Avoiding Plagiarism
Information you need to know
Objectives

- Learn what plagiarism is
- Learn why some students plagiarize
- Learn how plagiarism is detected
- Learn why plagiarism is a serious issue
- Understand Durham College’s Academic Integrity Policy
- Learn what you do not need to cite
- Identify what you must cite
- Learn how to integrate research into your own writing
- Learn the basics of APA and/or MLA
- Develop an action plan for avoiding plagiarism
What is plagiarism?

- Plagiarism is the **unacknowledged use** of another author’s words or ideas.
- A person’s original thought or idea is his/her **intellectual property**.
- Plagiarism can be **intentional** or **unintentional**.
- College students are **responsible** for understanding what plagiarism is and for learning how to avoid it.
Why do some students plagiarize?

- When students leave an assignment to the last minute, there is a greater chance they will take *shortcuts* to get the work done. This may involve buying a paper, copying from another student, or copying and pasting passages from a website or document.

- Students may feel *pressure* to do well on an assignment; they may not understand the material very well and feel that someone else has written it better than they ever could.

- Students might not keep careful *track* of where they got their information from. This makes it very difficult to reference the material correctly.

- Students working in a group might *share* too much and not do their own work.

- Students may not be completely familiar with the *rules* and format for proper referencing.
How is plagiarism detected?

• Your ‘voice’ or style of writing might be different than in previous assignments
• Your professor might use plagiarism detection software such as Turnitin.com
• Turnitin.com is a database that uses pattern matching to compare your written work to previously submitted student papers, millions of pages from journals, books and newspapers, and billions of pages from the internet
• Refer to your course outline and/or assignment guidelines for more information
Why is plagiarism a serious issue?

- Plagiarism is dishonest; it is a form of stealing
- Plagiarism ruins the reputation of the institution
- Plagiarism negatively affects the credibility of the writer
- When a student plagiarizes, he/she will not understand the material properly
Academic Integrity Policy at Durham College

- “Academic Integrity refers to the pursuit of scholarly activity in an open, honest and responsible manner”. (Policy # ACAD – 101)
- “Academic dishonesty refers to a variety of practices including copying another person’s work...collaborating without permission...and plagiarizing or failing to acknowledge ideas, data, graphics or other content without proper and full acknowledgement”. (Policy # ACAD -101)
- www.durhamcollege.ca/policies
Academic Integrity Procedure at Durham College

• Academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, is treated very seriously at Durham College.

• Procedure # ACAD 101.1 outlines the procedure for dealing with incidents of academic dishonesty.

• www.durhamcollege.ca/policies
What doesn’t need to be cited?

• **Common knowledge**
  - information that is generally known or accepted by educated people
  - well proven historical facts and dates
  - information that appears in the same form in 5 or more sources

• **Your opinion**
What do you need to cite?

When you write a paper, report or a presentation, you need to cite any work that is not your idea. Examples include:

1. Direct quotations
2. Paraphrased information
3. Summarized information
4. Statistics
5. Graphics/images
Integrating Research

- Whether you quote, paraphrase or summarize, use a variety of ways to clearly signal that you are using someone else’s words or ideas.
- The reader will see that you have acknowledged the source of the information and it will improve the flow of your writing.
- Smith defined ecology as “…” (46).
- General Motors (2011) reported that car sales increased by 16% in 2010 (p. 7).
The basics of APA

- APA = American Psychological Association
- Used in the sciences, health sciences and applied sciences
- Currency of research is important
- APA uses a References page at the end of the document and in-text citations (author, year, page) throughout the body of the document
The basics of MLA

- MLA = Modern Language Association
- Used in business, language and history
- MLA uses a **Works Cited** list at the end of the document and **in-text citations** (author page) in the body of the document
Avoiding Plagiarism

- When you research, you need to accurately keep track of your sources and the information you get from each source.
- Use a Research Notes form.
- Visit the SALS Centre and pick up a copy of ‘Top Tips for Avoiding Plagiarism’.
# Research Notes

**Research Notes** (complete a separate Research Notes form for each source)

Use this form when you conduct research from web and paper-based sources. When you take research notes, you will be better able to understand the information and its relationship to your assignment, decide which information you want to include, and plan where you want to include it. You will avoid plagiarism because you will have the citation information for each source. Keep the research notes together with each corresponding source in a research file along with the assignment rubric.

**Source Information:**
Include the author, date, title, publication information, retrieval date, and the URL, where applicable. Record the source information accurately; you will need it for APA or MLA referencing formats.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Notes</th>
<th>Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Write the page number for each 'piece' of information you have made notes for.</td>
<td>To avoid plagiarism, make <strong>point form notes</strong> or <strong>paraphrase</strong> (rewrite in sentences in your own words) the information. Put <strong>quotation marks</strong> around the information if you want to quote the source in your paper.</td>
<td>Note whether the information is a direct quote, a paraphrase, a summary, a statistic, or a definition. Write down where you plan to use the information. Will the information be useful in the introduction? as support for a sub-topic? in the conclusion? Record your thoughts about the source and/or the information.</td>
</tr>
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Avoiding Plagiarism

Top Tips for Avoiding Plagiarism

1. Learn What Plagiarism Is
   Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of another person’s words or ideas, and it is a form of academic dishonesty. Consult your course outline or the Durham College website to learn about the college’s Academic Integrity Policy and what the consequences could be if you break the policy.

2. Understand the Assignment Criteria
   Ensure you listen carefully to your professor’s instructions and follow the guidelines on the rubric. Ask for clarification if something is not clear, and refer to the rubric to stay on track.

3. Don’t Procrastinate
   Get started early and establish a realistic timeframe to get each stage of the assignment completed. Students who save an assignment until the last minute are more likely to take short cuts and then run the risk of plagiarizing.

4. Use Credible Sources
   Academic writing requires that you use credible sources to support your position. These could include books, articles, websites, and documents from the web.

5. Take Research Notes
   It is important to carefully note where each piece of information you intend to use in your paper came from. Use a Research Notes form available from the SALS Centre to record the source, page numbers, the content, and your plan for using the information. Indicate whether the information is a quotation, a paraphrase, or a summary of the information.

6. Understand What Needs to be Referenced
   Information you have quoted directly, paraphrased, or summarized must be referenced. Statistics and graphics or images that you did not create must also be cited. Your opinion and common knowledge does not need to be referenced. If you are unsure whether you should reference something, ask your professor; it is generally better to reference than not.

7. Learn and Apply the Referencing Requirements for Your Disciplines
   APA is generally used in the Applied, Health, and Social Sciences. MLA is used in the Humanities, Business, and most Communications courses. Pick up a style guide from the library, and attend a workshop at the SALS Centre to learn how to reference correctly.

8. Integrate Quotations
   Clearly signal that you are using someone else’s ideas in your writing. Use phrases such as “According to…” or “The Government of Ontario concluded…” to show your reader the source of the information.

9. Allow Time to Review Your Work
   Give your paper a final review before submitting it. Be sure you have acknowledged your sources throughout.

10. Use the Academic Support Available
    Speak with your professor about the assignment requirements and use the resources available at the library. Visit the SALS Centre and meet with a peer writing tutor or see the Writing Specialist to ensure you are not plagiarizing.
Where can you go for help?

• Ask questions if you are not sure; speak with your Professor about the assignment requirements
• Refer to the rubric for research and referencing requirements
• Make an appointment with the Writing Specialist or a peer writing tutor
• If you have English as your second or additional language, make an appointment to see the ESL Specialist
It is your responsibility…

- If you have any questions or concerns about academic integrity or academic expectations at Durham College, ask your professor, refer to your Student Handbook, or ask the staff at Student Academic Learning Services.

- We want you to be successful in your studies. It is up to you to take your responsibility as a college student seriously.
Questions from the audience...

• Please feel free to contact us with any questions you have regarding this presentation

• You can reach us...
  – By phone: 905.721.2000 extension 2491
  – By email: leslie.linstrum@durhamcollege.ca
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