

# **PLAGIARISM**

**What is it?**

**Why is it important to me?**

**How can I avoid it?**

(Or, did my high school teachers lie to me?)

*Adapted from a Presentation by Joyce A. Brannan, Technical Services Librarian, Julia Tutwiler Library, University of West Alabama, Livingston, Alabama.*

# Definitions



The simplest definition of **Plagiarism**:

the act of presenting another's work or ideas as your own.



phillipmartin.info

**“Every generation has the privilege of standing on the shoulders of the generation that went before; but it has no right to pick the pockets of the first comer”** - Brander Matthews

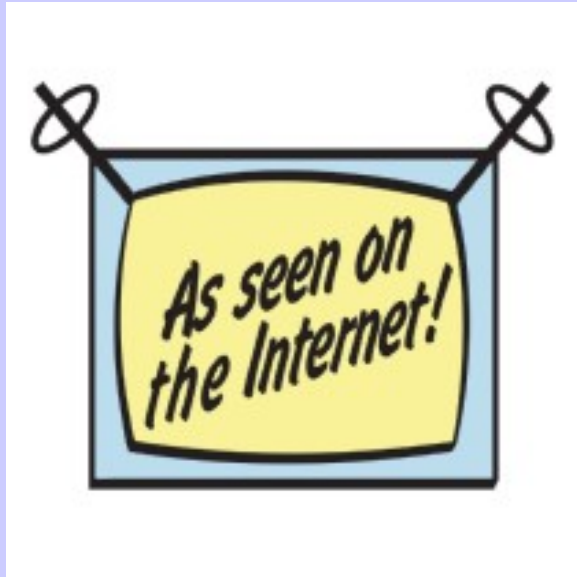
*Recreations of an Anthologist, 1904*

Matthews, B. (1904). *Recreations of an Anthologist*. New York: Dodd, Mead & Company.

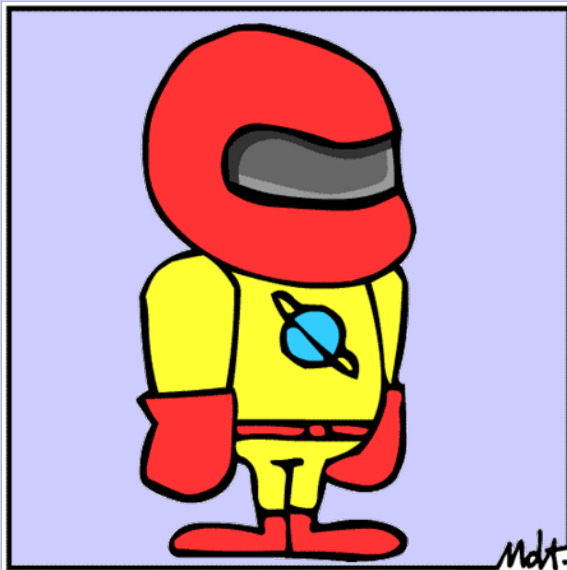
**“Plagiarism is using another person’s words or ideas without giving credit to the other person. When you use someone else’s words, you must put quotation marks around them and give the writer or speaker credit by revealing the source in a citation.”**

**“Even if you revise or paraphrase the words of someone else or just use that person’s ideas, you still must give the author credit in a note. Not giving due credit to the creator of an idea or writing is very much like lying”. (Harris, 2001)**

Harris, R.A. (2001). *The Plagiarism Handbook*. Los Angeles: Pyczak Publishing.



<http://echeat.com/>



[soundghost.co.uk](http://soundghost.co.uk)

True ONLY if you are a resident of the Planet for the Ethically-Challenged.

Here on Earth ...

it's called ***cheating!***

**“Plagiarism is like lip-synching to someone else’s voice and accepting the applause and rewards for yourself.”**  
(Purdue University, 2002)



**Plagiarism is like KIDNAPPING:**

**“It comes from the Latin plagiarius, a kidnapper. And indeed, that is what an act of plagiarism is like: stealing away an author's work, imprisoning it in another text, and robbing the rightful owner of a treasure, a creation, a reputation or even a livelihood.**

**Worse than a kidnapping, it takes a lot more than a ransom to get those things back.”** (theage.com.au, 2002)



San Jose State University, Plagiarism Tutorial,  
<http://130.65.109.143/plagiarism/tutorial/introduction.php>.

Todd Pettigrew (Macleans.ca On Campus, August 10, 2010) explains it this way:

“Plagiarism is counterfeiting.

Stealing is a crime against the rightful owner, but taking material from a book or a web site and turning it in as your own original work doesn't harm the original author. Instead, the offence is an offence against your instructor, your course, your university, and academia in general. The problem with taking the work of another and passing it off as your own is not that you've taken the work of another, it's that you've passed it off as your own.

This is why university professors — good ones, anyway — are sticklers for plagiarism. Like money, credit in a course only has value if the student really worked to earn it. If everyone were just allowed to hand in anything, anyone could get a degree without doing any work and the degree itself would cease to have any value, and the whole system would fall apart. Medical schools couldn't trust that potential physicians really understand chemistry. Law schools wouldn't know whether their applicants could really write analytically. Would you hire a graduate of Cheat-As-Much-As-You-Want University? Would you want to have such a degree?”

# Common Questions





Is it still considered plagiarism when you copy an essay from someone who just gets average grades?

Yes, and it makes *you* look even dumber!





Someone told me it's not  
plagiarism if the guy is dead ...

**Dead or alive ...**

**if it's not**

**your own idea,**

**you must cite your source!!**

# Can I plagiarize myself?

(and, won't that hurt??)

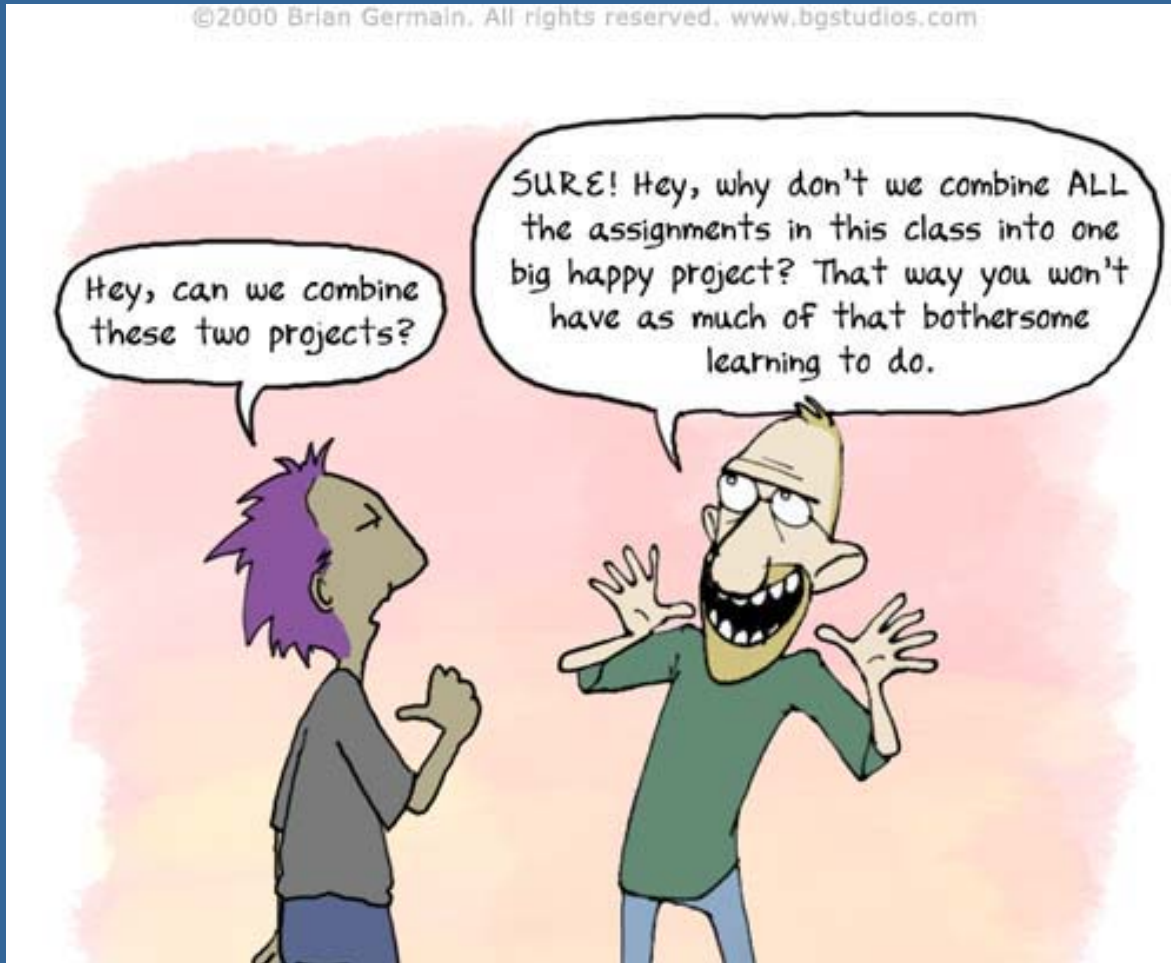


**Yes, it's called self-plagiarism, recycling fraud, or duplication of work.**

**“This occurs when authors reuse their own previously written work or data in a ‘new’ written product without letting the reader know that this material has appeared elsewhere. According to Hexam, “... the essence of self-plagiarism is [that] the author attempts to deceive the reader”.**

Roig, M. (2006). **Avoiding plagiarism, self-plagiarism, and other questionable writing practices: A guide to ethical writing.**

URL: <http://facpub.stjohns.edu/~roigm/plagiarism/>



## Duplication of work

Undergraduate students who submit similar assignments on closely related topics in two different courses must obtain the written consent of both instructors prior to the submission of the assignment. If prior approval is not obtained, each instructor reserves the right not to accept the assignment.

**Unauthorized duplication of work will receive the same penalty as plagiarism!**

# What about “Common Knowledge”?

## Do I need to cite it?

No, but make sure it's *common knowledge*.

For example:

“Sir John A. Macdonald was the first Prime Minister of Canada.”

This is common knowledge because:

- this fact is known by many people
- it can be found in numerous sources



[historystudycenter.co.uk](http://historystudycenter.co.uk)

However, if you state anything not considered common knowledge, or make any statement that is an interpretation of the facts, you will have to cite your source.

For example, the following statement would have to be cited:

“Sir John A. Macdonald did more to consolidate and define the Dominion of Canada than any other leading politician of his day (Bliss, 1994).”

**THIS IS NOT COMMON KNOWLEDGE!**



There are two reasons why the above example should be cited:

- 1) The thought and idea was found in Bliss' book *Right Honourable Men*.
- 2) Bliss interprets the role that Sir John A. Macdonald and others played in the political life of Canada.

**Therefore, Bliss needs to be cited and placed in your list of references:**

Bliss, Michael. *Right Honourable Men: the descent of Canadian politics from Macdonald to Mulroney*, 1994.

Information on this page adapted from University of Alberta Libraries “Common Knowledge and Quotations”



## *When Should I Use Quotation or Paraphrasing?*

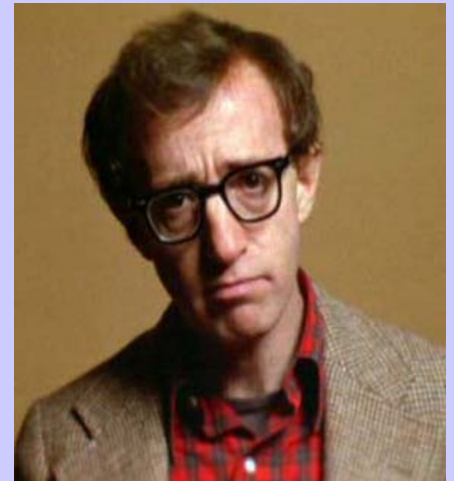
A *quotation* is any phrase or statement that is someone else's exact words. To cite a quotation, simply put quotation marks around the statement in question and document the source using an appropriate style guide.

Remember that you must always cite the author and the page number when using a quotation.  
From University of Alberta Libraries "Common Knowledge and Quotations"

### *DIRECT vs. INDIRECT quotes:*

#### Example:

Woody Allen once said "My problems all started with my early *education*. I went to a school for mentally disturbed teachers." – **this is an example of a *direct* quote.** In this case, you need to cite the author and date of quote as well as where you read the quote ([www.allgreatquotes.com](http://www.allgreatquotes.com))



Woody Allen blames his problems on his early education. – **this is an example of an *indirect* quote.** If you use an indirect quote you must still reference the information. Indirect quotes are included in the text, but do not require quotation marks.

**Paraphrasing:** “A paraphrased example must be cited. You cite a paraphrased example as you would a word-for-word quote. Paraphrasing is a condensed version of another author's work, or putting the author's words into your own words.”  
(<https://www.indiana.edu/~istd/example1paraphrasing.html>)



## *How do I paraphrase?*

Whenever you paraphrase, remember these two points:

1. You must provide a reference.
2. The paraphrase must be entirely in your own words. You must do more than merely substitute phrases here and there. You must also completely alter the sentence structure.

It can be difficult to find new words for an idea that is already well expressed. The following strategy will make the job of paraphrasing a lot easier:



## 6 Steps to Effective Paraphrasing

1. Reread the original passage until you understand its full meaning.
2. When you are at the note-taking stage, and you come across a passage that may be useful for your essay, do not copy the passage verbatim unless you think you will want to quote it. Set the original aside, and write your paraphrase on a note card.
3. If you think you will want to paraphrase the passage, make a note only of the author's basic point. You don't even need to use full sentences. Jot down a few words below your paraphrase to remind you later how you envision using this material. At the top of the note card, write a key word or phrase to indicate the subject of your paraphrase. In your note, you should already be translating the language of the original into your own words. What matters is that you capture the original idea.
4. Check your rendition with the original to make sure that your version accurately expresses all the essential information in a new form. Make sure to include the page number of the original passage so that you can make a proper reference later on.
5. When it comes time to write the paper, rely on your notes rather than on the author's work. You will find it much easier to avoid borrowing from the original passage because you will not have recently seen it. Use quotation marks to identify any unique term or phraseology you have borrowed exactly from the source.
6. Follow this simple sequence:
  - a. Convert the ideas from your notes into full sentences.
  - b. Provide a reference.
  - c. Go back to the original to ensure that (a) your paraphrase is accurate and (b) you have truly said things in your own words.

## Summary

Plagiarism of ideas	Using another person's ideas, processes, or results without giving appropriate credit
Plagiarism of text	Using another person's words without giving appropriate credit
<b>Plagiarism of text, without citing the source:</b>	
Verbatim copying	Using the text or any materials of others without acknowledging the source
Paraphrasing	Using the text of others with a few changes or mixing the others' texts without acknowledging the source(s)
<b>Plagiarism of text, with citing the source:</b>	
Verbatim copying	Using exact words of others with citing the origin but without using quotation marks
Inappropriate paraphrasing	Using texts of others while citing the origin but only with minor changes in the words or structure
<b>Self-plagiarism:</b>	
Duplicate publication	Submission of papers that are identical or the same in hypothesis, results, and conclusions to different courses
Practice of text recycling	Using one's own text in several different papers

# The Penalties

Plagiarism may result in receiving an **“F”** or **zero** for the **assignment**.

Plagiarism may result in receiving an **“F”** or **zero** for the **course**.

Plagiarism may result in **expulsion** from the university!



(refer to the Appendix on Plagiarism included in your course outline or see Senate regulations from the Handbook of Scholarship and Academic Policy. <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/PLAGIARISM>)

**The excuses ...**

# Excuse #1



[opensalon.com](http://opensalon.com)

**I ran out of time ...  
I needed a “shortcut”.**



**That “shortcut” may require you to repeat the course at summer school.**

**Submitting a plagiarized paper may result in getting a 0 on the assignment or, worse, failing the course!**



## If you can't make a deadline:

- ❖ take what you have to the professor and talk to him/her about your situation
- ❖ ask for an extension
- ❖ hand in what you have ... it might be better than you think!
- ❖ take the late penalty ... it's better than the penalty for cheating!



From: Scharer, N. Niko's Plagiarism Page, University of Toronto, Department of Philosophy.



## Excuse #2

**“I've always written my essays this way and no one has ever said it was wrong.”**

**OR**

**“Gee, officer, I always drive 50 kilometers above the speed limit and I've never been pulled over.”**



# Ignorance of the law is NO excuse!



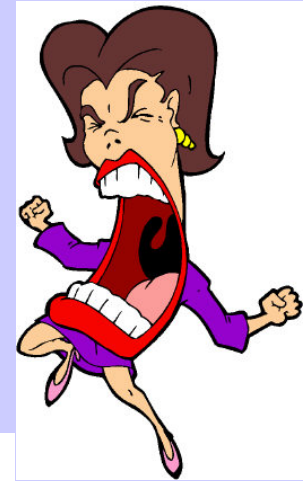
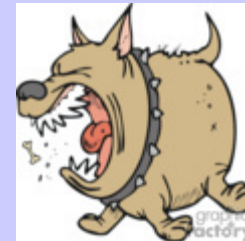
Getty Images

**It is your *responsibility* as a student  
to familiarize yourself with what  
constitutes plagiarism.**

## Excuse #3

**My parents expect me to get good grades.**





**Imagine how thrilled they'll be when you're expelled!**

## Excuse #4

**My roommate gave me permission to use his paper and he said I didn't have to cite him.**





## No one can give you permission to cheat!!

“Some students think that if they have permission to copy a work, then they are not plagiarizing it, even though they quote it without attribution. They feel free to use a roommate’s paper, or text from a public domain source such as a government document.”

“Plagiarism is using *any words* or ideas without giving credit to the source. If the plagiarizer copies material that is also copyrighted, then the wrongdoing is potentially enhanced by the additional crime of copyright infringement.” (Harris, 2001)

## Excuse #5

**I thought I could get away with it.**



cartoonstock.com

**Professors and TA's have access to turnitin.com, they possess a thorough knowledge of the topic you have been assigned, and they recognize writing styles.**

**AND REMEMBER, IF YOU CAN FIND IT,  
SO CAN YOUR PROFESSOR!**



## Excuse #6

**I copied one of my professor's earlier papers.**

**I thought plagiarism was  
the highest form of flattery.**



cartoonstock.com



guardian.co.uk

**Does he *look* flattered?**

**“Some international students believe that imitation is the highest form of flattery, to the extent that it would be disrespectful to put what they have learnt into their own words.”** (Times Higher Education, 2004, [timeshighereducation.co.uk](http://timeshighereducation.co.uk))

**However, UWO has a zero-tolerance policy on plagiarism. Therefore, any student who is unsure of what constitutes plagiarism needs to get help either from their professor, their TA, or the Writing Support Centre at Student Development Services.**

# It's a different world ... everybody cheats

## Cheating connection made

Cheating is always a concern at post-secondary academic institutions but recent studies suggest it may be more than a simple issue of wandering eyes. Delroy Paulhus, a professor of psychology at the University of British Columbia, has identified a link between academic cheating and sub-clinical psychopathy.

According to Paulhus, impulsive cheaters have four common characteristics consisting of erratic behavior, callousness, anti-social tendencies and manipulation. They also often possess a malevolent combination of high ambition and low moral inhibition.

According to James Côté, a sociology professor at Western, 60 to 80 per cent of students have cheated at least once in their lifetime, with arrogance as their primary motivation. He believes students at Western are no exception.

“[Our] culture has adopted characteristics where narcissism can be fairly functional to succeed, as well as sub-clinical levels of psychopathy — just take a look at our business leaders,” Côté says. The majority of people receive their moral code from the media, according to Côté. In a culture which idealizes the outlaw — a person who doesn't have much of a conscience and gets what they want by any means necessary — people are apt to distort the “Seven Deadly Sins” into the “Seven Virtues of Capitalism.”

“We live in a culture of academic disengagement, which is alive and well at Western,” Côté says. Where people are more concerned with the end credential rather than the learning aspect of education.”

—Vanessa Vernick (*UWO Gazette*, September 24, 2010)

# “If everyone else jumped in a lake ...”

The world may accept cheating as okay, but we shouldn't!

But, more importantly, it's about integrity and being fair and supporting to honest students who do good work. Academic values, such as truth, are worth fighting for (*Alex Gillis – University Affairs, March 12, 2007*).

For an education to be meaningful, it must be one obtained legitimately. Learning to think critically and gaining skills is a continual process and maintaining academic integrity on the journey is the hallmark of a quality education. (*Center for Intellectual Property, 1996, University of Maryland University College*).



“If you have integrity, nothing else matters. If you don't have integrity, nothing else matters.” ~Alan Simpson

“Character is much easier kept than recovered.” Thomas Paine

“The measure of a man's real character is what he would do if he knew he never would be found out.” - Thomas Babington Macaulay

“In the end, the ability to coast through school provide students with habits that will be detrimental to them in the real world.” *University Gazette, November 24, 2010*

## Other Excuses

**“It’s just one passage - what's the harm?”** Whether you plagiarized one passage or one hundred passages, it’s still plagiarism.”

**“I don’t know how to cite materials properly.”** Ask for help with citation styles from your professor or your TA.”

**“I thought that by citing it in my bibliography it wasn’t plagiarism.”** You have to cite it in your paper in addition to your bibliography.”

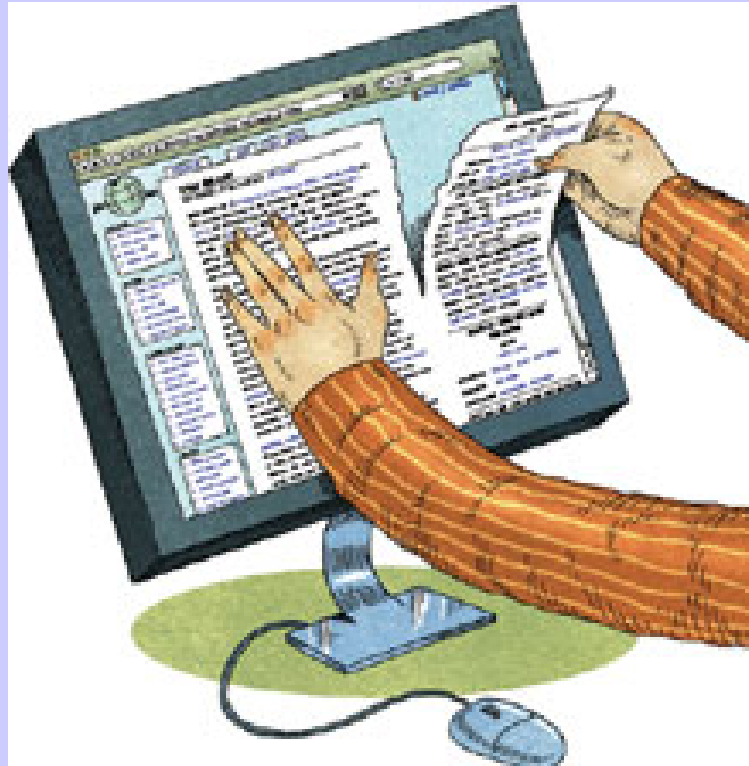
**“I thought by citing it in text I didn’t plagiarize.”** You have to use quotes around exact phrases.”

**“I don’t remember where I found the information so I couldn’t cite it.”** When you take notes, make sure you write down the source of information so that you can use it later when you need to cite it.”

**“I used a thesaurus to change the words.”** Changing a few words but not the idea is considered plagiarism.”

## Remember:

**It is always better to fail honestly than to be found guilty of an academic offence.**



*Credit: Wesley Bedrosian*

**Who does this  
*really* hurt?**

**Possibly the most important reason to not plagiarize is that it robs YOU ... think about who is really being cheated.**

**“Actually doing the work of the research paper gives you knowledge but it also improves research skills such as thinking and analyzing, organizing, writing, planning and time management, and attention to detail. All this is missed when you plagiarize. These are the skills that are highly valued in the working world. A degree will help you to get a first job, but performance - using the skills developed by doing such assignments - will be required not only for promotion but even for continued employment in the same position.” (Harris, 2001)**



**“Remember, when you write a paper, the goal is to demonstrate your own research and thinking about a subject, ‘not create a patchwork of borrowed ideas’” (Procter, 2006)**

Procter, M. (2006). How Not to Plagiarize Home Page.  
University of Toronto.  
<<http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/plagsep.html>>



**“There is another reason why plagiarism is so wrong and that is to pass off the thoughts of (another person) as one’s own ... is to assume that I do not have any thoughts, or that my thoughts are of less value than someone else’s. This is a model of a student who is an automaton without a single thought in their head, without an idea, a position or an opinion and who simply repeats what they have been told.”**

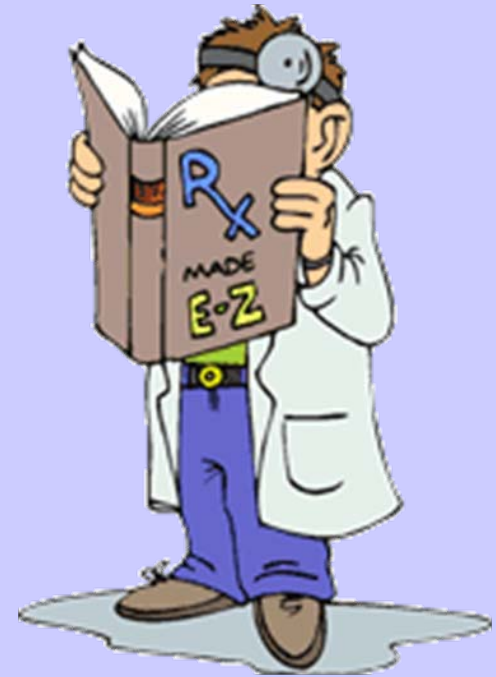
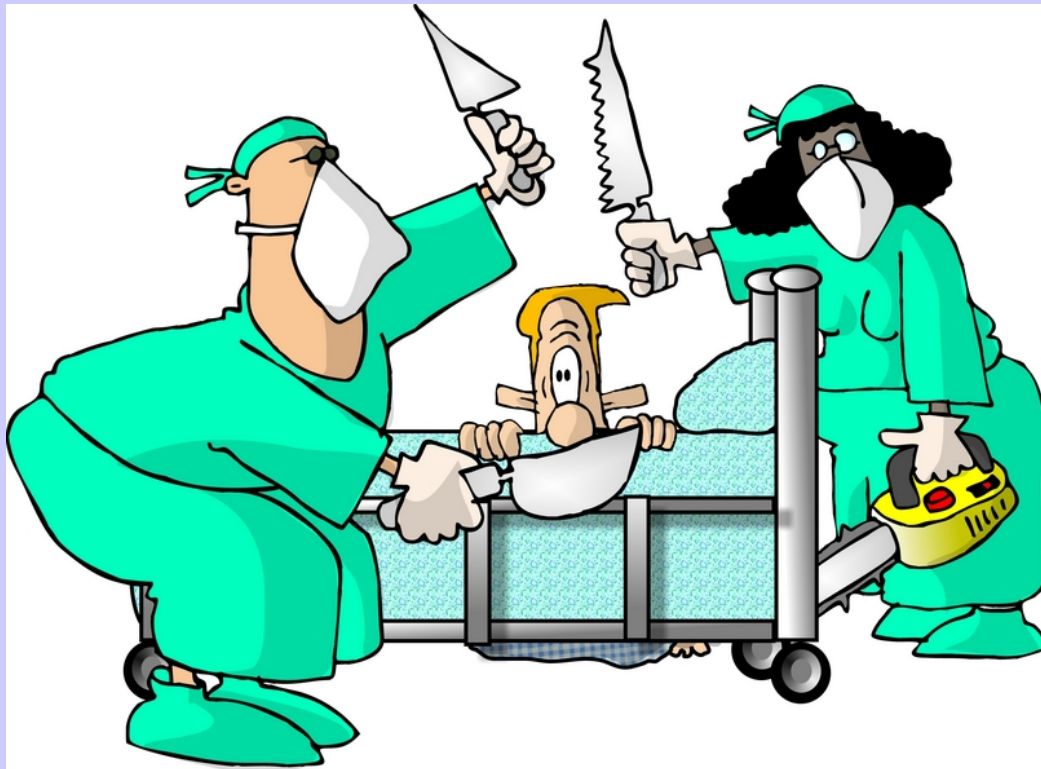
**“... [plagiarism] is an act of violation of my own integrity.”**

**“To use other people’s ideas ... will mean I have lost an opportunity to learn and to think and speak my own thoughts. I have thrown away the very thing that I came to university to develop: my capacity to think for myself!”**

(Student Learning, Murdoch University, Perth, Western Australia)

**“Ask yourself this: would you want to be treated by a doctor who passed medical school by cheating?”**

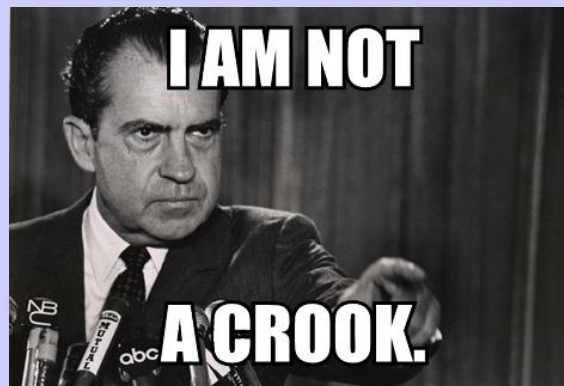
(<http://tlt.its.psu.edu/plagiarism/tutorial>)





In summary, if you plagiarize, your professors and peers will think of you as:

- unethical
  - dishonorable
    - a liar
      - a cheat
        - a fraud



**Gee, maybe taking an essay course wasn't  
such a good idea ...**



# RELAX ...



There are resources to help you identify and avoid plagiarism:

Western Libraries. Provides information on how to correctly cite bibliographic references in various academic disciplines:

[www.lib.uwo.ca/help/cite\\_references.html](http://www.lib.uwo.ca/help/cite_references.html)

Western's Writing Support Centre:

[www.sdc.uwo.ca/writing/](http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/writing/)

Plagiarism: What It is and How to Recognize and Avoid It

<http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml#plagiarized>

Is It Plagiarism Yet?

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/02/>

How Not to Plagiarize

<http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/plagsep.html>

Safe Practices

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/03/>