

Plagiarism: What Clark College Students Need to Know

Original text from “The Clark College English Department Statement on Plagiarism” with a few additions

Much of your college education will involve learning what others have written and integrating those ideas into your own thinking.

In academic writing any ideas or language not credited to another are assumed to be that of the author. The *problem of plagiarism* comes in when you fail to give credit for those ideas that are not originally yours.

The word plagiarism

- Is defined as “The act or instance of copying or stealing another’s words or ideas and attributing them as one’s own.” (Black’s Law Dictionary, 7th ed.)
- comes from the Latin word for "kidnapping,"
- refers to the unacknowledged use of another’s words, ideas, or information.”

Your instructor will provide you with the appropriate information for documenting the sources you use in your research and assignments. Use the following information as a guide to help you avoid plagiarism.

You MUST acknowledge:

- Any direct quotation. You must place the exact words quoted in quotation marks (even if the words articulate information that is common knowledge).
- Paraphrases and summaries that provide background information, present facts not commonly known, and explain various positions on your topic.
- Arguable assertions. If an author presents an assertion that may or may not be true, you must cite the source.
- Statistics, charts, tables, and graphs from any source. You must credit all graphic material, even if you yourself create the graph.

You MAY acknowledge

- Facts available from a wide variety of sources but especially well addressed in a particular source. If a number of textbooks, encyclopedias, or almanacs include the information, you need not cite it.
- However, if your own discussion of the material is informed by a particular source of this information, or if you want to provide a lead for readers to follow, you may want to cite the source.

You do not need to acknowledge anything written entirely in your own words that meets one of the following criteria:

- Common knowledge. If most readers like yourself would likely know something, you need not cite it.
- Your own ideas, discoveries, and reasoning.

Example of citing a direct quotation:

Quotation
Marks

"I spell out what plagiarism is on the first day of classes, reiterate it on my syllabus, invite students to come talk to me if they need clarification, explain that I will fail anyone I catch plagiarizing, and then I do. Other repercussions? Students who plagiarize don't ask me for a recommendation for graduate school, internships, or a job, and they wouldn't get a helpful one if they did." (Stone)

Quotation
Marks

Author of
the Source

Original
Source

Stone, Elizabeth. "For Plagiarists, No Veil Over Past Mistakes." The Chronicle of Higher Education. Jun 17, 2005. Vol.51, Iss. 41; pg. B.5

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Can I purchase research papers or hire someone to write my papers?

A: No. Such actions are considered to be plagiarism and academic dishonesty.

Q: Can I get help in writing your paper?

A: Yes, but there are limits to the amount of help you can honestly receive. For instance, others may read your paper and point out weaknesses, but they must not rewrite the paper for you.

Q: Can I use a paper that you wrote or are writing for another class?

A: Not without explicit permission from your instructor. Some faculty consider it an act of dishonesty to resubmit or to rewrite any paper that you have accomplished in any earlier or concurrent course for a new grade.

Q: What happens if I plagiarize and get caught?

A: The [Clark College Student Code](#) defines plagiarism in section 132N-120-060, and the consequences in section WAC 132N-120-070—Disciplinary . Your instructor may also define specific penalties. Consequences could include:

- failing the assignment
- failing the class
- receiving disciplinary warning, reprimand, probation, suspension or expulsion.

Q: Where can I get more help?

A: Take advantage of the resources on campus, including:

- Your instructor
- The Writing Center
- The Librarians