

Module 5.1 Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined as: “to steal or pass off as one’s own (the idea or words of another); use (a created production) without crediting the source; to commit literary theft; present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source.” Another way of plagiarism is using another person’s ideas or written work and passing them off as your own.

At the university, plagiarism is a serious issue. If your work appears to be plagiarized, your instructor and department will investigate whether they believe you did plagiarize another’s work. This can lead to failing an assignment or a class. Staff at the libraries are glad to help you avoid plagiarism.

In order to use another’s publication in your academic work you need to properly cite their work, to give the original author credit. Citing gives readers enough information to find the sources that you have used, so they can verify the reliability of your work, and so they can learn more.

You must cite whether you quote directly from another’s publication, or whether you restate their ideas in your own words; restating their ideas is also called paraphrasing. We use the phrase “academic integrity” to describe the process of properly crediting or citing another’s work in academic publications or assignments.

In a written paper, you cite by identifying the works that you used to build the argument in your paper. There are different citation styles for different subjects, such as Chicago, Vancouver, APA, or MLA. Your instructors will tell you which one you should use. Each citation style is a bit different; but the Libraries can help. We have instructions for many citation styles on our website, and our staff are always glad to help teach you how a particular style works.