

What is Plagiarism and How do I Avoid it?



Plagiarism

The action or practice of taking someone else's work, ideas, etc. and passing it off as your own even if done *unintentionally*.

Below are examples of plagiarism:

- Turning in someone else's work as your own (e.g., buying term papers online, copying exam answers)
- Copying words or ideas from another work without giving credit (i.e., not citing your sources).
- Providing wrong information about the source of information/quotations.
- Failing to identify quotes as quotes (i.e. not giving credit).

How can I avoid Plagiarism?

Tips for avoiding plagiarism are provided below. We welcome students to schedule a one-on-one advising appointment with OSS for more detailed guidance.

- **Cite Sources Carefully:** Keep track of what you are reading and what has informed your work. Whether a book, journal article, news source, video, or any other medium, you must cite your resources.
- **Understand Good Paraphrasing:** Simply using synonyms or changing up an author's sentence structure is not appropriate paraphrasing. Good paraphrasing requires you to understand the work, to restate it in your own words, and to still provide a parenthetical citation for the work you are referencing.
- **Seek Support:** If you do not understand an assignment, speak with your professor or academic advisor. Never seek the easy way out by copying a classmate's homework or requesting old assignments from your colleagues. You must be 100% committed to your education and to doing your own work.

What Happens if I Plagiarize?

Students who are charged with plagiarism may earn a grade of "F" on a particular assignment, within a particular class, and face disciplinary action including academic probation or dismissal from the University. Students should familiarize themselves with the [GW Code of Academic Integrity](#).

Himmelfarb Health Science Library resources

The Himmelfarb Health Sciences Library has a comprehensive online resource for students that describes plagiarism in detail and provides practical tips for avoiding this issue. You can read articles, watch videos, and view guidance on avoiding plagiarism by visiting the [Himmelfarb Library's website](#).

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