

## **Plagiarism and How to Avoid it.**

Plagiarism is a multi-faceted concern for students, and is one that has constantly evolving potentials for misuse. The goal of this handout is to provide you with a set of general outlines defining what is, and what is not, plagiarism. If you have questions, please speak with your instructor.

### **From the 2009-2010 FLCC Student Code of Conduct**

The term “plagiarism” includes, but is not limited to the use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment. It also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.

*What does this mean?*

In a nutshell, it means that using materials from sources without giving credit and providing documentation is considered plagiarism. Plagiarism is not limited only to published texts, but can also refer to web-based text, images, and unpublished works. In other words, if an idea isn't your original idea, articulated in your own words, chances are good that you need to cite it.

It also means that having someone else write your paper—for pay, for fun, or as a favor—is plagiarism because, again, these are not your words, but rather are someone else's.

*But I included the citation!*

A correctly incorporated quotation has two features: quotation marks and citation. Failure to include both elements constitutes improper use of a source, and may be considered plagiarism.

Correct:

When reading literature it is important to recognize that “every community has its own body of story that matters” (Foster 65).

Incorrect:

When reading literature it is important to recognize that every community has its own body of story that matters (Foster 65).

*What about paraphrasing?*

Paraphrasing, although it is putting an idea into your own words, still requires citation because the idea is not uniquely yours. The Modern Language Association offers the following examples:

## **Original Source**

“Some of Dickinson’s most powerful poems express her firmly held conviction that life cannot be fully comprehended without an understanding of death.”

## **Plagiarism**

Emily Dickinson firmly believed that we cannot fully comprehend life unless we also understand death.

--this is considered plagiarism because while the words have been rearranged, the idea is still that of the original author rather than the paper writer’s.

## **Acceptable use**

As Wendy Martin has suggested, Emily Dickinson firmly believed that we cannot fully comprehend life unless we also understand death (625).

This is acceptable because the original author has been named, and the page number where the referent can be found has been given. (MLA 56)

The corresponding citation for Wendy Martin is:

Martin, Wendy. “Emily Dickinson.” *Columbia Literary History of the United States*. Emory Elliott, gen. ed. New York: Columbia UP, 1988. 609-26. Print.

## **Other Issues** (Adapted from the Modern Language Association)

### *Reusing a paper you’ve written*

Also known as self-plagiarism, submitting work previously completed for a different class without consent from your instructor is considered academic dishonesty. While there are some classes in which this is encouraged, it is up to your individual instructor to make that known.

### *Collaborative Work*

Joint projects (those created in collaboration with your classmates) are not considered plagiarism provided all contributors are acknowledged.

## Works Cited

Foster, Thomas C. *How to Read Literature Like a Professor*. New York: Harper, 2003. Print.

Modern Language Association. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 7<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: MLA, 2009. Print.