Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Policy Statement on Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

For all courses in the Writing Program of the English Department at the University of Michigan-Flint including ENG 100, 109 (3 credits), 111, 112, HON 155/156 and upper division writing courses

University of Michigan-Flint Catalog Statement on Academic Integrity:

“No departure from the highest standards of intellectual integrity, whether by cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, falsification, or aiding and abetting dishonesty by another person, can be tolerated in a community of scholars. Such transgressions may result in action ranging from reduced grade or failure of a course, to expulsion from the University or revocation of degree.” (refer to current Catalog for the full text and for definitions of the misconducts listed)

The University code, then, is clear that maintaining academic integrity is paramount. To that end, departments and programs have been authorized by the university to “further delineate academic integrity,” and students “are bound by the University policy on academic integrity as well as these department or program policies”. The following delineates the writing program’s position on academic integrity.

The Importance of Academic Integrity in the Writing Classroom

At this, and all universities, plagiarism, cheating and other forms of academic misconduct cannot be tolerated and penalties are severe. The reason for this is, as Composition scholar Mike Rose argues, that “virtually all the writing academics do is built on the writing of others. Every argument proceeds from the texts of others” (Lives on the Boundary 180). Therefore, it is important that students “position” themselves in intellectual work by properly learning to “mark the difference” between their prose and others, to cite the language and ideas of others that they are using, and to “strike the proper balance between [their] writing and someone else’s.” You are expected to know and follow the rules academics and professionals use when they write. When you violate these rules, you show disrespect for the members of the community that follow the rules, and you risk losing your own status as a respected member of that community.
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Defining Academic Misconduct in Writing Courses
Academic misconduct includes but is not limited to receiving unauthorized assistance, submitting the ideas, work, or words of another without proper acknowledgement, and submitting your own work for credit in multiple courses without each instructor’s consent (remember that writing is learning; if you are not writing in the new context, you are not doing the work).

You are guilty of academic misconduct, for example, if you:
• “Cut and paste” from printed, electronic, or other-owned text and present it as your own
• Submit work written or partially dictated to you by someone else and represent it as your own
• Submit a paper written by you on a previous occasion and present it as new course work
• Put someone else’s ideas in your own words without telling the reader this is what you did
• Use another person’s words—sometimes even one word—without showing precisely which words are not yours and where they came from—even if you are using the other person’s words to express your ideas!

Avoiding Academic Misconduct in Writing
To maintain academic integrity, you have to be clear about who your ideas are informed by and fit into the larger conversations of the academy and the world. One way to avoid misconduct is to fully and properly acknowledge all sources of your work by unambiguously identifying the sources of all ideas, language, and other materials that are not your own. In other words, always be honest with your reader about what you are doing, and use the academic conventions that help you express that responsible, ethical approach.

You should:
○ Indicate where quotations begin and end by using quotation marks and introductory phrases
○ Use transitions or introductory phrases to clarify when “your” words represent another’s ideas
○ Include in-text citations for every source you borrow from, paraphrase, summarize, or quote
○ Attach a complete and properly formatted works cited page
Why Plagiarism Is a Serious Offense

Plagiarism means that you have not learned to do your work.
- Plagiarism and theft of others’ material is a serious violation of academic conduct at the university level, especially since researchers in all fields work with ideas and materials that they develop as their own. Work is published because it adds to our knowledge in many fields. Beyond the university, there are legal ramifications of violating Intellectual Property law.
- Stealing the ideas of others means that you misrepresent your own ability to work in your field. It means that you are not a professional and that you are not to be trusted to do accurate research.
- Misrepresenting materials can also have serious consequences, especially in the sciences, where the theft of materials the researcher does not understand can result in harm to people, even large numbers of people.
- In the university community, we recognize the important consequences of stealing the ideas of others. As you become a member of this community, you need to be aware of these consequences.
- Because we want you to become a member of this academic community, it is important to show that you can do the work. Plagiarizing by representing in writing the ideas, development of ideas, and/or specific language of another as your own defeats the purpose of taking writing courses at the University of Michigan-Flint. The writing sequence is about working on your writing and practicing the strategies for incorporating the work of others into your writing.

Plagiarism can have serious consequences for you.
- Plagiarism can result in your failing a paper or the entire course. Additional penalties may result when the situation is reported to the College of Arts and Sciences and the Academic Standards Committee. Furthermore, plagiarism may even result in your being suspended from the university.
- Suspension and the indication of plagiarism on your transcript can have serious consequences, and may prevent you from achieving your goals. Medical school, and all medical programs, law schools, and other professional schools, may turn down an applicant who has plagiarism recorded on his or her transcript. At the very least, an unpleasant and embarrassing explanation is required during the application process.
- Because plagiarism is a serious offense, you can expect discussion in class of the concerns of academic integrity and the strategies for using and properly documenting sources. If you do not understand how to avoid plagiarism or if you feel you cannot document sources properly, talk to your instructor. But if you panic or cut corners, if you do not submit your own new writing done within the context of your course, if you are confused and do not ask for help, if you plagiarize (use another’s words or ideas without full and proper acknowledgment), or if you commit outright academic fraud (buying an essay on the Internet, using someone else’s essay, having someone else write something for you that you “fix” later, or turning in your old work to save time, etc.), you will suffer serious consequences.
The Consequences of Plagiarism in Writing Courses

Learning to document sources correctly and appropriately is part of a long on-going process. One of the goals of your freshman writing courses is to make sure that you know and understand the conventions of documentation and how to eliminate conscious/intentional and unconscious/unintentional plagiarism.

Conscious/intentional plagiarism involves the intentional use of another’s work as if it were your own. Unconscious/unintentional plagiarism occurs if you fail to observe documentation requirements because you do not understand how documentation works. Generally unconscious plagiarism involves omitting a reference, or failing to document materials in the text of your paper. Whether conscious or unconscious, any violation of the following principles in a student’s completed work constitutes plagiarism.

When sources are required, you will learn how to properly acknowledge and document your sources. Every time you use a source, whether required by the assignment or not, you must be clear about what words and ideas you have taken from others. Of course, when and how to incorporate the words of others into your text and how to properly document a source can be tricky, and some students make mistakes, particularly in early drafts. However, using multiple drafts gives the writer the opportunity to focus on documentation on one of the later draft. Common mistakes include accidentally forgetting a beginning or end quotation mark, paraphrasing an acknowledged source with phrases too close to the original and misusing a citation formula—all concerns that can be remedied during the draft process.

The penalty for the minor mishandling of sources in work submitted for a grade will be assessed in the grade for that writing. The penalty for plagiarism, however, will be more severe. Plagiarism is no mistake. If you plagiarize you will not earn credit for the course. Regardless of the number of points honestly earned, a student caught plagiarizing all or part of an essay submitted for a grade will receive an automatic N for the course (or F for writing courses beyond the 100 level). Further penalties may result when reported to the College of Arts and Sciences Academic Standards Committee.
Guidelines for Avoiding Plagiarism

1) **All written work submitted for credit must be your own work.** It may not have been composed, wholly or partially, by another person.

2) **Every paraphrase, summary, and quotation must be accompanied by an in-text citation, and all sources cited in the text must appear in a full list of sources at the end of the essay.** Paraphrases are a version of another’s sentence or paragraph presented entirely in your own words. Summaries are reduced versions of another’s text written entirely in your own words. Quotations are word-for-word sections of a source presented within quotation marks. All paraphrases, summaries, and quotations must be accompanied by an in-text citation acknowledging the source, or sources, from which you drew and modified the information. All sources cited in in-text citations should then be listed at the end of your essay. The format for the in-text citations and list of sources at the end will be determined by the documentation style required in the course (MLA, APA, or Chicago, for example).

3) **Write an accurate bibliography (also known as List of References, Works Cited or, References Cited) using the conventions of the documentation style required.** In order to help your reader locate your sources quickly and easily, you need to provide a good bibliography. All the commas, parentheses, periods and so forth are a code that allows you to write your bibliography in a clear, succinct, and recognizable documentation form. You must follow the codes exactly.

4) **When you put work in quotation marks, you are saying these words are, word for word, the work of another.** Quotations, then, must be accurately copied in your text, and all quoted material must be accompanied by an in-text citation of the source and the source must be listed on the page of references.

5) **The wording of written work that is not in quotation marks must be your own.** It is important to note that even if you acknowledge in an in-text citation the source of a summary or paraphrase, without quotation marks, you are saying that the words in the summary or paraphrase are entirely yours. Thus you may not submit work outside of quotation marks that has been copied, wholly or partially, from a book, article, essay, newspaper, another student’s paper or notebook, or any other written, printed, or media source even if you cite your source. Another writer’s phrases, sentences, or paragraphs may be included only if presented as quotations and the sources acknowledged. Any passage that is not in quotation marks and not accompanied by an in-text citation must represent only your words and ideas.

   a) **Rule for re-wording sources:** If you have even as few as two to five words of your paper in succession identical to the source, that is plagiarism unless those words are enclosed in quotation marks and documented both in the text of your paper and in your list of references.
b) *Simply changing a word or two here or there is not appropriate paraphrasing; it is plagiarism.* Your paraphrases should not mimic the wording or syntax of the original sentence. While drawing from the idea of another, a paraphrase must be composed in your own words.

6) *Written work that presents any written, printed or media material including pictures, charts, or graphs must acknowledge the source of that material.* Ideas from books and essays may be incorporated into your work as starting points, governing issues, or illustrations. In each case, however, the source must be documented both in the text itself and at the end of the paper.

7) *Remember that any on-line materials you use to gather information for a paper are also governed by rules about plagiarism*, so you need to learn to cite electronic sources as well as printed and various other kinds of sources. Again, you need to include in-text parenthetical citations for all sources, and you need to include all sources in your list of references at the end of the paper.

8) *Professors assume that any paper submitted by a student for any class was prepared by that student for that specific class.* You may not turn in the same paper for two or more different classes/courses, composed at this university or another, unless each professor involved has authorized you to do so in advance.

9) *Do not fabricate or falsify sources or data.* Making up or changing sources, quotes, page numbers, statistics or other content will get you into serious trouble.

10) *Purchase a handbook, or find a good online resource, to help you with the proper formulas for acknowledging sources in the text and at the paper's end.* Your professor may require a particular handbook be purchased.