

Avoiding Plagiarism

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The objectives of this lesson are to:

1. Define plagiarism
2. Describe Kent State's Academic Dishonesty policy
3. Point out the consequences of committing plagiarism
4. Provide practice at solving plagiarism scenarios

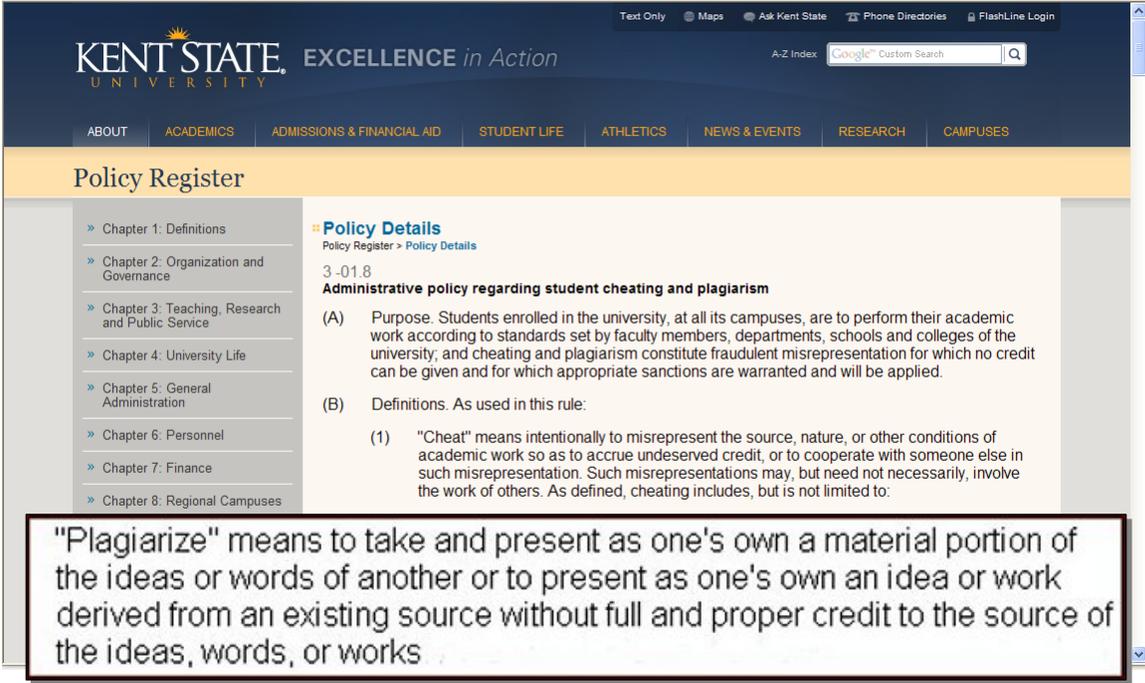
Each of the items listed in this lesson is taken almost directly from the Kent State Policy Register noting what constitutes "Academic Dishonesty."

The Policy Register can be found at: <http://www.kent.edu/policyreg/>
The Policy Register section on "student cheating and plagiarism" can be found in:

Chapter 3, Section 3-01.8.

Also, always check with your local department and the instructor of your course for procedures and policies that pertain to plagiarism.

First let's take a look at the policy:



The screenshot shows the Kent State University website's Policy Register. The header includes the Kent State University logo and navigation links. The main content area is titled "Policy Register" and lists various chapters. The selected chapter is "Policy Details" for "3-01.8 Administrative policy regarding student cheating and plagiarism". The text defines the purpose and definitions of cheating and plagiarism, including a specific definition of "Plagiarize" which is highlighted in a red box.

"Plagiarize" means to take and present as one's own a material portion of the ideas or words of another or to present as one's own an idea or work derived from an existing source without full and proper credit to the source of the ideas, words, or works.

As defined, plagiarism includes, but is not limited to:

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The screenshot shows the Kent State University website's Policy Register. The header includes the university logo, the tagline "EXCELLENCE in Action", and navigation links for ABOUT, ACADEMICS, ADMISSIONS & FINANCIAL AID, STUDENT LIFE, ATHLETICS, NEWS & EVENTS, RESEARCH, and CAMPUSES. The main content area is titled "Policy Register" and displays "Policy Details" for "3--01.8 Administrative policy regarding student cheating and plagiarism". A search bar is visible at the bottom left. A text box highlights the following definitions:

- (a) The copying of words, sentences and paragraphs directly from the work of another without proper credit;
- (b) The copying of illustrations, figures, photographs, drawings, models, or other visual and nonverbal materials, including recordings, of another without proper credit; and
- (c) The presentation of work prepared by another in final or draft form as one's own without citing the source, such as the use of purchased research papers.

Consequences

If you are found to have plagiarized, there are serious consequences.

Let's start with what could happen after just one incidence.

Your instructor may:

- Refuse to accept the work for credit.
- Assign a grade of "F" or zero for the project, test, paper, examination or other work in which the cheating or plagiarism took place.
- Assign a grade of "F" for the course in which the cheating or plagiarism took place.
- Or, recommend action be taken by Judicial Affairs and a Student Conduct Court hearing.

If several occurrences of plagiarism have been discovered, the university may take more severe action.

The University may...

- Reject the thesis, dissertation or work where the plagiarism occurred.
- Recommend to revoke your degree.
- Issue a disciplinary dismissal, suspension, and academic probation.

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Now you will see a series of scenarios.

These scenarios will help reinforce and increase your understanding of plagiarism.

For each scenario, decide whether or not you think an occurrence of plagiarism is being described.

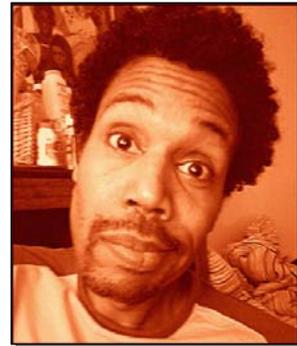
Scenario 1

When taking notes for a paper, you lose track of where your notes are from. You continue to write the paper including statements from your notes without the citations.

Is this plagiarism?
YES

Why is this plagiarism?

You must note where ideas come from in a paper. Use both an internal citation (in-text citation) as well as listing the information correctly in the Reference List or Bibliography.



(Creative Commons photo by Milik Williams)

Scenario 2

When writing up a report, you use statistics from a recently published survey. You do not cite the numbers as they were largely publicized in the news and online.

Is this plagiarism?
YES

Why is this plagiarism?

If you didn't compile the statistics yourself, you need to acknowledge the original author. You should cite the news story, or even better, find the original report where the statistics came from.

(Creative Commons photo by phrog8v8r)

Check the news website for the information you need for the bibliography or reference list. It might even lead you to the original study.



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Scenario 3

When researching a speech, you want to confirm the year that President Gerald Ford left office. You look up the date in an encyclopedia, but do not cite the article. *Gerald Ford left office on 20 January 1977.*



Is this plagiarism?
NO

Why is this NOT plagiarism?

Historical dates as well as facts such as historical people, cultural knowledge (TV Characters, celebrities, etc.) do not need to be cited.



However, if you were to use any of the other information in the article to make statements about President Ford that evaluate, or discuss the impact of his presidency, you would need to cite the article.

(Creative Commons photo by Freedom Goliath's Impermanence)

Scenario 4

You write a paper on hospice care for a class. Next semester you take a course which discusses concepts related to hospice care, including some you wrote about in your previous course. You decide to turn in the paper with a few revisions for another assignment.

Is this plagiarism?
YES

Why is this plagiarism?

At Kent State, you are not permitted to submit a paper created in one course for another course assignment unless you clear the paper with the instructor. Minor revisions are not enough.

This is called "double dipping" and is a form of academic misconduct.



(Creative Commons photo by thebluedino)

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Scenario 5

You and a partner are working on an assignment. You have a great discussion coming up with some good ideas. You finish off your assignment and turn it in. The discussion peaked your interest and you decide to work on the same topic for a term paper.

Is this plagiarism?

NO

Why is this NOT plagiarism?

(Creative Commons photo by siljegarshol)



As long as you are doing a NEW investigation of the information, and not using the same paper twice you are NOT 'double dipping.' Feel free to cite yourself or a little of the previous research if it seems to fit.



Much of academic research builds on previous investigations or discoveries. The key is to ADD to your knowledge, and your previous work.

Scenario 6

In your English paper on "Technology and Its Effect on Communication" you include the assertion that "the advent of the Internet has profoundly impacted contemporary society." You do not cite a source for this assertion.

(Creative Commons photo by niallkennedy)

Is this plagiarism?

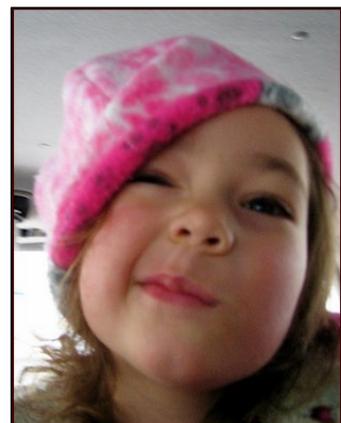
NO

Why is this NOT plagiarism?

This is an example of "common knowledge," a collection of basic facts and ideas that are part of the culture and do not need to be cited.

If you wanted to use a statistic, or make a judgment based on that statement, you would want to back up your ideas with some facts and citations.

(Creative Commons photo by Hint of Plum)



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Scenario 7

As the end of the semester approaches, you discover that you have a paper due that you have not started. You decide to buy one you found on the internet. You change the name on the paper and turn it in.

Is this plagiarism?

I know why this is plagiarism!



(Creative Commons photo by DrewVigal)

Any time you use someone else's work and choose to submit it with your name, it is plagiarism. Even if you bought or borrowed the paper from the author and they gave you permission to change the name, you are still plagiarizing.

Let's Review

Plagiarism includes:

- The copying of words, sentences and paragraphs directly from the work of another without proper credit.
- The copying of illustrations, figures, photographs, drawings, models, or other visual and nonverbal materials, etc. without using citations or getting permission.
- The use of a paper produced for one course in a second course without the instructor's permission (double dipping).

Plagiarism includes:

- Using a purchased paper, or one written by someone else, and representing it as your own.
- Remember, it is important to follow your style guide carefully when creating in-text citations and bibliographies to avoid the *appearance* of plagiarism.

How can you find more information?

Citation Style Guides are available at:

<http://www.library.kent.edu/style>

Additional information and tutorials are available at:

<http://www.library.kent.edu/plagiarism>