

Complete Plagiarism:

Complete Plagiarism is when a student submits an assignment that is entirely created by someone else. For example, a student asks someone do the work for them, uses AI to create their paper, uses an essay they found online, or uses a friend's paper and changes the name.

Patchwork Plagiarism:

Like the name suggests, this type of plagiarism occurs when ideas or information from multiple sources is woven together within a paragraph without acknowledgment of the sources. Commonly, there also tends to be a lack of original writing from the student in these types of paragraphs.

Example:

A student has to write an argumentative essay that vaping is not good for people. The student writes:

Vaping products are widely available in physical retail stores, making them easily available. Visual packaging and a wide variety of flavors make vaping appealing to teenagers and young adults. However, vaping can result in respiratory issues and cardiovascular difficulties. Even so, worldwide evidence of e-cigarette use shows a 46.6% surge in e-cigarette use in the United States from 2020 to 2022.

To correct this patchwork plagiarism, the student must identify all of their sources:

In an article from Psychology Today titled "The Hidden Dangers of Vaping: Causes, Impacts, and Solutions," Nigel R. Bairstow indicates why he thinks vaping is popular. He says, "Vaping products are widely available in physical retail stores, making them easily accessible" (23). He also notes age, mentioning that "visual packaging, and a wide variety of flavours…" are enticing to young adults (24). Although Bairstow points out that vaping can "result in respiratory issues and cardiovascular problems" (24), the usage of e-cigarettes seems to be increasing. The National Library of Medicine has a webpage called "Electronic Cigarette Harms: Aggregate Evidence Shows Damage to Biological Systems." On this webpage, Stephen Hamann and his colleagues say, "Worldwide evidence … shows a 46.6% increase in e-cigarette use in the United States from 2020 to 2022."

Paraphrasing Plagiarism:

The idea of paraphrasing is to express an author's ideas in your own words, while still giving them credit. Where this can go wrong is when a student instead uses a direct quote but changes words around and/or doesn't cite the author when paraphrasing.

Example:

In the first chapter of Harry Potter and The Deathly Hallows, Voldemorts "Death Eaters" gather around a table with him. Voldemort mentions the marriage between Remus Lupin and Nymphadora Tonks, and the Death Eaters cheer. Nagini, the great snake, dislikes the disturbance and opens his mouth wide to hiss angrily.

To correct this form of plagiarism, the student must provide the name of the author and the page number for the paraphrase:

In the first chapter of Harry Potter and The Deathly Hallows, written by J.K. Rowling, the author depicts Voldemort at a table where his "Death Eaters" (or followers) are also gathered. They discuss the current state of their plans, and Voldemort brings up a recent marriage between Remus Lupin and Nymphadora Tonks. Voldemort's snake, Nagini, is sensitive to loud sounds. So, when people at the table cheer, he hisses in frustration (23).

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Self-Plagiarism:

Self-Plagiarism is when a student re-uses old work. For example, if a student took English-C1000 in the past and decided to drop the class but later took the course again, it would be self-plagiarism to copy and paste an old essay into the new assignment and submit it. Likewise, submitting an essay originally written for one class as an assignment for another class would be self-plagiarism. Without disclosure to a professor or asking for permission to do so, this is not okay. Note: plagiarism checkers in Canvas compare your essay to every other essay that has ever been submitted on Canvas for every other class.

Source-Based Plagiarism:

Source-Based Plagiarism is when a student uses a made-up source, or they connect a quote to the wrong source. Another way that this occurs is when a student deliberately excludes information about the source in order to avoid questions about the source's credibility or to make the source fit their argument.

Unauthorized AI Usage:

Some professors at the college allow some use of AI. Usually, however, they limit AI to helping students come up with ideas. Students must follow their professor's AI policy. Unauthorized AI usage occurs if an assignment is submitted without noting how and where AI was used, or if a professors AI policy is ignored completely.

Can You Accidentally Plagiarize?

Yes! Not all plagiarism is on purpose, especially if a student is still learning how to format their assignments properly. The following errors would be considered forms of plagiarism:

Missing Quotation Marks:

This would be if a student introduced a source properly but forgot to include quotation marks.

Example:

In "How to Tame a Wild Tongue" by Gloria Anzaldúa, she states I remember being sent to the corner of the classroom for talking back to the Anglo teacher when all I was trying to do was tell her how to pronounce my name (34).

Corrected:

In "How to Tame a Wild Tongue" by Gloria Anzaldúa, she states, "I remember being sent to the corner of the classroom for 'talking back' to the Anglo teacher when all I was trying to do was tell her how to pronounce my name" (34).

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Missing In-Text Citations:

In-Text Citations are what we use to give credit to an author by providing their last name and page number from the work. Note: when a source is introduced in the introductory phrase, the last name does not have to be in the in-text citation.

Example:

The unnamed first-person point of view character states, “I wasn’t enthusiastic about this visit. He was no one I knew. And his being blind bothered me.”

Corrected:

The unnamed first-person point of view character states, “I wasn’t enthusiastic about this visit. He was no one I knew. And his being blind bothered me” (Carver 1).

OR

According to Carver, the unnamed first-person point of view character states, “I wasn’t enthusiastic about this visit. He was no one I knew. And his being blind bothered me” (1).

How To Avoid Plagiarism

You may be wondering how to avoid plagiarizing. Follow these steps:

1. Ask your professor questions about your assignment.
2. Go to tutoring if you are still unsure.
3. Cite and give credit to your sources’ ideas as well as their words.

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