

CYBERPLAGIARISM

LCCC Library
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Overview...

- What is it?
- Where are they getting their information?
- What can we do?
 - Prevention
 - Detection
 - Follow-up

What is it?



Definitions

- **Plagiarism:** The act or an instance of copying or stealing another's words or ideas and attributing them as one's own.

(Black's Law Dictionary. 1999 ed.)

- **Plagiarize:** ... [L *plagiarius* kidnapper f. *plagium* a kidnapping f. Gk *plagion*]

(The Oxford American Dictionary and Language Guide. 1999 ed.)

Give credit when you use

- Another person's idea, opinion, or theory
 - Facts, statistics, graphs, drawings that are not common knowledge
 - A quotation of another's actual spoken or written words
 - A paraphrase of another's spoken or written words
- (“Plagiarism,” Indiana)

History

- Biblical Book of Ecclesiastes /
Mesopotamian Epic of Gilgamesh

(Van Der Toorn)

- and...

Incidence

- Data varies
- Males cheat more often
- Younger students cheat more often
- Some surveys – 70-75% of student cheat, primarily by plagiarizing

(“Toward”, Christian)

Forms

- Unintentional
- Pre-meditated
- Self-plagiarism

Kinds

- One sentence or phrase
- Patchwork or cut and paste
- Global plagiarism
- Fabrication

Reasons

1. Don't understand it
2. Faulty note-taking
3. Poor time management & planning
4. Believe everything on the Web is public domain
5. Busy with jobs & families

Reasons

6. Grade pressure: parents, transfer schools, marketplace
7. Easy - instant gratification
8. Consider courses outside major a waste
9. Arrogance
10. Role models – government, sports, corporate America - plagiarize, fabricate, distort, bribes, hack

Reasons

11. Parents doing work for children
12. Collaborative learning
13. Consumer mentality
14. Cryptomnesia
15. “Infobesity”
16. Angry at instructor or administration

Reasons ESL Students May Commit Plagiarism

1. Their home countries may have different documentation standards or definitions of expert knowledge (Evans and Youmans).
2. Their culture may consider knowledge communal property.
3. Their home countries may teach through copying and memorization. Students may think the knowledge is common and need not be documented (Thomson and Williams) (Deckert).

4. Their home countries may emphasize grades over how they are attained (Evans and Youmans).

5. Their culture may not value the research of "non experts," such as other students' writings (Evans and Youmans).

6. They may not have been exposed to documentation standards in the United States.

Bad News

- Damages their honor
- Disrupts students' education
- Causes them to miss out on research & writing process
 - Articulate research need
 - Design search strategy
 - Access info
 - Analyze & evaluate info
 - Synthesize info
 - Constructively express/use result

- One third of faculty do not report plagiarism even when they know it is occurring (Center for Academic Integrity)
 - Faculty are generous, compassionate, &/or eager to be popular
 - Faculty are reluctant to turn them in (Rocklin)
- Recidivism rates are not always tracked

Good News

- Rarely a long-term plan: procrastinate & panic
- Unsophisticated – leave easily detected clues
- Usually admit to offense when confronted
- Generally want to learn how to write research papers correctly

*Where are they getting
their information?*



Sources

- Term paper mills (free & fee-based)
- Online databases
- Search engines: scientific reports, faculty & student posts, etc.
- Friends or family
- Fraternities and Sororities

Sources

- Term paper mills...

*Prevention
the best option*



Set Standards

- Review college policies on Academic Honesty
- Establish in syllabus a definition of plagiarism
- Establish policy for library faculty
- Specify the ramifications for plagiarizing and follow through

Encourage students to

- Take pride in their own work
- Give credit when it's due
- Appreciate academic research
- Identify how research is integrated into textbooks, newspapers, and magazines

Set a good example

- Give credit in handouts & discussions

Assign topics

- That require higher order thinking skills, not just a recount of info
- That are timely
- That vary from year to year
- That are related to a theme
- With a personal or local connection

Teach the Specifics

- Explain why documentation is necessary
- Show students how to document many kinds of sources
- Assign students sources to practice
- Show students how to paraphrase and quote using many examples (important for ESL students)

Begin Early

- Use sources in early assignments so students become comfortable with skills
- Focus on research throughout the semester
- Emphasize the practical application of research skills in all classes

Require

- Recent sources
- Some specific sources
- Correct citation style

- Assign 3 possible openings for papers – you choose which one to use
- Teach proper Web research
- Reminder: demo@turnitin.com
Document everything they borrow
- Refer to a good anti-plagiarism site

- Hold class discussions on academic integrity
 - Demand honesty (lower incidences if this happens)
(“Colleges Say”)
 - Warn of consequences (Schneider)
 - Ask them to sign a contract (Reiger and Dlugos)
 - Require students check each other’s papers for plagiarism

- Focus on entire writing process
 - 1) Topic proposal
 - 2) Thesis statement
 - 3) Outline
 - 4) Drafts
 - 5) Annotated bibliography
 - 6) Copies of sources

- Inform them beforehand:

You will select 1 citation from their
Works Cited list &
they will show you the resource
or give its exact location.

Detection



- Start of semester: assign an in-class writing sample
- Part of final exam: have them summarize its main points (Fain, “Cheating”)
- Require an oral report after it is submitted
 - Inform them in advance
 - Ask carefully posed questions about its content or key terms (Renard)

Metalearning Essays

(Harris)

- Problems? Solutions?
- Research strategy?
- Location of resources?
- Most important thing you learned investigating this?
- Most difficult part of writing it?
- Strongest aspect of the paper?
- With more time, on what aspect would you continue to work?
- Changes from first draft?

Search Engines

- <http://www.yahoo.com>
- <http://www.askjeeves.com>
- <http://www.google.com>
- <http://www.dogpile.com>

Online Databases

- <http://wave.lccc.edu>

✓ Search Online Databases

EBSCO

LexisNexis Academic

ProQuest

Plagiarism Detection Services

TurnItIn.com

MyDropBox.com

EVE2

CopyCatch

Glatt

Look for

- Advanced vocabulary, professional jargon
- Elementary writing style
- Inconsistent writing style Many minors errors used as a decoy
- Unusual formatting
- Strange text at top or bottom of page
- Fonts that do not match

- Content not closely related to assigned topic
- References to accompanying material (e.g., chart) that doesn't exist
- Internal documentation doesn't match bibl
- Fake citations (This is a big one!)
- Resources: outdated or not from college library
- Inactive web sites
- Student's inability to recall contents

Followup



If you suspect plagiarism

- Check assignments against in-class writing sample
- Have enough evidence to substantiate your claim

(Harris)

- Adhere to policy on academic honesty

Respect their dignity

- “This doesn’t sound like your unique voice. Did anyone help you?”
(Renard)
- “I was...surprised by your paper, so I did some investigation.... Before I tell you what I found out, is there anything you want to tell me...?”
(Harris)
- “I’m curious...why your writing style is so good in some parts...and so poor in others....”
(Harris)

Consider

- What is the librarian's role?
- Do you think plagiarism is more often intentional or unintentional?
- What is the biggest reason they plagiarize?
- Is cheating more prevalent in online courses than in f2f courses?
- What is the most plagiarism effective prevention strategy?

Consider

- Are we becoming plagiarism police?
- Is it plagiarism if an instructor posts ideas on a listserve or Website and you use them without attributing credit?
- What would you do if a student disputed your charge of plagiarism?
- How do you instill the values of honesty and pride in one's work?

