

Academic Honesty

Cheating is both morally wrong and academically unacceptable. Academic integrity is necessary in an institution that provides a worthwhile education. The responsibility for academic integrity and honesty is ultimately yours. The following guidelines may clarify what counts as cheating or academic dishonesty:

The two main types of academic dishonesty are *cheating* (including enabling another student to cheat) and *plagiarism*.

Cheating is the dishonest or unauthorized use of materials for academic works, such as:

Copying another's papers or notes during an exam; talking about a test or looking at another's paper during an exam; altering a graded exam or paper without informing the instructor and resubmitting it for re-grading; gaining unauthorized access to past exams from a course; removing tests from a classroom or office without prior consent; discussing an exam you have taken with other students, either from your class or from another section of the same course, who have yet to take that exam; providing false or exaggerated excuses to postpone due dates; lying to an instructor or college official to improve your grade or to get special privileges; forging a signature on any college document; altering or falsifying any official record; submitting work done in another class without prior permission of both instructors; having another do your work for a course (including unauthorized collaboration); or enabling another student to do any of the above.

Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of another person's work (words, ideas, data, etc.) in a graded or published piece or in a speech. The following are examples of plagiarism:

- copying all or parts of another person's paper, article, or notes and representing it as your own
- submitting a paper copied in full or in part from one purchased from a paper writing service or obtained electronically
- failing to fully cite (author, article title, book or journal, page number, date of publication) each instance where you've incorporated another's *ideas* or quoted words into your own written or oral work. (Note: you must cite specific ideas and information, not just exact quotes. Often summary and paraphrases you make of another's writing, research or words ought to be cited, as well.)

Students may plagiarize for many reasons: they fear failure, they don't manage their time well enough to complete the work on time, or they may see the course or documentation or the consequences of cheating as unimportant.

Plagiarism may be the result of *misuse of sources*, defined as writers citing information incorrectly or incompletely. In this case, the author makes a good faith effort to acknowledge the sources, but because this is a learning process, a student author may make errors in documentation and integrating the quotes and paraphrases into their own work. Students may not be aware of different contexts for crediting sources. Errors of this sort are still considered plagiarism, however. If unsure whether or not to cite a source, ask MAX Center writing tutors, who can assist you with citation at any point in your writing process. Those who are just entering college, students from other cultures, or those who are more familiar with non-academic working environments are examples of people who may need to learn more about how to acknowledge sources in academic work.

The following suggestions will help you use sources correctly:

1. Start by taking honest notes on note cards, putting ideas into your own words (keep in mind that even these may need to be cited), or using clearly noted direct quotes so that you will remember to cite them in your paper. You'll find it easier to create an honest paper by taking the time to think and write about the ideas in your own words rather than simply highlighting the sources.
2. Cite ideas that are paraphrased or summarized in your paper as well as direct quotes.
3. Use a handbook for the documentation style you have chosen to use or are required to use and follow it consistently.
4. Work on analyzing and synthesizing the material from your sources. Once you have discovered the purpose of your paper, you can begin to develop your own language with which to discuss the ideas of others honestly. (Dossin)

In general, avoid any behavior that you would feel ashamed of if it were public. If you feel you are unable to meet the expectations of the college, your parents, or any instructor without cheating, then you should talk with your advisor, the dean of students, your R.A., a counselor at Winton, or a tutor in the MAX Center. You will not meet anyone's expectations, including your own, by acting dishonestly.

For Macalester College's rules of academic honesty, please refer to this web site:
<http://www.macalester.edu/~dstudent/handbook/academic_policies.html>.

For additional information on how to document sources and how to avoid plagiarism, please refer to *Writing at Macalester College: A Handbook for First Year Students*, pages 22-23, also available at this web address: <<http://www.macalester.edu/max/fym>>.

Sources for this handout

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