

# Understanding Academic Integrity & Avoiding Plagiarism



Classes Outside the Main Stream.

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Credit to Professor Rebecca Feinberg of NSU for portions of this presentation.

# What is Academic Integrity?

- Quite simply, it is **HONESTY**.
- Being honest with yourself, others and the entire academic community.
- The Center for Academic Integrity defines it as, “*a commitment, even in the face of adversity, to five fundamental values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility.*”

[http://www.academicintegrity.org/fundamental\\_values\\_project/pdf/FVProject.pdf](http://www.academicintegrity.org/fundamental_values_project/pdf/FVProject.pdf)

# Academic Integrity

- Unfortunately, it seems that too many schools don't define what academic integrity means to their respective communities. Instead, schools tell students what acts constitute academic dishonesty.
- NSU defines academic integrity as academic honesty. "The university is an academic community and expects its students to manifest a commitment to academic integrity through rigid observance of standards for academic honesty." NSU Law's Code of Conduct and Academic Responsibility, p. 1-2 (hereinafter, the "Code")
- Well, what does it mean to be academically honest?

# Academic Dishonesty - Cheating

- To be academically honest, you must not be academically dishonest!
- So let's talk about the 4 types of acts that would violate academic honesty at NSU.
- **(1) Cheating.** NSU Law defines cheating as, “intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise.” Code, p. 2.

# Academic Dishonesty - Fabrication

- (2) **Fabrication.** NSU Law defines fabrication as, “intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise .” Code, p. 2.
- Example: In your term paper, you desperately need a source to back-up your claim that smoking has been shown to prevent cancer and promote healthy lung function.
- Well, you can’t find a source, so you just make one up and cite to it. 2010 Empirical Study by University of England, (Cambridge, UK) titled, “Smoking Improves Health” by Profs. Dewey, Cheatham and Howe.

# Academic Dishonesty - Facilitation

- Don't get me wrong, we certainly want you to be creative in your writing! But, being creative doesn't mean you should create your own sources and cite to them!
- **(3) Facilitating Academic Dishonesty.** NSU Law defines it as, "intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to violate any provision of this code." Code, p. 2.
- Example: During a final exam, Jane sees her boyfriend Billy copying from her test, but instead of reporting it, she allows him to continue doing so and never reports it.
- Note here that Jane didn't cheat! But she knowingly allowed Billy to violate the Code by cheating from her exam. They're both violating the Code and if caught, they will both face academic discipline, which may include dismissal.

# Academic Dishonesty - Plagiarism

- **(4) Plagiarism.** NSU Law defines it as, “the adoption or reproduction of ideas, words, or statements of another person as one’s own without proper acknowledgment.” Code, p. 2.
- Let’s look at a few other definitions for this.
  - Being dishonest.
  - Lying.
  - Stealing someone’s idea.
  - Cheating.
  - Disrespecting yourself and the academic community.
  - Copyright infringement. (Civil penalties)

# Academic Dishonesty - Plagiarism

- Does someone have to act intentionally to plagiarize?
- NO.
- Oftentimes, even honest students fall into the trap of plagiarism by unintentionally failing to cite authority properly or failing to use quotation marks appropriately.
- Ignorance is **not** a defense when you are facing academic discipline or dismissal for plagiarism.
- The penalties for plagiarism are the same, whether or not it was intentional.

# Avoiding Plagiarism

- This is why it is absolutely critical that you understand how to avoid plagiarizing.
- Let's talk about different types of plagiarism.
- Cutting and pasting from wikipedia. We call this *cybercheating*, which is a form of plagiarism.
- Buying an essay or paper from the web.
- Cutting and pasting from a blog or a paper or article you found online.
- Cybercheating is on the rise as access to the internet increases.

# Avoiding Plagiarism

- Quoting another person's actual words, ideas, whether oral or written without providing a citation.
- Paraphrasing another person's words or ideas (oral or written) without a citation.
- Using another person's idea, opinion, theory, thesis, etc. without attribution/citation.

# Avoiding Plagiarism

- This is why it is absolutely critical to ALWAYS cite to your sources. By acknowledging someone else's work, you are respecting their ideas and their contributions to academia and you are avoiding plagiarism.
- You aren't misleading or misrepresenting the work as solely your own.
- YOU MUST GIVE CREDIT WHERE CREDIT IS DUE!

# Avoiding Plagiarism – When to cite?

- Uncommon knowledge, original facts, interpretations, opinions, theories, quotes, etc.
- Examples:
  - Continuous exposure to cigarette smoke has been linked to lung cancer in mice. (Salsbury 2011).  
Original fact from a study.
  - According to a recent opinion poll of South Floridians, NSU is the best university in America. (Cheney 2011).  
Opinion from a poll study.

# Avoiding Plagiarism – When you don't need to cite?

- You don't need to cite a statement when it is **common knowledge**.
- Examples:
  - Barack Obama is the current president of the United States.
  - Dogs are mammals.
  - Florida is a coastal state.

# Avoiding Plagiarism – Quotations

- Quotations
  - Use quotation marks and cite the source (author) when you copy exact wording (even in your notes).
  - In general, use quotation marks when you have 5 or more words that are the same as the source.

# Example 1 - Quoting

- Read the following excerpt from Bottom Line Personal (June 1, 2011), p. 11.
- Most people don't believe it, but our nighttime dreams are a powerful source of insight that can help us lead more fulfilling lives. In fact, by working with your dreams, you can move past obstacles, cope better with anxiety, heal old hurts and make better decisions.
- Now imagine that you're writing a paper on dreams for your class.

# Example 1 – Quoting

- Here's what you write in your paper after reading from that source:
  - Dreams are a powerful source of insight that can help us lead more fulfilling lives.
- Do you need quotes here? 5 or more words copied directly from source?
- Let's re-write this: One author suggests that, "dreams are a powerful source of insight that can help us lead more fulfilling lives." Bottom Line Personal (June 1, 2011), p. 11.

# Example 2 - Quoting

- Read the following excerpt from Bottom Line Personal (July 1, 2011), p. 9.
- Within seconds after we eat, bacteria in the mouth convert sugars into acids that can damage tooth enamel, leading to decay and cavities. We all know that we need to brush and floss to keep our teeth and gums healthy, but certain foods also can dilute acids, cleanse the teeth and reduce inflammation – the underlying cause of periodontal disease.
- I hope you had a good lunch! Now imagine that you're writing a paper on gum disease for class.

# Example 2 – Quoting

- Here's what you write in your paper after reading from that source:
  - Inflammation is the underlying cause of periodontal disease.
- Do you need quotes here?
- Let's re-write it. It is well understood by dentists that inflammation is “the underlying cause of periodontal disease.” Bottom Line Personal (July 1, 2011), p. 9.

# Avoiding Plagiarism – Paraphrasing

- Paraphrasing/Summarizing
  - Using your own words to paraphrase or summarize the source material.
  - Even when you paraphrase or summarize, you **MUST** cite the source.
  - **GIVE CREDIT WHERE CREDIT IS DUE.**
  - If your citation is incomplete or incorrect, then you have engaged in plagiarism! Intentional or unintentional – it doesn't matter.
  - Use a citation manual. Ask your professor for one he/she prefers.
  - In law school, we use several citation manuals, but the most widely used one is called the “Blue Book.”

# Example 1 - Paraphrasing

- Let's re-read our first excerpt from Bottom Line Personal on dreams.
- Most people don't believe it, but our nighttime dreams are a powerful source of insight that can help us lead more fulfilling lives. In fact, by working with your dreams, you can move past obstacles, cope better with anxiety, heal old hurts and make better decisions.
- Again, you're writing a paper on dreams.

# Example 1 – Paraphrasing

- After reading your source, you write the following sentence: Dreams are powerful tools that can help us solve problems in our daily lives.
- Do we need quotes here?
- Let's re-write this. Dreams are powerful tools that can help us solve problems in our daily lives. Bottom Line Personal (June 1, 2011), p. 11.

# Example 2 - Paraphrasing

- Let's re-read the second excerpt from Bottom Line Personal on gum disease.
- Within seconds after we eat, bacteria in the mouth convert sugars into acids that can damage tooth enamel, leading to decay and cavities. We all know that we need to brush and floss to keep our teeth and gums healthy, but certain foods also can dilute acids, cleanse the teeth and reduce inflammation – the underlying cause of periodontal disease.
- Again, imagine that you're writing a paper on gum disease.

# Example 2 - Paraphrasing

- After reading from that source, you write the following sentence: Brushing and flossing immediately after meals helps to reduce inflammation and in turn, gum disease.
- Do we need quotes here?
- Let's re-write this. Brushing and flossing immediately after meals helps to reduce inflammation and in turn, gum disease. Bottom Line Personal (July 1, 2011), p. 9.
- Obviously, you will need to consult your citation manual to see if these citations are adequate. Most citations need the author and the title of the article as well as the source publication.
- The correct citation may look something like this: Marvin A. Fier, DDS, "Eat Your Way to a Healthy Mouth," Bottom Line Personal (July 1, 2011), p. 9.

# Writing Responsibly

- One of the reasons students plagiarize is because they haven't done the work and a deadline is fast approaching.
- Other reasons include:
  - Lack of research skills.
  - Problems evaluating sources.
  - Confusion between plagiarism and paraphrasing.
  - Confusion with terminology.
  - Careless notetaking.
  - Ignorance about proper citation technique.
  - Stress.

# Writing Responsibly

- PLAN AHEAD.
- Make a schedule for your research and stick to it.
- Gather sources and make copies of the materials along with the relevant portions of the source needed for a correct citation.
- Ask questions when you don't understand how to properly cite a source.

# Writing Responsibly

## Good Sources

- What are good sources when you're researching for a paper?
  - Academic, peer reviewed articles and books.
  - Library web pages.
  - Online articles.
  - Use Lexis-Nexis or other online databanks.

# Writing Responsibly

## Bad Sources

- Wikipedia
- Googled websites.
- Non-academic articles or books.
- Biased articles. They tend to promote a specific agenda and are not objective.
- Urbandictionary.com – yes, this has actually been used in a paper!

# Writing Responsibly

- Write well and edit several drafts before turning in your final, polished draft.
- Use proper grammar and punctuation. The Chicago Manual of Style can help you with this task. Or ask your professor for his/her recommendation of a style/grammar manual.
- Cite your sources accurately and correctly.
- Maintain academic integrity – be honest.
- Keep organized and stick to a schedule or research plan.

# Writing Well

- As professors, we want you to be creative and original. It's okay to think outside the box.
- Don't feel that someone else's idea or words will make a better impression on your professor. It won't.
- We want you to learn from your mistakes.
- One of the goals of this program is that you significantly improve your writing ability.
- You can't do this unless you're honest with yourself and with us.

# Writing Well

- Don't be afraid to ask your professors for help.
- Ask your librarians for assistance.
- Keep a running research log on your computer – a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet.
- The research log should have the source, the page number(s) where you are getting a quote or a paraphrase and the specific ideas you are planning to use in your paper.

# Example of a Basic Research Log

Author	Title	Source	Date	Page #	Material	Citation
Marvin Fier	Eat Your Way to a Healthy Mouth	Bottom Line Personal	July 1, 2011	pp. 9-11	Brushing and flossing = reduction of periodontal disease	Marvin A. Fier, DDS, "Eat Your Way to a Healthy Mouth," <u>Bottom Line Personal</u> (July 1, 2011), p. 9.
Laura Hodges Taylor	Law and Happiness (Book Review)	Journal of Legal Education	May 2012	Vol. 61, p. 702	Interpersonal connections contribute more to happiness than income.	Laura Hodges Taylor, Book Review: Law and Happiness, <i>Journal of Legal Education</i> (May 2012), Vol. 61, p. 702

# Writing Well

- Work is still original even it contains quotations or paraphrasing from another source – AS LONG AS YOU CITE TO IT!
- “Original work may include the thoughts and words of another author. Entire thoughts or words of another author should be identified using quotation marks.” Code, p. 2.
- “Standards of scholarship require that the writer give proper acknowledgment when the thoughts and words of another author are used. Students must acquire a style manual approved by their center and become familiar with accepted scholarly and editorial practice in their program.” Code, p. 2.

# So why are we talking about this?

## Statistics of Academic Dishonesty

- Between 40 and 70 percent of all college students have reported cheating sometime during their academic career (Aiken, 1991; Davis, Grover, Becker, and McGregor, 1992).  
<http://teaching.berkeley.edu/bgd/prevent.html>
- McCabe, Butterfield, and Trevino (2006) found that 56% of MBA students surveyed self-reported having cheated in the previous year, while 47% of non-MBA graduate students reported the same.  
<http://www.research.psu.edu/training/research-protections-workshops/orp-video-archive/documents/20070926b.pdf>

# More Statistics of Cheaters

- Which types of students cheat the most?
  - Business Graduate Students – 56%
  - Engineering Graduate Students - 54%
  - Law Students – 45%

Lucia Graves, “Which Types of Students Cheat Most,” (Oct. 3, 2008),  
<http://www.usnews.com/education/articles/2008/10/03/which-types-of-students-cheat-most>.

# Instances of Academic Dishonesty

- On a blog entitled “Organizations and Markets,” Nicolai Foss, a professor at the Copenhagen Business School, reports the following: “At my school we had a nasty case last year where a PhD student had directly copied a Harvard Business School [working paper] and submitted it to a conference. He was discovered, and immediately dismissed from the program. His reaction? ‘The department head and I hold different conceptions of what “plagiarism” means.’ See <http://www.research.psu.edu/training/research-protections-workshops/orp-video-archive/documents/20070926b.pdf>.

# What about here at NSU?

- What did one of your administrators have to say about it?
- Assistant Dean of Online Programs Jennifer McIntyre said, in an e-mail to me, “[w]e have had quite a few [plagiarism violations]... We have dismissed people from the program. We have had students copy from a source without citing it properly, copy each other’s work when the student lets them or does not let them. This happened in all 3 programs but by far the worst is in the Education Law program...”

# What happens if I plagiarize or engage in other academically dishonest acts?

- Violation of the Code.
- “Any violation(s) of any of the academic standards, conduct standards, or supplemental standards may result in a complaint being filed against a student to enforce the Code of Student Conduct and Academic Responsibility.” Code, p. 3.
- “If the student is found in violation of the Code of Student Conduct and Academic Responsibility and/or university policies and procedures, one or more of the following sanctions may be imposed.” Code, p. 3.

# Sanctions for Violations of the Code

- Consult Plagiarism Avoidance Contract
- Expulsion
- Suspension
- Temporary Suspension
- Disciplinary Probation
- Warnings
- Fines
- Termination of Residence Hall Contract
- Counseling
- Other Appropriate Action
- And remember, if you plagiarized, then you may be subject to a civil lawsuit for copyright infringement by the author of the source.

# Summary

- Avoid plagiarism and other academically dishonest acts by planning ahead, asking for help and sticking to a schedule.
- The best way to avoid trouble is to be HONEST at all times.
- Remember these values: *honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility.*
- If you remember and adhere to these values, then you'll be just fine.

# Plagiarism Avoidance Contract

- Take a moment to read and understand the contract.
- Questions?
- Execute the contract.

# Thank you for your attention.

