PLAGIARISM: Academic Dishonesty in Writing

What is plagiarism?
“Derived from the Latin word *plagiarius* (‘kidnapper’), *plagiarism* refers to a form of cheating that has been defined as ‘the false assumption of authorship: the wrongful act of taking the product of another person’s mind, and presenting it as one’s own’ (Alexander Lindey, *Plagiarism and Originality* 2).”


Is it plagiarism if I put another’s thoughts into my own words?
Yes. Paraphrasing can be plagiarism if an author doesn’t cite the source. The *MLA Handbook* states that “[p]lagiarism involves two kinds of wrongs. Using another person’s ideas, information, or expressions without acknowledging that person’s work constitutes intellectual theft” (66).

What counts as “another’s thoughts”?
- Quoted words from outside sources
- Paraphrased ideas from outside sources
- Borrowed information from outside sources, such as diagrams and statistics
- Materials from the Internet

How do I cite my source?
Students must cite sources in two places: in parenthetical documentation in the paper itself and on a works cited page. The parenthetical documentation immediately acknowledges the quotation or paraphrase as an outside source, and the works cited provides further information about where readers can access the source.

How do I use parenthetical documentation?
At the end of a sentence using quoted or paraphrased material, provide parenthetical documentation.

**Sample Documentation**
In *Everyday Theory*, Bob Coleman and Becky McLaughlin define theory as “a position or stance” (2).

*Everyday Theory* includes the definition of theory as “a position or stance” (Coleman and McLaughlin 2).

**Documentation Guidelines**
- When the author’s name *appears* in the sentence, write only the page number in the parentheses.
• When the author’s name *doesn’t appear* in the sentence, it—along with the page number—must be included in the parenthetical documentation.
• Internet sources do not require a page number in the documentation.

**How do I create a works cited page?**
A works cited is the final page of an essay using outside sources.

**Sample Works Cited Entries**


**Works Cited Guidelines**
• For more information about works cited pages, see your handbook.
• For more documentation samples, see “MLA and APA Documentation” on the drop down menu at [http://lrc.nwfsc.edu](http://lrc.nwfsc.edu). Click on “How to Write MLA Documentation of Electronic Sources.” See the Adobe files halfway down the screen for examples of various online databases.
• The Online Writing Lab at Purdue University also has additional help at [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/).

**How do I avoid 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.”


**How can plagiarism be prevented and detected?**
Many professors use Turnitin.com, a plagiarism detection site which allows submitted essays to be compared to archived material in Turnitin’s database. The site contains essays from cheat sites, sites appearing on the Internet, as well as previously submitted essays from universities and colleges across the nation.

**What are the penalties for plagiarism?**
“Cheating in any form, including plagiarism . . . may result in academic penalty and/or course failure at the discretion of the instructor, [decisions] which may be appealed by the student....”

--*NWF College Catalog* (2009-2010)

**Why is plagiarism awareness important?**
Properly documenting outside sources protects the honest student. While part of the research process benefits students by exposing them to others’ scholarship, students are responsible for noting others’ material so that an individual’s own work is easily distinguished and may be evaluated. Furthermore, plagiarism, in addition to being a legal issue, is a moral and ethical issue in which the offense of the plagiarizing student prevents honest students from being graded fairly in a course.