

Defining and Avoiding Plagiarism
The Department of Counselor Education and School Psychology
The University of Toledo

The faculty in the Department of Counselor Education and School Psychology developed this document on plagiarism to help students understand what constitutes plagiarism and to help students avoid plagiarizing. In your coursework, you will frequently be asked to write papers or give presentations in which you will be drawing upon the literature in our profession; understanding and discussing the ideas of others is vital to professional academic work. Professional behavior must also reflect the knowledge of when and how to give credit to others, and this document will give you some guidelines for doing so.

Defining Plagiarism

This document is an expansion of the information found in the *APA Manual* (APA, 2001) and *The University of Toledo 2004-2006 General Catalog* (The University of Toledo, n.d.). In this catalog, plagiarism is given as one example of academic dishonesty, and is defined as “representing the words, ideas or information of another person as one’s own and not offering proper documentation” (p. 27). Plagiarism is unethical behavior; The American Counseling Association Code of Ethics states in Section G.5.b. that “Counselors do not plagiarize; that is, they do not present another person’s work as their own work” (ACA, 2005, p. 18).

Plagiarism can be very obvious, such as when a student copies someone else’s paper for a class assignment or copies information from a website without appropriate citation. It can also be subtler, such as paraphrasing someone’s words or ideas without properly citing the source. The examples contained in this document are intended to help students understand both the obvious and the more subtle forms of plagiarism, and to give students information about how to avoid committing plagiarism.

Avoiding Plagiarism

If you are using another’s words or ideas in a paper, manuscript, presentation, and so forth, you must acknowledge the source of the words/ideas.

If you want to incorporate another person's ideas in your own writing you must either put the idea in your own words or use direct quotes. And, no matter whether you use quotes or paraphrasing, you must acknowledge the original source by properly citing the original author. (Western Washington University, n.d., p. 2).

To avoid plagiarism, you must give credit whenever you use [1] another person’s ideas, opinion, or theory; [2] any facts, statistics, graphs, drawings – any pieces of information – that are not common knowledge; [3] quotations of another person’s

actual spoken or written words; or [4] paraphrase of another person's spoken or written word. (Indiana University, n.d., ¶2)

Examples of Plagiarism and Appropriate Citations

The following examples demonstrate proper and improper citations; for more information on appropriate citations and the use of quotations, refer to Sections 3.34-3.41 of the *APA Manual* (APA, 2001).

Here are two direct quotes from a recent article that we will use to illustrate examples of plagiarism and proper paraphrasing. Note the first is a block quote because it is over 40 words.

On the basis of the current study and similar studies, it is clear that the need for systematic, comprehensive coverage of substance abuse issues in counselor preparation has been well established. The most appropriate method for providing this training has yet to be determined. Future research could address the feasibility of the three methods presented in this article for including substance abuse training in CACREP standards. (Salyers, Ritchie, Luellen, & Roseman, 2005, p. 41)

The majority of respondents rated the inclusion of substance abuse training in counselor education as important, and a majority (84.5%) reported that they offered substance abuse courses (Salyers, Ritchie, Luellen, & Roseman, 2005, p. 37).

For any citation that you include in your text, also include a full reference in your reference list at the end of the paper. For example:

Salyers, K.M., Ritchie, M.H., Luellen, W.S., & Roseman, C.P. (2005). Inclusion of substance abuse training in CACREP-accredited programs. *Counselor Education and Supervision, 45*, 30-42.

Direct Copying

Directly copying another person's words without citation is an obvious example of plagiarism. It is improper to directly quote a paragraph, a sentence, or even a key phrase without citing the source.

Plagiarism:

It is clear that the need for systematic, comprehensive coverage of substance abuse issues in counselor preparation has been well established.

You may use another person's words allowing that you properly cite them. For example, a proper citation for the above would be:

“. . . it is clear that the need for systematic, comprehensive coverage of substance abuse issues in counselor preparation has been well established” (Salyers, Ritchie, Luellen, & Roseman, 2005, p. 41).

Improperly Paraphrasing

Instead of directly quoting a passage you may wish to paraphrase an idea or passage using your own words. If you use exact words or phrases from the original source it is still plagiarism. You cannot simply replace a few words in a passage. It is plagiarism to cut and paste sentences or paragraphs from articles and change a few words.

Plagiarism:

On the basis of several studies, clearly there is a need for systematic, comprehensive coverage of substance abuse issues in counselor preparation.

In the above example, the original sentence was used almost in its entirety with only the beginning clause changed and the ending changed. This constitutes plagiarism, as does the lack of citation of the source.

Plagiarism:

According to current studies, there is a need for systematic, comprehensive coverage of substance abuse issues in counselor training, but the best method for providing this training has yet to be found (Salyers, Ritchie, Luellen, & Roseman, 2005).

In this example, the paraphrased passage is attributed to the source, but it still uses original passages and mere substitution of words and, thus, is still plagiarism. It should either be completely restated in your own words, or quoted directly from the original and properly cited.

Plagiarism:

The inclusion of training for addictions counseling is vital within counselor education curricula according to current research.

This example appropriately paraphrases (puts the original in other words), but neglects to cite the source.

Properly cited:

The inclusion of training for addictions counseling is vital within counselor education curricula according to current research (Salyers et al., 2005).

Properly cited:

The inclusion of “systematic, comprehensive coverage” of addictions counseling is vital within counselor education curricula according to current research (Salyers et al., 2005, p. 41).

It is proper to include exact passages if they are identified by quotation marks and properly cited which includes citing the page for the direct quote.

What needs to be cited?

Any fact, idea, or research finding that is not common knowledge needs to be properly cited. Facts that are readily available for verification (e.g., the capital of Canada is Ottawa) do not need a citation. If you are unsure of whether something is common knowledge it is a good idea to go ahead and cite the source where you found it.

Plagiarism:

Most counselor education programs offer substance abuse courses.

This is not common knowledge, but is the finding of a recently published survey of counselor education programs. The proper way to cite this is:

Properly cited:

Most counselor education programs offer substance abuse courses (Salyers, Ritchie, Luellen, & Roseman, 2005, p. 37).

Does not require a citation:

The University of Toledo's Counselor Education and School Psychology Department offers CACREP-accredited programs in Community Counseling, School Counseling and doctoral-level Counselor Education.

Patricia Arredondo was president of ACA in 2005-2006

The University of Toledo's School Psychology program is approved by the National Association for School Psychologists.

These facts may not be known by everyone, but in all three cases the information is generally accessible to the public and not the result of a specific study or publication.

Consequences of Plagiarism

Students are expected to behave in a responsible and professional manner while functioning in classes. Failure to conform one's behavior to acceptable standards of practice (e.g., avoidance of plagiarism) shall be considered cause for dismissal from the department and possibly from the university.

Acknowledgements

The format/structure of this document was adapted in part from statements about plagiarism on the websites of Indiana University and Western Washington University Department of Sociology.

References

American Counseling Association. (2005). *ACA code of ethics*. Alexandria, VA: Author.

American Psychological Association. (2001). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Indiana University. (n.d.). *Plagiarism: What it is and how to recognize and avoid it*. Retrieved February 1, 2006, from <http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml>.

The University of Toledo (n.d.). *The University of Toledo 2004-2006 General Catalog*. Toledo, OH: Author.

Western Washington University, Department of Sociology. (n.d.). *The Student's Guide to Avoiding Plagiarism*. Retrieved February 1, 2006, from <http://www.wvu.edu/depts/soc/plagiarism.PDF>.