

Writing With Integrity:
Understanding Liberty
University's Code of Honor

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Why View This Presentation?

It will explain Academic Honesty.

It will define Academic Dishonesty

It will offer a specific explanation of Plagiarism.

It will explain how to avoid committing plagiarism.

It will explain LU's plagiarism policies.

You are responsible for knowing what plagiarism is. If you commit plagiarism, you will be held accountable for your actions.

Academic Honesty

As a Christian institution, Liberty University holds its students to high standards for ethics, both personal and academic.

Academic honesty, according to LU's Graduate Catalog, requires students to be "free from deception in both thought and action."

Primarily, academic honesty at Liberty means that all work students complete is entirely their own (except as dictated by specific assignment guidelines), both in examination settings and in papers.

Academically honest students in no way attempt to take credit for another's words, ideas, or research, and they represent both their own thoughts and those they cite with integrity, accuracy, and respect. Such students do not twist another's words, use another's research without proper citations, or steal information from other students' work.

Academic Dishonesty

The Liberty Way and the LU Graduate Catalog both define academic dishonesty in the following ways:

- Cheating
- Falsification
- Plagiarism

What Is Cheating?

According to the Liberty Way, cheating involves:

- “Referring to information not specifically condoned by the instructor.
- Receiving information from a fellow student.
- Stealing, buying, selling or transmitting a copy of any examination.”

The 2008-09 Graduate Catalog further defines cheating as “a form of dishonesty in which a student attempts to give the appearance of a level of knowledge or skills that the student has not obtained” (pp. 32).

What is Falsification?

The Liberty Way explains falsification in this way:

- “Unauthorized signing of another person's name to an official form or document.
- Unauthorized modification, copying, or production of a University document.”

The Graduate Catalog adds to this definition that falsification may also include “invent[ing] or distort[ing] the origin or content of information used as authority” (32).

- This includes misrepresenting a source’s ideas or arguments.
- This includes falsely reporting research results.
- This includes deliberate suppression or distortion of information sources.

New Information

In Spring 2007, the GAC revised the Honor Code for graduate students. It maintains all of these definitions and explanations of plagiarism. It also bans the process of recycling papers—using a paper written for one class to fulfill another's requirements.

What Is Plagiarism, and How Can I Avoid It?

Definitions

Examples

Advice

A Few Definitions

Quotation

- Using SPECIFIC and EXACT language from another source in your own work.
- Quotations must be marked with parenthetical citations or footnotes and placed in quotation marks (“”).

Paraphrase

- Taking a specific passage from another source and putting it in your own words. *The Message*, for instance, is a paraphrase of the Bible.
- These must be marked with a parenthetical citation or footnote.

Summary

- Summary involves giving a recap of the main ideas and arguments in an outside source.
- If you are summarizing an ENTIRE source, simply give credit to the author and place the entry on your bibliography.
- If you are summarizing a specific passage, you must include a parenthetical citation or footnote after your summary.

What Is Plagiarism?

At Liberty University, plagiarism is a form of Academic Dishonesty (along with cheating on examinations, selling test answers, and forging signatures and official university documents). It is “a form of intellectual theft” and thus will be taken as seriously as theft of a material item would be (see Graduate Catalog, p. 31).

The Liberty Way defines plagiarism as follows:

- “Omitting quotation marks or other conventional markings around material quoted from any printed source.
- “Paraphrasing a specific passage from a specific source without properly referencing the source.
- “Replicating another student's work or parts thereof and submitting it as an original.”
- See <http://www.liberty.edu/index.cfm?PID=1324> for this definition and for more information.

Omitting Quotation Marks: Some Specific Cases

Obvious Plagiarism:

- *A student quotes directly from a source without setting the quotation off with proper punctuation (“”) and without giving credit in a parenthetical citation.*
- ALWAYS give credit where credit is due!

Less Obvious Plagiarism:

- *A student remembers to mark all his or her longer quotations, but he or she forgets that quotations of only a few words also require quotation marks.*
- *A specific phrase that clearly comes from a particular source (i.e., “crucified with Christ” ALWAYS needs quotation marks).*

Hidden Plagiarism:

- *A student quotes directly from a source but, thinking that he/she has simply paraphrased, only sets off the source with a parenthetical citation.*
- *Even if you think you’ve put everything in your own words, go back and check to make sure you didn’t use any exact phrases. Missing quotations marks constitute plagiarism!*

Paraphrasing Specific Passages: Some Specific Cases

Obvious Plagiarism:

- *A student summarizes a key argument that can be traced to a few specific passages but forgets to use an in-text citation.*
- If in doubt, ALWAYS use an in-text citation. Simply having a source on your bibliography is not good enough.

Less Obvious Plagiarism:

- *A student thinks he is summarizing a whole source, but he actually refers only to the introduction, which contains the main arguments.*
- After you have written your summary, look back at the source and make sure you have not echoed any language or sequence of sentences unknowingly. If you have, include an in-text citation.

Hidden Plagiarism:

- *A student remembers hearing a specific phrase some time in the past and thinks it would fit well in the paper.*
- In this case, Google the phrase: if it draws thousands of hits, it's probably just a common expression. If Google sends you to a particular source or set of sources, though, you need to cite it.

Using Another Student's Work: Some Specific Cases

Obvious Plagiarism:

- *A student turns in a paper written by someone else.*
- *A student downloads a paper from the Internet and takes credit for it.*
- *If you did not write your WHOLE PAPER yourself, and if every source is not acknowledged and documented, you are plagiarizing.*

Less Obvious Plagiarism:

- *A student's classmate makes some intelligent comments on the discussion board that he wants to explore further. He accidentally uses his classmate's ideas and passes them off as his own.*
- *For every thought you have, ask yourself where it came from. If you can trace a source, you need to cite that source.*

Hidden Plagiarism:

- *A student asks a classmate to look over a paper he wrote. He rewrites his sentences exactly as the classmate suggests.*
- *Do NOT let a classmate, spouse, or friend rewrite your papers under any circumstances. See your professor for extensive editing help.*

When Do I Have To Document?

When you quote directly, paraphrase, or summarize, cite it!

When you use an idea in your work that you got from somewhere else, cite it!.

When you refer to a point your instructor made, cite it!

When you find a source on the Internet that gives you useful background information, cite it!

When you have someone look over your work, make sure he/she does nothing more than proofread!

When you can trace the origin of your thoughts, phrases, and arguments to any location except your own brain, cite it!

When Can I Leave Out a Citation?

When I come up with an idea entirely on my own.

When I do primary research and want to report the results of my study.

When I have a thought that grows out of—but is different from—what we talked about in class, on the discussion board, etc.

When I am talking about my paper with a friend, colleague, instructor, or family member and come to a realization I had not had previously.

When the fact I refer to is common knowledge:

- If your sources all assume something is true or well known, then you can too (e.g., “Projection and displacement are common phenomena in the counseling profession”).
- If your next-door neighbor, spouse, and child all know something, then it’s common knowledge (e.g., “Sesame Street is a children’s television show”).
- If everyone in your field already knows something, it’s common knowledge (e.g., “Billy Graham is a well known evangelist”).

Summary: If your idea, words, or thought cannot be traced to a specific person, place, or source, you do not have to cite it.

Other Things To Avoid

Over-quoting (probably not plagiarism, but grounds for a serious downgrade)

Parroting back your professor's lecture (perhaps plagiarism, perhaps a lack of originality)

Recycling an old paper (probably not plagiarism, but definitely grounds for a 0 on the assignment)

Citing the source on the bibliography but not in the in-text citation (probably just an oversight, but grounds for a serious downgrade and/or rewrite)

Using material taken directly from Blackboard or another online source (probably not intentional plagiarism, but punishable with the full plagiarism sanctions)

Using Freeessays.com, Gradesaver.com, Studentessays.com, Wikipedia, Sparknotes.com as scholarly sources (probably not plagiarism, but certainly academically unsound sources and thus grounds for a downgrade)

If In Doubt...

Cite! Better to over-cite than not to cite when you should.

Go to your professor if you are worried you might be plagiarizing. If you approach the professor for help BEFORE the paper is due with your questions, there will be no penalties, and you will have a good learning experience.

If you are still in doubt, see the “Avoiding Plagiarism” section on this web site:

<http://www.writing.ku.edu/students/guides.shtml#7>.

LU's Academic Dishonesty Policy

Sanctions

Appeals

Sanctions

Except in very rare cases, academic dishonesty is punishable by an automatic “F” in the course.

If a case is not “clear and convincing,” it is the professor’s duty to investigate as necessary and impose the appropriate sanctions, including oral reprimands, reduced grades, failure in the course, or additional work (Graduate Catalog 32).

In some cases, punishment can be more extreme and involve expulsion from your academic program and/or Liberty.

Sanctions are just as stiff for distance students as for residential students.

Graduate and Undergraduate students have equally stiff sanctions, but the appeals process differs slightly.

Sanctions are not designed to make your life miserable; rather, they reflect the high value Liberty University places on personal integrity in all its forms.

The Appeals Process for Undergraduate Students

If you are accused of academic dishonesty, your professor must notify you within one week of learning of the infraction. He/she will present his case to you in an appropriate format, such as a conference, phone call, e-mail, or commentary on a paper.

If you disagree with the charge, you may then submit a written appeal of the charge to the Department Chairperson. The Chair will evaluate the appeal and let you and the instructor know his/her decision.

If you lose the first appeal, you may go to the Dean of the school and follow the same procedure.

If you lose the second appeal, you have one week to appeal to the Senate Committee on Academic Admissions and Standards, who, along with the Dean and Registrar, will arrange a hearing.

After the hearing, the committee will make a recommendation to the Provost, who will make a final decision.

The Appeals Process for Graduate Students

If you are accused of plagiarism, your professor must notify you within one week of learning of the infraction. He/she will present his case to you in an appropriate format, such as a conference, phone call, e-mail, or evaluation of a paper.

If you disagree with the charge, you may then submit a written appeal of the charge to the Dean of the School. The Dean will evaluate the appeal and let you and the instructor know his/her decision.

If you lose this appeal, you have one week to submit a request for a hearing by the Committee on Graduate Academic and Admissions Standards, who will arrange a hearing in an appropriate format.

After the hearing, the committee will make a recommendation to the Graduate Senate, who will make a final decision.

Rights and Responsibilities

Students Must...

- Maintain high standards of academic integrity.
- Report infractions of the LU Academic Honesty policy.
- If accused, tell the truth.
- Follow the appeals process if they feel the charge is unjust.

Faculty Must...

- Hold students responsible for academic honesty.
- If accusing a student who has *clearly* violated the policy, faculty must communicate the sanction to the student. Faculty are not required to hear a student's argument in a *clear* case of plagiarism and may choose simply to allow the appeals process to take its course.
- If accusing a student who has *possibly* violated the policy, faculty must investigate and communicate the appropriate sanction.

Administration Must...

- Follow the appeals process, looking out for the student's rights and the academic integrity of Liberty University.

ALL PEOPLE IN ALL CASES MUST TAKE ACTION COMMENSURATE WITH LIBERTY UNIVERSITY'S SPIRITUAL AND ACADEMIC STANDARDS.

Source Material

See the following official documents on Academic Dishonesty:

- *The Liberty Way*. 2006. Liberty University. 1 November 2006.
<https://www.liberty.edu/studentaffairs/index.cfm?PID=1324>
- *Liberty University and Theological Seminary 2006-2007 Graduate Catalog*. Lynchburg, VA: Liberty University, 2006.
- *Liberty University Honor Code* (adopted by GAC, Spring 2007).