

Illinois Wesleyan University Statement on Plagiarism

What is plagiarism? Plagiarism is the intentional or inadvertent misrepresentation as one's own, the words, ideas, research data, formulae or artistic creations of another individual or collective body, without giving credit to the originator(s) of those words, ideas, data, formulae or artistic creations.

Examples of plagiarism:

- Submitting in one's own name a term paper, report or document written by someone else or obtained from a commercial agency.
- A document that is only partially of one's own creation; combining original content with text, data or graphics taken from another source such as an encyclopedia, book, journal article or downloaded from the World-Wide-Web.
- Paraphrases of the ideas or words of others without proper acknowledgement.
- Original work based on the ideas of others without proper acknowledgment.

Why one should not plagiarize: The scholarly community recognizes that it is virtually impossible to write everything with such originality that one never employs the ideas and words of another. However, by providing proper citations to other works, a writer shows his or her ability to enter into dialogue with the scholarly community of a specific discipline, building upon what has already been said and adding his or her own voice. Plagiarism on the other hand is contrary to the ideals of scholarship. It is subversive to sound education and ethically dishonest.

When to cite a source: Cite a source whenever you use the

- Words (written or spoken)
- Ideas
- Research data
- Formulae
- Artistic creations (images, music) of another person or agency.

It is not necessary to cite common knowledge.

What is common knowledge? Common knowledge is anything that is considered known by the vast majority of the population – or may be found in generalized information sources, for example; Chicago is the largest city in Illinois, or $E=mc^2$.

Avoiding plagiarism: To aid in avoiding plagiarism, the scholarly community has developed techniques of documentation which allow a writer to use other peoples' words and ideas without seeming to expropriate them. Footnotes, endnotes, parenthetical textual notes and quotation marks are used by scholars

to acknowledge the sources of ideas and words. Students at IWU are expected to learn how to quote and cite sources responsibly. There are numerous tools which can assist writers in meeting this requirement. Two of the most common are the *APA Publication Manual* published by the American Psychological Association and the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* published by the Modern Language Association. Both are available from the IWU Writing Center and The Ames Library. Your instructor or a librarian will gladly assist you in applying these guidelines to the work you do in individual classes. Also, because what is considered the “correct” way of citing and quoting varies among disciplines, your instructors may specify which set of guidelines is to be followed for a specific class assignment.

Consequences of plagiarism at IWU: Because IWU takes very seriously the responsibility of ethical scholarship and writing, plagiarism can result in a failing grade for an assignment, a course, or in some cases, separation from the University. It is the responsibility of instructors who discover instances of plagiarism to report these to the Associate Provost of Academic Planning and Standards in writing. Only after such a report has been filed can an appropriate punitive response be determined. The instructor must also inform the student at the time that the report is filed. The Associate Provost of Academic Planning and Standards is responsible for seeing that the appropriate penalty is recorded in all cases not requiring action of the Academic Appeals Board.

Sources consulted:

“Defining and Avoiding Plagiarism: The WPA Statement on Best Practices”
Online posting. 22 October 2007 <http://wpacouncil.org/positions/plagiarism.html>

MacDonald, Jean. “To Cite is Right: Avoiding Plagiarism, Pleasing Profs & Living an Academically Honest Life.” The Ames Library, Illinois Wesleyan University. January 2008 http://www2.iwu.edu/library/help/Plagiarism_Module.ppt

“Plagiarize” Webster’s Third New International Dictionary. Philip Babcock Gove, editor in chief. Springfield, Mass.: Merriam-Webster Inc., 2002

Academic Standards Committee
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