**A Student's Guide to Academic Integrity at The University of Oklahoma (Norman Campus, excluding Law) (Abbreviated Guide)**

**What is academic integrity?**

Academic integrity means honesty and responsibility in scholarship. Academic assignments exist to help students learn; grades exist to show how fully this goal is attained. Therefore all work and all grades should result from the student's own understanding and effort.

**What is academic misconduct?**

Academic misconduct is any act which improperly affects the evaluation of a student’s academic performance or achievement. Misconduct occurs when the student either knows or reasonably should know that the act constitutes misconduct. “I didn’t mean to” is never an excuse for academic misconduct.

* **CHEATING AND UNAUTHORIZED MATERIAL ON EXAMINATIONS AND OTHER ASSIGNMENTS**  
  Unless the professor specifies otherwise, all examinations and other assignments are to be completed by the student alone, without inappropriate assistance of any kind. For tests, that means no help is to be given to or received from other persons; no books, notes, cellphones, iPods, calculators, or other materials or devices of any kind are to be consulted; and if a calculator or other hand-held electronic device is permitted to be used for mathematical calculations, no other information may be programmed into or retrieved from the device.
* **IMPROPER COLLABORATION**  
  Collaboration means working together. Many classes emphasize working with a partner or in groups. Permission from the professor to "work together" on a homework assignment, project, or paper is not permission to violate the rules of integrity by simply getting the answers from someone else or presenting another student's work as your own. Unless the professor specifies otherwise, it is assumed that all work submitted for a grade will be the product of the student's own understanding, and thus expressed in the student's own words, calculations, computer code, etc. When a student's work is identical or very similar to someone else's at points where individual variations in expression would be expected, it is reasonable for the professor to conclude that academic misconduct has occurred.
* **FABRICATION, FORGERY, ALTERATION OF DOCUMENTS, LYING, ETC., IN ORDER TO OBTAIN ACADEMIC ADVANTAGE**  
  It's wrong to lie to an instructor in order to get an excused absence, an extension on a due date, a makeup examination, an Incomplete, admission to a class or program, etc. It's wrong to forge an instructor's signature on drop slips, or anywhere else for academic advantage. It's wrong to falsify transcripts and diplomas. It's wrong to fake data, for example in an assigned lab project, or fabricate quotations or sources for a paper. The person who lies to get out of a difficult situation usually feels that there's nothing personal about it. The person who gets lied to feels differently. All of these actions destroy the institution's integrity and eat away at the expectation of mutual trust among all members of the academic community.
* **ASSISTING OTHERS IN ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT**  
  Helping someone else cheat is itself an Academic Integrity Code violation. So is providing someone with a paper or homework, or any other form of help, where you know, or reasonably should know that the other student will use it to cheat.
* **ATTEMPTING TO COMMIT ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT**  
  Trying to cheat is academic misconduct, even if the attempt is discovered before it is completed. For example, possession of unauthorized notes in an examination is academic misconduct, even if they have not yet been used. Asking others for help in cheating is academic misconduct even if nobody responds and no cheating ultimately occurs.
* academic advantage.
* **INTIMIDATION AND INTERFERENCE WITH INTEGRITY PROCESSES**  
  Interfering with the proper functioning of the Academic Integrity Code is also a violation of the Code. For example, it is a violation to threaten or bribe someone to prevent that person from reporting misconduct or testifying in a hearing. It is also a violation to interfere with an Integrity Council investigation or lie to an investigator or other official. Student Code violations may also apply to such conduct. Once the investigation is over, retaliation against someone for reporting misconduct or participating in an investigation or hearing will ordinarily be addressed through the Student Code.
* **PLAGIARISM**  
  There is basically no college-level assignment that can be satisfactorily completed by copying. OU's basic assumption about writing is that all written assignments show the student's own understanding in the student's own words. That means all writing assignments, in class or out, are assumed to be composed entirely of words generated (not simply found) by the student, except where words written by someone else are specifically marked as such with proper citation. Including other people's words in your paper is helpful when you do it honestly and correctly. When you don't, it's plagiarism. Plagiarism is the most common form of academic misconduct at OU. Students are encouraged to test their skills in avoiding plagiarism by taking the library’s plagiarism tutorial, available at http://libraries.ou.edu/help/tutorials/academicintegrity/player.html. Within the academic community and specifically at the University of Oklahoma, the following rules apply:
  1. **IT IS PLAGIARISM TO COPY WORDS AND PRESENT THEM AS YOUR OWN WRITING.**  
     It is the worst form of plagiarism to copy part or all of a paper from the Internet, from a book, or from another source without indicating in any way that the words are someone else's. To avoid this form of plagiarism, the paper must BOTH place the quoted material in quotation marks AND use an acceptable form of citation to indicate where the words come from.
  2. **IT IS PLAGIARISM TO COPY WORDS, EVEN IF YOU GIVE THE SOURCE, UNLESS YOU ALSO INDICATE THAT THE COPIED WORDS ARE A DIRECT QUOTATION.**  
     Simply documenting the source in a footnote or bibliography isn't good enough. You must also indicate that the words themselves are quoted from someone else. To avoid this form of plagiarism, put all quoted words in quotation marks or use equivalent punctuation.
  3. **IT IS PLAGIARISM TO COPY WORDS AND THEN CHANGE THEM A LITTLE, EVEN IF YOU GIVE THE SOURCE.**  
     Putting someone else’s ideas into your own words so it's not a direct quotation is called "paraphrasing." Paraphrasing is fine when you cite the source and indicate the new expression is actually your own. When it's not -- when the expression remains substantially similar to the source as a whole or in one of its parts -- it's plagiarism. Even if not specifically prohibited by the instructor, "writing" a paper by copying words and then altering them violates OU's basic assumption about writing and may easily result in a charge of academic misconduct. To count as "your own words," your paper must be so significantly different from your sources that a reasonable reader would consider it a new piece of writing. If it's not -- if "your writing" is substantially similar to somebody else's where individual variations would be expected, it's plagiarism.
  4. **EVEN IF YOU EXPRESS THEM IN YOUR OWN WORDS, IT IS PLAGIARISM TO PRESENT SOMEONE ELSE'S IDEAS AS YOUR OWN.**  
     It is plagiarism to present someone else's original arguments, lines of reasoning, or factual discoveries as your own, even if you put the material in your own words. To avoid this form of plagiarism, cite the source.
  5. **THE RULES AGAINST PLAGIARISM APPLY TO ALL ASSIGNMENTS.**  
     Take-home tests, comprehensive examinations, "review of the literature" sections of theses or dissertations, and all other assignments are subject to these rules. There is basically no college-level assignment that can be satisfactorily completed by copying.