

Plagiarism and Copyright

What is plagiarism?

Simply put, plagiarism is the use of another's original words or ideas as though they were your own. Any time you borrow from an original source and do not give proper credit, you have committed plagiarism and violated U.S. copyright laws.

How to avoid plagiarism:

1. Never copy directly
2. Never print directly
3. Never copy from other students

What are copyright laws?

Copyright laws exist to protect our intellectual property. They make it illegal to reproduce someone else's expression of ideas or information without permission. This can include music, images, written words, video, and a variety of other media.

Anyone who reproduces copyrighted material improperly can be prosecuted in a court of law. It does not matter if the form or content of the original has been altered -- as long as any material can be shown to be substantially similar to the original, it may be considered a violation of the Copyright Act.

Citations

All work needs to be cited throughout the paper. The rule of thumb is that you cite any information that is not common knowledge to someone who knows about your topic. Any statistics must be cited as well.

Quoting directly is acceptable

- Always use quotation marks (Punctuation inside quotation marks.)
- Always give credit to the source
- In a bibliography—can include both publications and online sources

Paraphrasing

- Using your own words is acceptable
- Always give credit to the source

Use Common Knowledge

- Facts that are known to many people and sources (George Washington was the first president. Bush and Kerry ran for president in the 2004 Presidential Election)
- Common knowledge does not have to be cited.