

## Writing Center Workshop Lesson Plan Avoiding Plagiarism and Using Turnitin

### Lesson Objectives:

- 1) Define and raise awareness about different types of plagiarism
- 2) Inform students of NPU's Academic Integrity Policy and procedures for handling cases of suspected plagiarism
- 3) Explain how to interpret Turnitin originality reports/similarity checks
- 4) Equip students with strategies for avoiding plagiarism, including a mini-lesson on quoting vs. paraphrasing

### Preparation:

- 1) Review lesson plan and handouts
- 2) Check that there are enough copies of the instructor and student materials. Print more if necessary.

### Handouts:

- 1) Student Handout

### Technology: N/A

### Introductory Activity: 15 minutes

- 1) Introduce yourself, the Writing Center, and the lesson
- 2) Student introductions—name and class
- 3) Do the Introductory Activity on the handout. Have students answer questions on their own, share with a partner/small group, and then share out with the class at-large.

### Lecture Notes: 20 minutes

- 1) Go through lecture notes, encouraging students to fill in blanks as you go.
- 2) Emphasis that avoiding plagiarism means:
  - a. Using Turnitin as a tool—it needs interpretation to be useful
  - b. Using research writing best practices, including
    - i. Citing directly and indirectly quoted source material both in-text and at the end of your paper (in a references/works cited/bibliography page)
    - ii. Paraphrasing correctly (and not patchwriting)
    - iii. Using your instructor and the Writing Center as resources to field questions

### Practice Activity: 20 minutes

- 1) Have students access a Turnitin originality report of their own
- 2) If not every student has a piece of writing that would fit the exercise, they can work in small groups on one student's writing

- 3) Work through the questions and share out at the end. Be sure to invite instructor commentary.

**Closing Notes:** 5 minutes

- 1) Take any last questions
- 2) Encourage students to visit Writing Center drop-in hours

**Additional Resources:**

- 1) Plagiarism.org
- 2) Turnitin.com
- 3) Purdue OWL
- 4) Diana Hacker's *Rules for Writers*

**Writing Center Workshop: Avoiding Plagiarism and Using Turnitin: *Introductory Activity***  
***FACILITATOR ANSWER KEY***

- 1) How do you define *plagiarism*?
- 2) Which of the following constitute plagiarism?
  - Turning in someone else's work as your own
  - Using ideas from someone else without giving credit
  - Failing to put a quotation in quotation marks
  - Giving incorrect information about the source of a quotation
  - Changing words but copying the sentence structure of a source without giving credit
- 3) What are ways students can use Turnitin to prevent plagiarism (and more?)
  - Originality report
  - Grammar checker

***Lecture Notes***

**I. Plagiarism: A Definition**

**According to the Merriam-Webster online dictionary, to "plagiarize" means:**

- to steal and pass off the ideas or words of another as one's own
- to use (another's production) without crediting the source
- to commit literary theft
- to present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source

In other words, plagiarism is an act of fraud. It involves both stealing someone else's work and lying about it afterward.

### **But can words and ideas really be stolen?**

According to U.S. law, the answer is yes. The expression of original ideas is considered intellectual property and is protected by copyright laws, just like original inventions. Almost all forms of expression fall under copyright protection if they are recorded in some way (such as a book or a computer file).

## **II. Academic Integrity: NPU Policies and Procedures**

Committing plagiarism at NPU is considered an act of academic dishonesty and a violation of the **Academic Integrity Statement** that can be found on page 18 of your student handbook:

*“Academic dishonesty runs counter to the goals and ideals of every educational institution, will not be tolerated at North Park University, and may result in dismissal from the University. Appropriate designated authorities within the University will judge cases of alleged academic dishonesty according to the principles, policies, and procedures outlined in the Student and Faculty Handbooks.”*

Can you believe there were 21 cases of plagiarism reported to the Academic Dean alone in January, 2019? The general procedure regarding a case of suspected plagiarism is as follows:

- 1) Students suspected of plagiarism will be contacted by their professor to be informed of the situation as well as reminded of the academic integrity policy.
- 2) A report of evidence will be submitted by the professor to the academic dean.
- 3) A hearing date will be set both student and professor will attend under the direction of the academic dean, who will facilitate further conversation and decide upon consequences.

## **III. Tips for Avoiding Plagiarism**

The website **plagiarism.org** offers several strategies for preventing plagiarism, some of which include

- giving yourself time to include all the steps in the research/writing process

- taking effective notes
- citing sources, when in doubt
- showing that you are not just copying ideas but are processing and adding to them
- lending outside support to the ideas that are completely yours
- making it clear who said what
- knowing how to paraphrase
- analyzing and evaluating your sources
- asking \_\_\_\_ your instructor \_\_\_\_ when in doubt

#### IV. Turnitin: A Tool

Turnitin is not a private detective sneaky professors use to catch you cheating, but a tool that can help you check to see if there are places you should revise in a draft before submitting a final copy, especially when instructors permit you to view your \_\_\_ originality \_\_\_ report.

Both \_\_\_ cited \_\_\_ and \_\_\_ uncited \_\_\_ phrases can be flagged, since Turnitin only points out phrases that match content already in its database—and these phrases are \_\_\_ not necessarily \_\_\_ plagiarism.

It's best to \_\_\_\_\_ ask your instructor \_\_\_\_\_ about their preferred match percentage.

#### V. Strong Research Writing Prevents Plagiarism

Think of yourself as the \_ architect \_\_\_ of your paper and your sources as \_ bricks \_\_\_\_\_. An architect can build any type of structure they want with their building materials: a round observatory, a flat and wide warehouse, or a tall, narrow skyscraper. The architect (and their \_\_\_\_\_ blueprints \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_ are in charge \_\_\_\_\_.

However, when you neglect to draw up blueprints (like a \_\_\_ thesis or paper outline \_\_\_) your building materials take charge, and you can only build rectangular, brick-shaped buildings—or a paper that repeats what its sources say, which can lead to \_\_\_\_\_ plagiarism \_\_\_\_\_.

*You* are the architect! You design your paper, not your sources. Keep them in their place by

- using quotes only when necessary. If you \_\_\_ can't say it better yourself \_\_\_\_\_, use a quote.
- paraphrasing correctly, using both \_\_\_ semantic \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_ syntactic \_\_\_\_\_ strategies.
  - **Semantic** (find phrases and synonyms to replace original wording)
  - **Syntactic** (restructure the original sentence(s))
    - *Original*: Probably only about 10% of your final manuscript should appear as directly quoted matter.

- *Semantic paraphrase*: Only roughly 10% of your final draft should comprise word-for-word quotations.
- *Syntactic paraphrase*: Directly quoted matter should probably only appear as about 10% of your final manuscript.
  - *Both semantic AND syntactic is best!* Word-for-word quotations should comprise only roughly 10% of your final draft.
- recalling that paraphrased information still needs to be \_\_\_\_\_ cited \_\_\_\_\_
- Citing as you go. As you locate sources you think you'll use in your paper, record
  - their \_\_\_\_\_ citations \_\_\_\_\_ (and add it to a rough draft of your \_\_\_\_\_ references \_\_\_\_\_ page)
  - the \_\_\_\_\_ page \_\_\_\_\_ number
  - the correct quote/paraphrase (or add it to an \_\_\_\_\_ outline \_\_\_\_\_)

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- 3) What are ways students can use Turnitin to prevent plagiarism (and more?)

### *Lecture Notes*

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- the \_\_\_\_\_ number
- the correct quote/paraphrase (or add it to an \_\_\_\_\_)

***Student Activity***

In pairs or small groups, look at a Turnitin originality report for a piece of your own writing and pick a too-long quote, poorly-paraphrased phrase, or other area that could benefit from revising.

**1)** Rewrite the sentence(s) below.

**2)** What's causing Turnitin to flag this writing?

**3)** Revise the writing below, including any necessary citations in the correct format.