

What is documentation?

A systematic way of indicating the original source of the material or information used in your own work. Each field follows a documentation format, such as APA, CBE, IEEE, etc., depending upon the intended publication and its author's guidelines.

Check Your Work

To avoid any inadvertent plagiarism, use the same tools your professors use to check student papers.

- **Google it.** Type in phrases and sentences using Google's advanced search menu.
- **Turnitin.com.** If your UAB department or school does not provide a Turnitin account for students, ask your professor if you can turn in your paper early so that he or she can run it through the software program for you.
- **Full text databases.** Available online at Sterne Library, students can search full text periodicals and books.
- **Glatt Plagiarism Services.** Available online at <http://plagiarism.com/>, this Website offers a plagiarism self-detection test.

Remember: If you use more than 6 words of original text from a source, without putting it in quotes, a computer software program can identify that as potentially plagiarized text.

Need Help?

Sterne Library offers Term Paper Research Clinics and Citation Clinics. For more information, visit the Library's Website at <https://www.mhsl.uab.edu/>. To schedule an appointment for one of the clinics, contact the Reference/Information department at 934-6364.

What is plagiarism?

Using other people's work (in a variety of forms) in part or in whole and representing it as your own. If you do not follow the *Three-Step Rule*, you may accidentally plagiarize, which can be a violation of UAB's Academic Honor Code.

UAB Honor Code

The University of Alabama at Birmingham expects all members of its academic community to function according to the highest ethical and professional standards. Students, faculty, and the administration of the institution must be involved to ensure this quality of academic conduct. Academic misconduct undermines the purpose of education. Such behavior is a serious violation of the trust that must exist among faculty and students for a university to nurture intellectual growth and development. Academic misconduct can generally be defined as all acts of dishonesty in an academic or related matter. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following categories of behavior:

ABETTING is helping another student commit an act of academic dishonesty. Allowing someone to copy your quiz answers or use your work as their own are examples of abetting.

CHEATING is the unauthorized use or attempted use of unauthorized materials, information, study aids, the work of others, or computer-related information.

PLAGIARISM means claiming as your own the ideas, words, data, computer programs, creative compositions, artwork, etc., done by someone else. Examples include improper citation of referenced works, the use of commercially available scholarly papers, failure to cite sources, or copying another person's ideas.

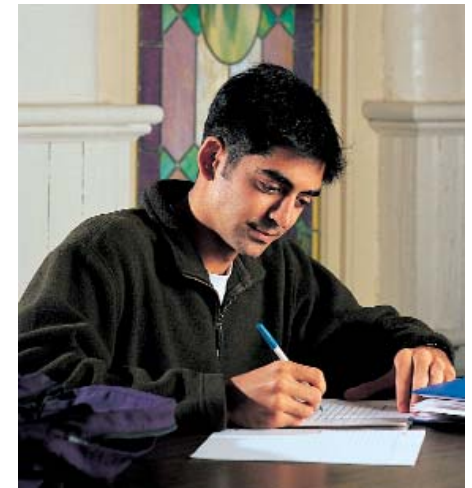
FABRICATION means presenting falsified data, citations, or quotations as genuine.

MISREPRESENTATION is falsification, alteration, or the misstatement of the contents of documents, academic work, or other materials related to academic matters, including work substantially done for one class as work done for another without receiving prior approval from the instructor.

The full text of the Honor Code, along with the procedure for suspected violation, is available online in the student handbook, *Direction*, at http://www.uab.edu/images/stuaff/pdf/Direction_Handbook2007-09.pdf

The Ethics of Paraphrase

For academic writers who wish to avoid plagiarism while incorporating prior source work



Graduate School

www.uab.edu/graduate

Ethics for Academic Writers

Three-Step Rule

All information from sources MUST be

1) Paraphrased, summarized or quoted

AND

2) Cited in the same paragraph

AND

3) Cited again in the list of references at the end of the document.

What needs to be documented?

- quoted material whether published, written (but not published), or spoken
- another person's idea or opinion (in contrast to common knowledge)
- interpretations
- drawings or photographs
- charts and graphs
- lab results
- lecture notes
- professional presentations
- progression of thought
- techniques and procedures
- surveys and test instruments
- World Wide Web page materials

What does NOT need to be documented:

Common Knowledge

- “bare-bone” facts from a dictionary or other basic reference books (dates, titles of principal works or studies, proper names)
- scientific and technical terms
- example of common knowledge: Crick and Watson proposed a spiral model of DNA, the double helix

Source Writing Techniques

Paraphrase

- restates key ideas or concepts from an original source in your own words to convey an accurate summary
- assimilates research into a single style of writing to avoid choppiness, awkward sentence structures, or both
- Beware the Synonym-Substitution Approach. It's quick, but risky, because you could accidentally plagiarize and might not fully understand the material.

Direct Quotation

- copies the exact words of a source and identifies them with double quotes at the beginning and end

Generalization

- briefly combines a common idea from several sources to support a claim, referencing all of the works

EXAMPLES

Original source: “Research at many levels, however, indicates that [students who copy are] more likely to be driven by desperation and a desire for success (or fear of failure) than by a simple desire to cheat... When a paper displays unintentional plagiarism, we have a teaching opportunity...” Williams, Bronwyn T. (2008). Trust, betrayal, and authorship: Plagiarism and how we perceive students. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 51:4, p. 350.

Paraphrase: Some professors argue that many students who plagiarize have understandable motives and present opportunities for teachers to model more ethical conduct in the classroom. (Williams, 2008.)

Direct Quotation: Williams asserts that “desperation and a desire for success” motivate students, more than “a desire to cheat.” (Williams, 2008.)

Generalization: Many researchers advocate educating and training students in plagiarism prevention through case studies, text analysis and paraphrase and citation practice. (Williams, 2008, Swales and Feak, 2004, Day, 2006.)

Guidelines for Effective (& Ethical) Paraphrase

1. Read *and understand* the original source. Use a highlighter pen *only* if you are going to make notes also.
2. Write the bibliographic information down carefully and completely.
3. For Internet sources, print the Web pages you are using (as Web addresses frequently change), and note the date you accessed the page.
4. Make notes, using words, phrases, or a short string of words. Do NOT copy sentences or long sections of text.
5. Leave the material for a period of time, at least several hours and preferably several days.
6. When you write *your* paper, use only the notes you have taken. *Never* write your paper looking directly at the original text. Absolutely never write your paper with photocopies of original texts in which sentences have been highlighted spread around you on a table or the floor.
7. Place appropriate citations in your text to indicate sources.
8. After writing a complete section such as a literature review, verify details included in your paper by using the original text.
9. Add details or make other adjustments if what you have written misrepresents the original text.