

SArD Faculty Guide to Plagiarism

Approved by SArD Administrative Committee on:

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Defining plagiarism may vary among faculty members. In order to help students avoid plagiarizing, faculty may find these recommendations helpful. The following is not a “how-to guide” to prevent plagiarism but rather a set of suggestions to assist faculty in dealing with issues of plagiarism. It is of utmost importance that faculty handle plagiarism issues in an appropriate manner, both for their sake and that of the institution, as well that of the student.

1. Faculty need to know what plagiarism really is.
2. Faculty should make students aware of what plagiarism is and how it can be avoided – You should take the time to discuss and promote student responsibility; codes of conduct; academic integrity, honesty, and trust. You would need to conduct your academic affairs in a manner which exemplifies and promotes these ideals.
3. Faculty should present a positive attitude when discussing plagiarism with their students – Make it clear that you are not policing them, but rather teaching them understand what plagiarism is. Use your syllabus or other course materials to let your students know the policy on plagiarism, including specific penalties.
4. Faculty would need to remind their students that taking the time to address the subject of plagiarism would:
 - Help them to avoid plagiarizing.
 - Assist them in developing their research, writing, designing, and critical thinking skills.
 - Improve their academic performance.
5. Faculty should have the courage to ask the student – Tactfully asking about the work does not mean you are accusing anybody of cheating, just that you are concerned or curious about one or more aspects of it. A direct approach may quickly and easily allow you to identify the root of your concern, and give the student an opportunity to correct, or at least learn from, their errors.
6. Faculty could ask the student to produce drafts, notes, outlines, or other material used to develop their work – This request is more reasonable if you have previously informed your students that they may or will be required to do so.
7. Faculty may keep records of preliminary drafts to keep track of students’ work.
8. Know the reasons, intentional and unintentional, why students plagiarize. (appendix A)
9. Assignments and topics:
 - Give assignments that interest the student.
 - Design Research assignments should be considered to reduce the possibility of having students modifying, or recycling a previously produced work to fulfill the assignment.
 - Make assignments that are unique and specific.

- Set clear guidelines to have students apply classroom instructions, discussions, or readings to their assignment.
- Make your research analysis assignments require critical thinking and synthesis, not just a repeating of facts or a presentation of someone else's ideas.
- Set deadlines and put in writing penalties for exceeding them.
- For assignments that take the form of a written paper use the university-provided plagiarism service [Turn It In]
- Give more graded classwork assignments.
- Help students learn from their mistakes.
- When grading papers, design projects, presentations, or other assignments, be specific in your evaluation. Differentiate, and specify, your grading format, style, content, etc.

Why Students Plagiarize?

[Appendix A]

What are the Causes of Plagiarism?

Understanding why students plagiarize can help teachers to consider how to reduce the opportunities for plagiarism in their classrooms.

- **FEAR OF FAILURE** – Students may fear failure or fear taking risks in their own work. Students may have strong pressures on them to earn high grades. Lack of confidence leads them to rely on others.
- **POOR TIME MANAGEMENT** – Students may have poor time-management skills and believe they have no choice but to plagiarize. Students may lack good study habits, or may not realize how long a project will take to complete, and therefore outsource.
- **NO FEAR OF CONSEQUENCES** – Students may simply not care about getting caught, or have an unethical approach to cheating, believing the benefits outweigh the risks. Some simply like beating the system.
- **LENIENCY IN CONSEQUENCES** – Instructors may fail to report cheating when it does occur, or may not enforce appropriate penalties.
- **LACK OF INTEREST AND COMMITMENT** – Faculty may present assignments so generic that students have no interest and believe it is justified to cheat. Students may believe faculty do not track on the students work carefully or with honest interest; they are therefore unwilling to work if their effort will not be recognized.
- **LACK OF INVESTMENT** – Students may see some classes as more relevant to their education than others. Students may not see the connection between the assignment and their learning goals.
- **LACK OF ABILITIES** – Students may be unprepared to tackle a given assignment.