



## Writing Guide: **Plagiarism**

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1. **Plagiarism** is academic theft, the presentation of someone else's words or ideas as your own.
2. It is a serious academic offense that has serious consequences:  
The WCC Board of Trustees Policy Manual, Section 4095: Student Rights and Responsibilities, numbers plagiarism among the forms of academic dishonesty that "will call for discipline."
3. Students found guilty of plagiarism face the following possibilities:
  - o a failing grade on the work that contains plagiarized material
  - o a failing final grade in the course
  - o more serious discipline

### Avoiding Plagiarism

#### To Avoid Plagiarism, Quote and Paraphrase Effectively

1. Here are two basic ways to borrow information from a source:
  - o **Quotation**
    - o an exact borrowing of a source's words
    - o you must put these words in quotation marks
  - o **Paraphrase**
    - o a borrowing of a source's ideas
    - o written in your own words
    - o do not put these words in quotation marks
2. Here are some tips on paraphrasing:
  - o Don't look at the source when you write your paraphrase. This will help you to use your own words rather than copy the words of the source.
  - o If you can't resist looking at the source, consider the following:
    - o Make sure that your **words** are different from those of the source
    - o Make sure that your **sentence structure** is different from that of the source

#### To Avoid Plagiarism, Cite Your Sources

3. **Citing your sources** means letting readers know the source of any information (not only written words or ideas but also material from other media) that you borrow to put into your paper.



4. Any words, facts, ideas, statistics, or opinions that you include in a paper that are not your own must be cited.
5. All quotations and paraphrases must be cited.
6. Here are the two most common documentation styles for citing sources:
  - o MLA (Modern Language Association) style
  - o APA (American Psychological Association) Style
7. Both of these styles call for a combination of parenthetical in-text citations and a list of sources at the end of your paper.
8. For each piece of borrowed information in your paper, you must provide the following:
  - o in the text of your paper, the name of the source's author
  - o in the text of your paper, the page number of the source from which you have borrowed the information
  - o in the text of your paper, the source's year of publication (this is for APA style but not MLA style)
  - o at the end of your paper, a list of all the sources you have borrowed from (called Works Cited in MLA style and References in APA style)
9. Why cite sources?
  - o To give credit to the sources
  - o To show your credibility: readers can trust you because you care enough about your subject to do research on it to support our own ideas and opinions with the ideas and opinions of experts
  - o To let readers know where they can get further information about your topic
  - o To let readers look for themselves at your sources