
Temple University



College of Arts and Sciences

Statement on Academic Honesty

**Policy of the College of
Arts and Sciences**

Approved October, 1983

Academic Honesty

The students and faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences at Temple University are working together in a common endeavor: to seek the truth, to discover the truth, to speak and to publish the truth. It is an ancient and honorable endeavor to which teachers and students have dedicated themselves since time immemorial. Out of this long history of dedication to the truth has grown a specific set of requirements governing the ways in which we behave toward one another in the classroom and the ways in which we may use one another's thoughts, words, ideas, and published research. As a student in the College of Arts and Sciences, you will want not only to dedicate yourself generally to the pursuit of truth but also you will need to learn the specific rules which govern academic behavior in this college.

The most important rules are self-evident and follow inevitably from a respect for the truth. We must not take credit for research, for ideas, or for words which are not our own. We must not falsify data or results of research. We must not present any work under false pretenses. In order to be sure that we do not violate this principle, we must learn some specific rules. We must understand exactly what the College of Arts and Sciences means when it speaks about the two major types of academic dishonesty: plagiarism and violating the rules of an assignment. The faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences is confident that if we all understand these few simple rules, we will have no need to worry about academic dishonesty.

Academic Dishonesty: Plagiarism and Violating the Rules of an Assignment

The two types of academic dishonesty are 1) plagiarism and 2) violating the rules of an assignment.

I. Plagiarism. Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of another person's labor: another person's ideas, words, or assistance.

There are many forms of plagiarism: repeating another person's sentences as your own, adopting a particularly apt phrase as your own, paraphrasing someone else's argument as your own, or even presenting someone else's line of thinking in the development of a thesis as though it were your own. All these forms of plagiarism are

prohibited both by the traditional principles of academic honesty and by the regulations of the College of Arts and Sciences. Our education and our research encourage us to explore and use the ideas of others, and as writers we will frequently want to use the ideas and even the words of others. It is perfectly all right to do so; but we must always remember that when we use the words and ideas of others we must acknowledge their use. In short, we must never submit someone else's work as if it were our own.

Some sorts of plagiarism are obvious. Students must not copy someone else's examination answer or laboratory report, submit a paper written in whole or part by someone else, or have a friend do a calculus assignment or take a psychology test for them.

Other forms of plagiarism however, are less obvious. We provide below some guidelines concerning the types of materials that should be acknowledged.

- (a) Quotations. Whenever you use a phrase, sentence, or longer passage written (or spoken) by someone else, you must enclose the words in quotation marks and indicate the exact source of the material. This applies also to quotations you have altered by the omission of some words (indicated by three spaced periods within the quotation) or by the addition of some words (enclosed in square brackets).
- (b) Paraphrasing another's language. Avoid closely paraphrasing another's words: substituting an occasional synonym, leaving out or adding an occasional modifier, rearranging the grammar a little, just changing the tenses of verbs, and so on. Either quote the material directly, using quotation marks, or put the ideas completely in your own words. In either case, acknowledgement is necessary. Remember: expressing someone else's ideas in your own way does not make them your original ideas.
- (c) Facts. In a paper, you will often use facts that you have gotten from a lecture, a written work, or some other source. If the facts are well known, it is usually not necessary to provide a source. (In a paper on American history, for example, it would not ordinarily be necessary to give a source for the statement that the Civil War began in 1861 after the inauguration of Abraham Lincoln.) But if the facts are not widely known or if the facts were developed or presented by a specific source, then you should give the source for the facts. Similarly, when you attribute a belief or claim to someone, you should

support the attribution unless it is common knowledge that the thinker held the view in question. (In the context of a philosophy course it would probably not be necessary to document your claim that Descartes thought souls were different sorts of things from bodies but you should support, by reference to appropriate primary or secondary sources, your claim that he thought the soul and body communicated in the pineal gland.)

- (d) Ideas. If you use an idea or ideas that you learned from a lecture, written work, or some other source, then you should give the source. You should give the source for an idea whether or not you agree with the idea. It does not become your original idea just because you agree with it.

In general, all sources must be identified as clearly, accurately, and thoroughly as possible. When in doubt how to do so, ask your instructor. When in doubt about whether to identify a source, either go ahead and cite the source or consult with your instructor.

There are two ways that you can provide the source for a quotation, paraphrased passage, fact, or idea. Sometimes the instructor will expect you to use footnotes. This is especially true if you are writing a long paper. In such a case, the instructor may also expect you to give a bibliography, in which you would list all sources that you actually used in preparing the paper, and perhaps all those you consulted.

But it is often all right for you to provide the source in the body of the paper, without using a footnote. (For example, in a paper on the history of Philadelphia, you might write the following sentence: "Warner, in his book Private City, states on page 55 that the population of the city was 565,529 in 1860." This would acknowledge your source and avoid the use of a footnote.)

When preparing a paper, you should ask your instructor whether he or she expects you to use footnotes, and whether all sources consulted should appear in a bibliography or only those from which you used material.

2. Violating the Rules for Assignments. Academic course work is intended to advance the skills, knowledge, and intellectual competence of students. It is important, therefore, that students not participate in course work in such a way as to thwart these intentions. When students

are given assignments in a class or laboratory, the instructor will normally explain the rules under which the assignment is to be carried out. A student who does not understand the rules should ask the instructor for clarification. These rules are intended to make the assignment an educational experience or to make certain that the students' accomplishments on the assignment can be fairly evaluated. A violation of the rules of an assignment is cheating.

Academic cheating is, generally, the thwarting or breaking of the general rules of academic work or the specific rules of individual courses. It includes falsifying data; submitting, without the instructor's approval, work in one course which was done for another; helping others to plagiarize or cheat from one's own or another's work; or actually doing the work of another person.

There are many examples. When an examination is given in class, the instructor will usually assume or explicitly state that it is a "closed book" exam. If it is, students should not use notes or any other written aids in taking the exam. If you are unsure, ask.

If the answers to mathematics problems are in the back of the book, looking them up may produce correct answers, but it will not promote skill, knowledge, or competence. Or if the teacher says not to use a dictionary for a foreign language translation but you use one anyway, you will not participate in the reading exercise which the teacher intended by making the assignment. In both of these examples, not only do you cheat yourself out of academically useful work, but you also cheat yourself of any helpful evaluation which the teacher might make. If instructors don't know what kinds of problems their students are having, they can't do much to help with those problems. Moreover, they may be led to miscalculate the difficulty and usefulness of the assignments which they have made. So a few students' disregard of the conditions of a particular assignment may affect the quality of instruction for an entire class. Failing to follow the directions for an assignment constitutes academic cheating.

Another form of academic cheating occurs when work is submitted as if produced according to instructions when actually it is produced by some other means, or is simply invented. When students are given a laboratory assignment, it is assumed that they will carry out the assignment and that their reports will be based on their own laboratory work. A student should not make up data for a report or prepare a report without doing the assignment. If the assignment has called for the collection of data, perhaps

through social or laboratory experiment, then the significance of the cheating can be great. Inventing or lying about the data gives you an unfair advantage over students who have obtained the data in prescribed ways, and it seriously distorts the teacher's perception of the class. More importantly, it completely bypasses a principal purpose of such assignments.

A special case of such cheating occurs when students avoid the expected work of an assignment not by drawing upon the work of others but by drawing upon their own work, already done for another course—for instance, by submitting a paper from one course to fulfill an assignment for another. This is academic cheating, since it frustrates the aims of the assignment. It avoids the development of skill, knowledge, and competence for which the assignment was made. When an instructor assigns a paper to be written outside of class, it is assumed that a student will prepare a paper specifically for that course. This does not mean, of course, that students should avoid building upon their previous work. All education, and especially education within a major field, assumes a continuous building upon what has been learned before. For the purpose of course work, however, work you have already done should be regarded as if it were the work of someone else. Specific use of that work must be appropriately acknowledged. And substitution of that work for a current assignment is a form of cheating unless specifically permitted by the instructor. If you wish to use a paper that you have prepared for another course, you should obtain permission from your instructor.

Penalties for Academic Dishonesty

The penalty for plagiarism or cheating as a first offense is normally an F in the course in which the offense is committed and a report to the Dean. A subsequent offense may in addition be referred to the University Discipline Committee.

Students who believe that they have been unfairly accused of cheating may appeal the decision of the instructor. The student should first speak with the instructor. If that does not resolve the matter, the student should speak to the department's student adviser/ombudsperson. If the matter is not satisfactorily resolved at the departmental level, then the student may appeal to the Grievance Committee of the College, which consists of students and faculty members. The office of the Dean can provide information concerning an appeal.