

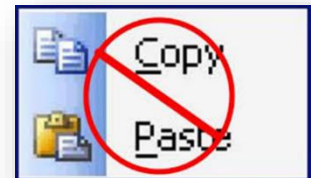
Plagiarism and College Research

What is plagiarism?

Now that you are writing college level research papers you need to be aware of plagiarism and how to avoid it in your papers. Plagiarism is when someone doing research takes the work of someone else and includes it in their work without giving them credit. Someone who commits plagiarism takes someone else's ideas and passes them off as their own. College scholarship is built on the idea of people sharing ideas and giving credit to the hard work of others. Plagiarism undermines that idea.

What are some examples of plagiarism?

Plagiarism can be done by accident or intentionally. For example, someone new to writing research papers might forget to properly cite one of their sources. An example of someone intentionally committing plagiarism would be if they copy and paste an article right into their paper and turn it in as their own work.



What are the penalties for plagiarism at Pennhighlands?

Plagiarism is a serious offense in college and can be punished the following ways according to the Pennhighlands Academic Integrity Policy:

- A failing grade for the plagiarized assignment
- A failing grade for the course
- Expulsion from Pennsylvania Highlands Community College

So how do you avoid plagiarism?

1. Follow the rules for citing the sources you use for your papers. One rule is that you have to cite any information you use in a paper that isn't "common knowledge". An example of common knowledge would be that water freezes at 32 degrees or that the Abraham Lincoln was president during the Civil War. These are things that everyone knows and don't need to be cited.

Lesser known facts, ideas or statistics need to be cited in MLA or APA style. The divorce rate in the USA in 1995 would be something that was not common knowledge and would need to be cited. The number of casualties in the battle of Gettysburg is not common knowledge and would need to be cited. The definition of a psychological disorder would need to be cited.

Sometimes when working on a paper you might not be sure that something is common knowledge or not. If you aren't sure you need to cite a source, cite it just to be careful. You will

never get in trouble or lose points for citing too many sources. However you could get in trouble or lose points on an assignment for not citing a source you used in a paper.

2. Make sure you paraphrase information from other sources that you use in your papers. This means to not copy a source word for word into your paper. To really paraphrase you need to put an idea into your own words. That means changing more than one or two words from the source you are using. You need to change the entire sentence structure.

Here is an example of paraphrasing properly.

Original Sentence:

The results of our study indicate that a high sugar diet increased the chance of type 2 diabetes by 35%.

Paraphrase:

People who consume a diet that is high in sugar put themselves at greater risk for developing type 2 diabetes, according to a study conducted by Dr. Abraham Myers in 2009.

Note how both sentence says the same thing but use different words and have their own structure.

If you do copy something word for word into your paper then be sure to put it in “quotation marks” to indicate it is a quote. Follow the APA or MLA rules for quoting sources when you do this.

Here is an example of a quoted source in APA Format.

“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times.” (Dickens, 1859, p. 1)

3. Taking good notes is also an important part of avoiding plagiarism. If you find a useful fact or idea, make sure you note down where you got it from. That way you can easily keep track of the sources you have used.

If you write down facts without noting where you got them from you risk having to waste time finding where you got that information later.

Writing down where you got information from also prevents you from mixing up your ideas with those of others by accident.



If you still have questions about plagiarism contact the library at akirby@pennhighlands.edu or call 814-262-6484.