

Understanding Plagiarism

In writing, we draw upon others' words and ideas and the intellectual heritage of human progress. Scholarship entails researching, understanding, and building on the work of others, and requires that proper credit be given for any "borrowed material". UC Berkeley students are responsible for knowing the expectations for academic integrity.

WHAT IS PLAGIARISM?

Plagiarism means using another's work without giving credit. You must put others' words in quotation marks and cite your source(s). Citation must also be given when using others' ideas, even when those ideas are paraphrased into your own words.

"Work" includes original ideas, strategies, research,"¹ art, graphics, computer programs, music and other creative expression. The work may consist of writing, charts, pictures, graphs, diagrams, data, websites, or other communication or recording media, and may include sentences, phrases, innovative terminology,"² formatting or other representations.

The term "source" includes published works (books, magazines, newspapers, websites, plays, movies, photos, paintings, and textbooks) and unpublished sources (class lectures or notes, handouts, speeches, other students' papers, or material from a research service).

Using words, ideas, computer code, or any work by someone else without giving proper credit is plagiarism. Any time you use information from a source, you must cite it.

WHY SHOULD YOU BE CONCERNED ABOUT PLAGIARISM?

- If you plagiarize, you are cheating yourself. Plagiarizing a paper is like seeking a friend to practice baseball for you – you'll never hit a home run yourself.
- Plagiarism is dishonest because it misrepresents the work of others as your own.
- Plagiarism violates the Berkeley Campus Code of Student Conduct and could result in Suspension or Dismissal from the University.
- Plagiarism devalues others' original work. Submitting a professional writer's work in place of your own is taking an unfair advantage over other students who do their own work.
- It is wrong to take or use property (an author's work) without giving the owner the value or credit due. Copyright violations can also result in fines or damages.
- **UC Berkeley's reputation affects the value of your degree:** academic misconduct hurts Berkeley's standing and can make your diploma worth less.

HOW TO CITE SOURCES

The most common citation method is to identify the source in the text, putting the author's last name and the publication year in parenthesis, with the page number of

the cited material (Hacker, 1995, p. 261). The author's last name links the reader to a list of sources at the end of the paper where the full publishing information is given:

References:

Hacker, Diana., *A Writer's Reference* (St. Martin's Press, 1995)

Two other methods are footnotes and endnotes, which use raised numbers at the end of an idea or quoted words to link the reader to the source given at the bottom of the page (footnote) or at the end of the paper (endnote).

For all three methods, you must include the source in a reference list at the end of the paper. Here, sources are fully identified by author's name, title, publisher's name, year of publication, and page number(s). For more information, see the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 4th ed., J. Garibaldi, (Modern Language Assn. 1995) or visit mla.org or apastyle.apa.org.

EXAMPLES of ETHICAL SCHOLARSHIP

Citing a source for factual information:

In describing the role of the Los Angeles Times in the conflicts and events surrounding the diversion of water from the Owens Valley, I have relied upon the factual account in Thinking Big – The Story of the Los Angeles Times (Gottlieb and Wolt, 1997).³

Identifying the source “up front” means the student does not need a page cite until the end of this paragraph, but additional page citations would be required to reference facts used later in the paper.

The Original Source:

“In research writing, sources are cited for two reasons: to alert readers to the sources of your information and to give credit to the writers from whom you have borrowed words and ideas.”⁴

Plagiarism (same words, no quotation marks):

In research writing, sources are cited to alert readers to the sources of your information and to give credit to the writers from whom you have borrowed words and ideas.

The student has used the author's exact words, leaving out only a phrase, without quotation marks or a citation.

Also Plagiarism (incorrect paraphrase):

In research writing, we cite sources for a couple reasons: to notify readers of our information sources and give credit to those from whom we have borrowed. (Hacker).

The student has made only slight changes, substituting words such as “a couple” for “two”, “notify” for “alert”, and “our”/“we” for “your”/“you”, leaving out a few words, and giving an incomplete citation.

A Solution (appropriate paraphrase):

A researcher cites her sources to ensure her audience knows where she got her information, and to recognize and credit the original work. (Hacker, 1995, p. 260).

The student has paraphrased in her own words, while accurately reflecting and citing the author’s ideas.

A Different Solution (quotation with cite):

In her book A Writer’s Reference, Diana Hacker notes, “In research writing, sources are cited for two reasons: to alert readers to the sources of your information and to give credit to the writers from whom you have borrowed words and ideas.” (1995, p.260).

By introducing the source, the student signals that the following material is from that source. All verbatim words are in quotation marks, and the source of the quote is cited with a page number.

GETTING HELP

Read the syllabus and the assignment; ask your instructor how to cite sources; and get a book on writing and citing research papers. Also, contact the Student Learning Center at 642-7332.

¹ Brenda Spatt, *Writing from Sources* (St. Martin’s Press, 1983), p.438.

² *Id.*

³ Robert Gottlieb and Irene Wolt, *Thinking Big – The Story of the Los Angeles Times* (G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1997).

⁴ Diana Hacker, *A Writer’s Reference* (St. Martin’s Press, 1995).