

Name der Lehrveranstaltung
bei
Name der Dozentin / des Dozenten
im
Bezeichnung des Semesters

Titel der Hausarbeit
von
Name der Autorin / des Autors; Matrikelnummer

Erklärung

Mir ist bewusst, dass Plagiiere in einer Seminarhausarbeit, wie auch in einer Studienabschlussarbeit, eine Täuschung im Sinne der Prüfungsordnungen, die im Zuständigkeitsbereich des Fachprüfungsausschusses Anglistik / Amerikanistik / Englisch liegen, darstellt. Ich habe die Ausführungen zu Plagiaten bzw. *plagiarism* in dem folgenden Werk gelesen und verstanden, und ich weiß, was ein Plagiat im Sinne dieser Ausführungen ist:

- *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 7. Aufl. New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2009. S. 51-59 [bis einschließlich Abschn. 2.6].

Mir ist bewusst, dass die Aufdeckung eines Plagiats bzw. von Plagiaten in oben genannter Seminarhausarbeit zur Folge hätte, dass ich in der oben genannten Lehrveranstaltung, zu der diese Seminarhausarbeit gehört, keine Leistungspunkte erwerben kann und dass die Vorsitzende bzw. der Vorsitzende des Fachprüfungsausschusses Anglistik / Amerikanistik / Englisch über diesen Sachverhalt informiert wird. Mir ist bewusst, dass die Feststellung von Plagiaten in von mir erbrachten Prüfungsleistungen, für die der Fachprüfungsausschuss Anglistik / Amerikanistik / Englisch zuständig ist, im Wiederholungsfall zum Ausschluss von weiteren Prüfungsleistungen, für die der Fachprüfungsausschuss Anglistik / Amerikanistik / Englisch zuständig ist, sowie zu darüber hinaus gehenden weiteren Sanktionen führen kann. Eine elektronische Fassung der Hausarbeit, die mit der gedruckten Fassung vollkommen identisch ist, habe ich eingereicht.

Ort, Datum, Unterschrift

Name in Druckschrift

MLA
Handbook
for Writers
of Research
Papers

MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers

Seventh Edition

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OF AMERICA

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religious beliefs, race, sex, or sexual orientation. Discussions about this subject have generally focused on wording that could be labeled sexist. For example, many writers no longer use *he*, *him*, or *his* to express a meaning that includes women or girls: "If a young artist is not confident, he can quickly become discouraged." The use of *she*, *her*, and *hers* to refer to a person who may be of either sex can also be distracting and momentarily confusing. Both usages can often be avoided through a revision that recasts the sentence into the plural or that eliminates the pronoun: "If young artists are not confident, they can quickly become discouraged" or "A young artist who is not confident can quickly become discouraged." Another technique is to make the discussion refer to a person who is identified, so that there is a reason to use a specific singular pronoun. *They*, *them*, *their*, and *theirs* cannot logically be applied to a single person, and *he or she* and *her or him* are cumbersome alternatives to be used sparingly. Many authors now also avoid terms that unnecessarily integrate a person's sex with a job or role. For instance, *anchorman*, *policeman*, *stewardess*, and *poetess* are commonly replaced with *anchor*, *police officer*, *flight attendant*, and *poet*. For advice on current practices, consult your instructor or one of the guides to nondiscriminatory language listed in A.3.

2 Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

- 2.1. Definition of Plagiarism
- 2.2. Consequences of Plagiarism
- 2.3. Information Sharing Today
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 - 2.7.3. Research on Human Subjects
 - 2.7.4. Copyright Infringement
- 2.8. Summing Up

You have probably read or heard about charges of plagiarism in disputes in the publishing and recording industries. You may also have had classroom discussions about student plagiarism in particular and academic dishonesty in general. Many schools have developed guidelines or procedures regarding plagiarism. Honor codes and other means to promote academic integrity are also common. This section describes ethical considerations in research writing and can help you avoid plagiarism and other unethical acts.

2.1. DEFINITION OF PLAGIARISM

Derived from the Latin word *plagiarius* ("kidnapper"), to *plagiarize* means "to commit literary theft" and to "present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source" (*Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* [11th ed.; 2003; print]). Plagiarism involves two kinds of wrongs. Using another person's ideas, information, or expressions without acknowledging that person's work constitutes intellectual theft. Passing off another person's ideas, information, or expressions as your own to get a better grade or gain some other advantage constitutes fraud. Plagiarism is sometimes a moral and ethical offense rather than a legal one since some instances of plagiarism fall outside the scope of copyright infringement, a legal offense (see 2.7.4).

2.2. CONSEQUENCES OF PLAGIARISM

A complex society that depends on well-informed citizens strives to maintain high standards of quality and reliability for documents that are publicly circulated and used in government, business, industry, the professions, higher education, and the media. Because research has the power to affect opinions and actions, responsible writers compose their work with great care. They specify when they refer to another author's ideas, facts, and words, whether they want to agree with, object to, or analyze the source. This kind of documentation not only recognizes the work writers do; it also tends to discourage the circulation of error, by inviting readers to determine for themselves whether a reference to another text presents a reasonable account of what that text says. Plagiarists undermine these important public val-

ues. Once detected, plagiarism in a work provokes skepticism and even outrage among readers, whose trust in the author has been broken.

The charge of plagiarism is a serious one for all writers. Plagiarists are often seen as incompetent—incapable of developing and expressing their own thoughts—or, worse, dishonest, willing to deceive others for personal gain. When professional writers, such as journalists, are exposed as plagiarists, they are likely to lose their jobs, and they are certain to suffer public embarrassment and loss of prestige. Almost always, the course of a writer's career is permanently affected by a single act of plagiarism. The serious consequences of plagiarism reflect the value the public places on trustworthy information.

Students exposed as plagiarists may suffer severe penalties, ranging from failure in the assignment or in the course to expulsion from school. This is because student plagiarism does considerable harm. For one thing, it damages teachers' relationships with students, turning teachers into detectives instead of mentors and fostering suspicion instead of trust. By undermining institutional standards for assigning grades and awarding degrees, student plagiarism also becomes a matter of significance to the public. When graduates' skills and knowledge fail to match their grades, an institution's reputation is damaged. For example, no one would choose to be treated by a physician who obtained a medical degree by fraud. Finally, students who plagiarize harm themselves. They lose an important opportunity to learn how to write a research paper. Knowing how to collect and analyze information and reshape it in essay form is essential to academic success. This knowledge is also required in a wide range of careers in law, journalism, engineering, public policy, teaching, business, government, and not-for-profit organizations.

Plagiarism betrays the personal element in writing as well. Discussing the history of copyright, Mark Rose notes the tie between our writing and our sense of self—a tie that, he believes, influenced the idea that a piece of writing could belong to the person who wrote it. Rose says that our sense of ownership of the words we write "is deeply rooted in our conception of ourselves as individuals with at least a modest grade of singularity, some degree of personality" (*Authors and Owners: The Invention of Copyright* [Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1993; print; 142]). Gaining skill as a writer opens the door to learning more about yourself and to developing a personal voice and approach in your writing. It is essential for all student writers to understand how to avoid committing plagiarism.

2.3. INFORMATION SHARING TODAY

Innumerable documents on a host of subjects are posted on the Web apparently for the purpose of being shared. The availability of research materials and the ease of transmitting, modifying, and using them have influenced the culture of the Internet, where the free exchange of information is an ideal. In this sea of materials, some students may question the need to acknowledge the authorship of individual documents. Professional writers, however, have no doubt about the matter. They recognize the importance of documentation whether they base their research on print or electronic publications. And so they continue to cite their sources and to mark the passages they quote.

In the culture of the academy, too, the free exchange of information is a long-standing ideal. Under certain circumstances, this ideal is described as academic freedom. But nothing about academic freedom or the free exchange of information implies ignoring authorship. Academic standards require all writers to acknowledge the authors whose work they use when preparing papers and other kinds of studies and reports.

New technologies have made information easier to locate and obtain, but research projects only begin with identifying and collecting source material. The essential intellectual tasks of a research project have not changed. These tasks call for a student to understand the published facts, ideas, and insights about a subject and to integrate them with the student's own views on the topic. To achieve this goal, student writers must rigorously distinguish between what they borrow and what they create.

As information sharing has become easier, so has plagiarism. For instance, on the Internet it is possible to buy and download completed research papers. Some students are misinformed about buying research papers, on the Internet or on campus. They believe that if they buy a paper, it belongs to them, and therefore they can use the ideas, facts, sentences, and paragraphs in it, free from any worry about plagiarism. Buying a paper, however, is the same as buying a book or a magazine. You own the physical copy of the book or magazine, which you may keep in your bookcase, give to a friend, or sell. And you may use whatever you learn from reading it in your own writing. But you are never free from the obligation to let your readers know the source of the ideas, facts, words, or sentences you borrow. Publications are a special kind of property. You can own them physically,

but the publisher or author retains rights to the content. You should also know that purchased papers are readily recognizable, and teachers can often trace downloaded materials through an Internet search.

2.4. UNINTENTIONAL PLAGIARISM

The purpose of a research paper is to synthesize previous research and scholarship with your ideas on the subject. Therefore, you should feel free to use other persons' words, facts, and thoughts in your research paper, but the material you borrow must not be presented as if it were your own creation. When you write your research paper, remember that you must document everything that you borrow—not only direct quotations and paraphrases but also information and ideas.

Often plagiarism in student writing is unintentional, as when an elementary school pupil, assigned to do a report on a certain topic, copies down, word for word, everything on the subject in an encyclopedia. Unfortunately, some students continue to take this approach in high school and even in college, not realizing that it constitutes plagiarism. To guard against the possibility of unintentional plagiarism during research and writing, keep careful notes that always distinguish among three types of material: your ideas, your summaries and paraphrases of others' ideas and facts, and exact wording you copy from sources. Plagiarism sometimes happens because researchers do not keep precise records of their reading, and by the time they return to their notes, they have forgotten whether their summaries and paraphrases contain quoted material that is poorly marked or unmarked. Presenting an author's exact wording without marking it as a quotation is plagiarism, even if you cite the source. For this reason, recording only quotations is the most reliable method of note-taking in substantial research projects, especially for beginning students. It is the surest way, when you work with notes, to avoid unintentional plagiarism. Similar problems can occur in notes kept electronically. When you copy and paste passages, make sure that you add quotation marks around them. (See 1.7 for more on note-taking.)

Another kind of unintentional plagiarism happens when students write research papers in a second language. In an effort to avoid grammatical errors, they may copy the structure of an author's sentences. When replicating grammatical patterns, they sometimes inadvertently plagiarize the author's ideas, information, words, and expressions.

If you realize after handing a paper in that you accidentally plagiarized an author's work, you should report the problem to your instructor as soon as possible. In this way you eliminate the element of fraud. You may receive a lower grade than you had hoped for, but getting a lower grade is better than failing a course or being expelled.

2.5. FORMS OF PLAGIARISM

The most blatant form of plagiarism is to obtain and submit as your own a paper written by someone else (see 2.3). Other, less conspicuous forms of plagiarism include the failure to give appropriate acknowledgment when repeating or paraphrasing another's wording, when taking a particularly apt phrase, and when paraphrasing another's argument or presenting another's line of thinking.

Repeating or Paraphrasing Wording

Suppose, for example, that you want to use the material in the following passage, which appears on page 625 of an essay by Wendy Martin in the book *Columbia Literary History of the United States*.

ORIGINAL SOURCE

Some of Dickinson's most powerful poems express her firmly held conviction that life cannot be fully comprehended without an understanding of death.

If you write the following sentence without documentation, you have plagiarized because you borrowed another's wording without acknowledgment, even though you changed its form:

PLAGIARISM

Emily Dickinson firmly believed that we cannot fully comprehend life unless we also understand death.

But you may present the material if you cite your source:

As Wendy Martin has suggested, Emily Dickinson firmly believed that we cannot fully comprehend life unless we also understand death (625).

The source is indicated, in accordance with MLA style, by the name of the author ("Wendy Martin") and by a page reference in parenthe-

ses, preferably at the end of the sentence. The name refers the reader to the corresponding entry in the works-cited list, which appears at the end of the paper.

Martin, Wendy. "Emily Dickinson." *Columbia Literary History of the United States*. Emory Elliott, gen. ed. New York: Columbia UP, 1988. 609-26. Print.

Taking a Particularly Apt Phrase

ORIGINAL SOURCE

Everyone uses the word *language* and everybody these days talks about *culture*. . . . "Languaculture" is a reminder, I hope, of the *necessary* connection between its two parts. . . . (Michael Agar, *Language Shock: Understanding the Culture of Conversation* [New York: Morrow, 1994; print; 60])

If you write the following sentence without documentation, you have committed plagiarism because you borrowed without acknowledgment a term ("languaculture") invented by another writer:

PLAGIARISM

At the intersection of language and culture lies a concept that we might call "languaculture."

But you may present the material if you cite your source:

At the intersection of language and culture lies a concept that Michael Agar has called "languaculture" (60).

In this revision, the author's name refers the reader to the full description of the work in the works-cited list at the end of the paper, and the parenthetical documentation identifies the location of the borrowed material in the work.

Agar, Michael. *Language Shock: Understanding the Culture of Conversation*. New York: Morrow, 1994. Print.

Paraphrasing an Argument or Presenting a Line of Thinking

ORIGINAL SOURCE

Humanity faces a quantum leap forward. It faces the deepest social upheaval and creative restructuring of all time. Without clearly

recognizing it, we are engaged in building a remarkable civilization from the ground up. This is the meaning of the Third Wave.

Until now the human race has undergone two great waves of change, each one largely obliterating earlier cultures or civilizations and replacing them with the ways of life inconceivable to those who came before. The First Wave of change—the agricultural revolution—took thousands of years to play itself out. The Second Wave—the rise of industrial civilization—took a mere hundred years. Today history is even more accelerative, and it is likely that the Third Wave will sweep across history and complete itself in a few decades. (Alvin Toffler, *The Third Wave* [1980; New York: Bantam, 1981; print; 10])

If you write the following sentence without documentation, you have committed plagiarism because you borrowed another writer's line of thinking without acknowledgment:

PLAGIARISM

There have been two revolutionary periods of change in history: the agricultural revolution and the industrial revolution. The agricultural revolution determined the course of history for thousands of years; the industrial civilization lasted about a century. We are now on the threshold of a new period of revolutionary change, but this one may last for only a few decades.

But you may present the material if you cite your source:

According to Alvin Toffler, there have been two revolutionary periods of change in history: the agricultural revolution and the industrial revolution. The agricultural revolution determined the course of history for thousands of years; the industrial civilization lasted about a century. We are now on the threshold of a new period of revolutionary change, but this one may last for only a few decades (10).

In this revision, the author's name refers the reader to the full description of the work in the works-cited list at the end of the paper, and the parenthetical documentation identifies the location of the borrowed material in the work.

Toffler, Alvin. *The Third Wave*. 1980. New York: Bantam, 1981. Print.

2.6. WHEN DOCUMENTATION IS NOT NEEDED

In addition to documenting direct quotations and paraphrases, you should consider the status of the information and ideas you glean from sources in relation to your audience and to the scholarly consensus on your topic. In general, information and ideas you deem broadly known by your readers and widely accepted by scholars, such as the basic biography of an author or the dates of a historical event, can be used without documentation. But where readers are likely to seek more guidance or where the facts are in significant dispute among scholars, documentation is needed; you could attribute a disputed fact to the source with which you agree or could document the entire controversy. While direct quotations and paraphrases are always documented, scholars seldom document proverbs, sayings, and clichés. If you have any doubt about whether you are committing plagiarism, cite your source or sources.

2.7. RELATED ISSUES

Other issues related to plagiarism and academic integrity include reusing a research paper, collaborative work, research on human subjects, and copyright infringement.

2.7.1. Reusing a Research Paper

If you must complete a research project to earn a grade in a course, handing in a paper you already earned credit for in another course is deceitful. Moreover, you lose the opportunity to improve your knowledge and skills. If you want to rework a paper that you prepared for another course, ask your current instructor for permission to do so. If you wish to draw on or reuse portions of your previous writing in a new paper, ask your instructor for guidance.

2.7.2. Collaborative Work

An example of collaborative work is a group project you carry out with other students. Joint participation in research and writing is common