

Plagiarism is the use of another's words or ideas without giving proper credit. Plagiarism can be intentional (e.g., putting one's own name on a document written by someone else) or unintentional (e.g., forgetting to give proper credit to a source). While the former is certainly more serious than the latter, both can pose serious problems with serious consequences.

Plagiarism is easily avoided by preparing your own documents based, primarily, on your own ideas. Of course, it's appropriate and important to include information from outside sources in many of your writings. As long as you provide proper credit and put the information in your own word order and words, you shouldn't encounter any problems. Other documents on the Online Writing Center site will help you credit your sources correctly and paraphrase effectively.

Plagiarism is not to be taken lightly. At Western Technical College, plagiarism is one of a number of issues that fall under the heading of "Academic Dishonesty." To that end, Western maintains an Academic Dishonesty policy that all students are expected to follow.

Academic Dishonesty Definition

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to: plagiarizing; cheating on tests or examinations; turning in counterfeit reports, tests, and papers; stealing tests or other academic material; knowingly falsifying academic records or documents of the institution; accessing a student's confidential academic records without authorization; disclosing confidential academic information without authorization; and turning in the same work to more than one class without informing the instructors involved.

Student Expectations: Each student is expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found in violation of academic dishonesty, including, but not limited to the following, will be subject to disciplinary action (as per the guidelines of the Western Student Code of Conduct):

A. Cheating on an examination or the preparation of academic work. Any student who engages in any of the following shall be deemed to have engaged in cheating:

- Copying from another student's test paper, laboratory report, other report, or computer files, data, listings, and/or programs;
- Using, during a test, materials, or electronic devices not authorized by the instructor;
- Collaborating with or aiding another person, without authorization, during an examination or in preparing academic work;
- Knowingly and without authorization, using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, soliciting, copying or possessing in whole or in part, the contents of an unadministered examination;
- Substituting for another student, or permitting another student to substitute for oneself in taking an examination or preparing academic work;

- Bribing another person to obtain an unadministered examination or information about an unadministered examination;
- Attempting to bribe any faculty/staff or student to alter a grade.

B. Plagiarizing or appropriating another's work or idea without properly acknowledging incorporation of that work or idea into one's own work. For example, "quotation marks should be used to indicate the exact words of another" as stated in the fifth edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. In addition, sources should be cited when paraphrasing or summarizing.

C. Unauthorized reuse of work or the turning in of the same work to more than one class without informing the instructors involved.

D. Any forgery, alteration, or misuse of academic documents, forms or records, in hard copy or electronic format.

E. Attempts by unauthorized individuals or organizations to access student records without the expressed written consent of the student. Examples of violations include, but are not limited to the following:

- Illegally accessing information from student or faculty files (electronic or paper);
- Misrepresenting oneself to obtain another student's transcript, term grades, or class registration;
- Using a student's ID number without his or her expressed written permission to gain access to other college services.