

# Content Avoiding Plagiarism

The UVSC “Student Rights and Responsibilities” states, “Each student is expected to maintain academic ethics and avoid dishonesty in all its forms, including but not limited to, cheating and plagiarism . . .” (UVSC Catalog 2003-2004, 29).

## WHAT IS PLAGIARISM?

Plagiarism is defined as “the act of appropriating any other person’s or group’s ideas or work (written, computerized, artistic, etc.) or portions thereof and passing them off as the product of one’s own work in any academic exercise or activity” (UVSC Catalog 2003-2004, 29). Plagiarism may be either intentional or unintentional.

Types of plagiarism include the following:

- ◀ Claiming that any portion of another person’s writing or ideas is your own work. It does not matter if the material is purchased, borrowed, or stolen – it is still plagiarism.
- ◀ Summarizing (briefly stating an author’s main ideas), paraphrasing (putting the author’s words into your own words), or quoting (copying specific words, sentences, and/or paragraphs) without crediting the source, accurately citing the information, and fairly representing the author’s intentions.
- ◀ Using facts (statistics, research findings, graphics, etc.) that are not common knowledge without citing the source you obtained them from.

You need to give credit for anything that is not common knowledge. Common knowledge is information that can easily be found in a wide variety of resources (i.e. birth dates or places).

## WHY SHOULD I GIVE CREDIT TO OTHER AUTHORS?

Giving credit to authors adds to your credibility as a writer. It demonstrates that you have done research and know what other people are saying about your subject. Responding to others’ ideas gives you authority and establishes you as a participant in the academic discussion. Providing citations also gives readers all the necessary information to locate your sources for further research.

Plagiarism destroys credibility because ideas are owned by the person or group who originated them, and using another author’s ideas constitutes dishonest behavior. In contrast, using your own ideas will create pride and ownership in your own work.

## HOW DO I AVOID PLAGIARISM?

**Be accurate in note taking and when cutting and pasting from the Internet.**

- ◀ Distinguish between quotes, paraphrases, and summaries, so you can reference each appropriately.
- ◀ Clarify the source of each quote, paraphrase, or summary. Include author, title of work, and page numbers along with pertinent publication information.

**Be careful when writing your paper.**

- ◀ Quotes, paraphrases, summaries, and ideas from other authors all need to be cited.
- ◀ Quotes must be in quotation marks, use the exact wording as the original quote, and convey the meaning intended by the author.
- ◀ Paraphrases and summaries need to be in your own words and must be true to the author’s ideas.
- ◀ Always include an accurate *Works Cited/References/Bibliography* page according to the format you are using.

**REMEMBER: When in doubt, cite the material.**