Avoiding Plagiarism

WHAT IS PLAGIARISM?

PLAGIARISM IS TAKING SOMEONE ELSE’S IDEAS & WORDS AND CALLING THEM YOUR OWN.

As information becomes easier to access and use digitally, the temptation to cut and paste another’s words grows stronger. It might seem harmless to borrow a phrase or a sentence for a pressing assignment, but without giving credit to the creator, plagiarism is being committed. In college, plagiarism is an act of “academic dishonesty” and may result in a failing grade for the assignment or course. In some cases, expulsion from college is the penalty for plagiarism (PTCC Policy 314).

SO HOW DOES ONE USE ANOTHER’S IDEAS AND WORDS WITHOUT PLAGIARIZING?

1. Recognizing what plagiarism looks like is the first step in avoiding it. According to the Duke University Libraries site, plagiarism is when you:

   - Copy, quote, paraphrase or summarize any source without adequate documentation.
   - Purchase a paper by mail or email.
   - Allow another person to write a paper for you.
   - Submit another person's unpublished work in your name.

   (http://library.duke.edu/research/plagiarism)

See the “Types of Plagiarism” document on Plagiarism.org for additional examples of what plagiarism looks like. Remember, claiming ignorance is NOT an acceptable excuse, especially at the college level.

2. Citing your source(s) is the second step in avoiding plagiarism. Simply put, citing a source means giving credit where credit is due. Document WHO (artist/creator), WHERE (source/URL), and WHEN (article/accessed date) for any copying and pasting you do into your own files or assignments. Do this whenever you “take” or save another’s words, ideas, pictures, etc. with the possible intention of using later. Recording this information immediately will prevent “honest mistakes,” save you time if asked to prove or share a source, and make it easier to create a bibliography page if required. It is up to each student to know how to cite one’s sources when completing assignments. The resources found in this document should assist you in doing so.
Tools for Citing Sources

Students are expected to use the appropriate citation format for assignments. The citation format will often vary according to the student’s discipline or program. For instance, PTCC students use the MLA (Modern Language Association) format in classes such as Reading Strategies, Writing Foundations and/or College Composition, but the APA (American Psychological Association) style is often required for courses specializing in education or the health sciences. Ask your instructor if you are not sure which citation style to use. Citation rules change over time, so knowing where to look for citation examples and help is a must. Here are some online resources to help you get started:

MLA RESOURCES: INFORMATION & TUTORIALS
- “MLA Formatting and Style Guide” (Purdue: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/)
- “MLA Style: English and Other Humanities” (http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/resdoc5e/RES5e_ch08_o.html)
- “Academic Honesty Tutorial: Avoiding Plagiarism-MLA” — TUTORIAL
  (Seneca Libraries: https://www.softchalkcloud.com/lesson/serve/j9Q4AktIGWOic8/html)

APA RESOURCES: INFORMATION & TUTORIALS
- “APA: General Format” (Purdue: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/)
- “APA Style: The Social Sciences” (Hacker: http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/resdoc5e/RES5e_ch09_o.html)
- “Academic Honesty Tutorial: Avoiding Plagiarism-Nursing (APA)” — TUTORIAL
  (Seneca Libraries: https://www.softchalkcloud.com/lesson/serve/jf5UxJvAwbrH3Y/html)
- “The Basics of APA Style®” — TUTORIAL
  (APA: http://www.apastyle.org/learn/tutorials/basics-tutorial.aspx)

CITATION BUILDERS: Citation builders are not 100% accurate. Always proofread before submitting assignments.
- “Check Cite” (James Madison University: http://www.lib.jmu.edu/help/checkcite/)
- “Son of Citation Machine” (Warlick/Landmark Project: http://www.citationmachine.net/)
- “Citation Builder” (NCSU Libraries: http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/citationbuilder/)

MORE CITATION RESOURCES: PRACTICE, QUIZZES & GAMES:
- “Understanding Plagiarism” —QUIZ
  (Indiana State U: https://www.indiana.edu/~tedfrick/plagiarism/)
- Citation Games — Choose between five different games
  (Williams College Libraries: http://library.williams.edu/citing/game/)
- “Citation Tic-Tac-Toe” —GAME
  (James Madison University: http://www.lib.jmu.edu/games/tictactoe/)