

**FOSTERING ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AMONG STUDENTS:
A FACULTY AND STUDENT RESOURCE GUIDE**

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I. INTRODUCTION

The faculty of the Graduate School of Education recognize the importance of helping students develop a sense of integrity regarding their academic work. The faculty further recognize that integrity regarding academic work is only one aspect of ethical behavior important to instill in persons planning to enter the profession of education. There is an obvious parallel between the ethics of honesty in academic work and the ethics of professional practice. During their preparation, students should also be educated about ethical behavior related to professional practice. Thus, the Graduate School of Education faculty has a dual responsibility, both as educators and as scholars, to ensure that students of education learn ethical standards of behavior in both academic work and professional practice.

Although written standards exist in the education professions regarding ethical practice (e.g., CEC Code of Ethics), there is no such document in the University or in the Graduate School of Education to guide students in their academic work. The primary intent of this document is to provide Graduate School of Education guidelines on ethical behavior for the purpose of helping students develop a sense of integrity about academic work. This document is also intended to serve as a reference and instructional resource for faculty and students on ethical behavior related to both academic work and professional practice. Titled FOSTERING ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AMONG STUDENTS--A Faculty and Student Resource Guide, this document demonstrates a proactive approach on the part of the Graduate School of Education faculty regarding the ethical behavior expected of students in our graduate programs.

II. ACADEMIC HONESTY AND INTEGRITY AT PSU

Background

The following policies and discussion are based on: a) guidelines developed by PSU's Graduate School of Social Work for inclusion in their Graduate Student Handbook (1991), the University's Graduate Policy on Academic Honesty and Integrity (*PSU Bulletin*, 2001-02), and materials developed and compiled by the Graduate School of Education's Program and Policy Committee (1989-90; 1990-91)

Graduate School of Education faculty members generally handle questions of academic dishonesty in their own ways, and most often in private with the individual student. Without clear guidelines and procedures, a student problem can quickly become a faculty member problem. Academic dishonesty needs to be handled in a uniform manner, with expectations and consequences being clearly communicated to students. This procedure would minimize the possibility that faculty members could be charged with unfair treatment for handling a question of academic dishonesty more stringently than a colleague. Additionally, faculty would have guidelines for handling difficult or ambiguous situations. Finally, students would be protected from unfair or coercive treatment.

Definitions and Discussion

Portland State University, through its Graduate Policy on Academic Honesty and Integrity, provides general information for graduate students regarding the various forms of academic

dishonesty, plus the university procedures for dealing with violations of such policy. These various forms of academic dishonesty, as defined by the University, are presented below. Following the definitions, instructional suggestions provided by the School of Social Work on helping students avoid plagiarism are discussed. Lastly, selections from Hacker (1989) on summarizing and paraphrasing are presented to illustrate one of many instructional resources faculty might use in teaching students to employ ethical writing standards.

Graduate Policy on Academic Honesty and Integrity

The following discussion and definition of Academic Honesty and Integrity is published in the 2001-02 *Portland State University Bulletin*:

Graduate students have a primary, unique relationship and responsibility to the faculty of the academic departments, the faculty upon whose recommendations graduate degrees are awarded. A major feature of the graduate students responsibilities to the faculty is the adherence to academic honesty. The Graduate Policy on Academic Honesty and Integrity assumes that the student is honest, that all coursework and examinations represent the students own work, and that all documents supporting the students admission and graduation are accurate and complete. Academic honesty is a requirement for all graduate activities. Any violation of academic honesty and integrity is grounds for academic action. In addition, a student found in violation of this policy is subject to disciplinary sanction as provided in the University Student Conduct Code.

Violations of the policy include but are not limited to:

1. Cheating in Examinations and Course Assignments

The willful use or provision to others of unauthorized materials in written or oral examinations or in course assignments.

2. Plagiarism

The appropriation of language, ideas, and products of another author or artist and representation of them as ones own original work; failure to provide proper identification of source data; use of purchased or borrowed papers in graduate courses without complete identification of the source.

3. Selling or Offering to Sell Course Assignment Materials

Selling or offering to sell material to another person; knowing, or under circumstances having reason to know, that the whole or a substantial part of the materials is intended to be submitted in fulfillment of a course requirement.

4. Academic Fraud

Furnishing false or incomplete information to the University with the intent to deceive; forging, altering, or misusing University documents or academic forms which serve as the basis for admission, course study, or graduation; misrepresenting a person's identity to an instructor or other University official. (pp. 61-62)

Suggestions for Avoiding Plagiarism

The 1991 Graduate Student Handbook, developed by Portland State University's School of Social Work, provides useful suggestions for dealing with proper paraphrasing, quotations, and citations of secondary sources:

Citations must be provided for all direct quotations and paraphrases, borrowed ideas, and facts that are not general knowledge. Opinions are ideas that are not yet taken for granted, and must be documented. It is unnecessary to document facts that are generally familiar and can be found in any commonly used source, but less accessible facts must be referenced (Crews, 1984).

In order to avoid plagiarism, one must be familiar with the principles of proper paraphrasing, quotation, and citation of secondary sources.

Paraphrasing. Paraphrasing is the expression of another person's ideas in your own words. A good paraphrase is generally shorter and clearer than the original statement. Weidenborner and Caruso (1982) note that paraphrasing is improper when only a few words are changed and there are only minor changes in sentence patterns. Crews (1984) points out that paraphrasing an idea or someone's opinion does not turn it into public property or a common fact. Both types of material must be acknowledged in the reference list.

Quotation. Direct quotation should be kept to a minimum and used only for very important material. Quotations should be brief and combined with paraphrases for clarity. Most quotations are incorporated in text and enclosed by double quotation marks. Longer quotations are set off from the text as a free-standing block with no quotation marks. The source of a direct quotation must always be cited, and includes the author, year, and page number.

Weidenborner, and Caruso (1982) note that one can repeat without quotation marks specific numbers, special terms for which there is no simple synonym, and very simple words that would require bizarre substitutions. Quotation marks are required for even a single word, however, if it is especially colorful or represents the original writer's judgment.

Secondary Sources. A primary source is a writer's original product, reproduced in his or her own words. In contrast, secondary sources are those which use or comment on primary sources. Whenever possible, primary sources should be consulted and cited in scholarly work. As VanLeunen (1978) points out, it is never acceptable to treat a secondary reference as if it were primary. If you cannot confirm a reference in its primary source and your only access is through a secondary source, you must refer to the secondary source as well as the primary one. For example, if Adams summarizes or comments on the results of an unpublished or unavailable study by Brown, the Brown reference is most available in a secondary source, the Adams book. In text, the citation is: Brown (cited in Adams, 1980). The citation in the reference list is: Adams, J.B. (1980). Social work effectiveness research. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin (pp. 8-9).

Instructional Resource and Examples

In A Writers Reference by Diana Hacker (1989), plagiarism is addressed and various examples (correct and incorrect) are presented to assist the writer in citing sources, summarizing, and paraphrasing. Following are selections from this book, which may serve as examples for use by faculty and students:

ORIGINAL SOURCE

Public and scientific interest in the question of apes' ability to use language first soared some 15 years ago when Washoe, a chimpanzee raised like a human child by R Allen Gardner and Beatrice Gardner of the University of Nevada, learned to make hand signs for many words and even seemed to be making short sentences. -Erik Eckholm

SUMMARY

Interest in the ability of apes to use language was sparked in the early seventies, when a chimpanzee named Washoe was taught sign language by R. Allen Gardner and Beatrice Gardner (Eckholm B7).

PARAPHRASE

Interest in the ability of apes to learn language mounted in the early seventies, with reports that Washoe, a chimpanzee raised and trained by professors R. Allen Gardner and Beatrice Gardner, had learned words in sign language and may even have created short sentences (Eckholm B7). (p. 170)

Hacker (1989) also stresses the importance of using your own words to summarize or paraphrase the words of another writer. In her book, she demonstrates acceptable and unacceptable examples of paraphrasing:

ORIGINAL VERSION

If the existence of a signing ape was unsettling for linguists, it was also startling news for animal behaviorists.

UNACCEPTABLE BORROWING OF WORDS

An ape who knew sign language unsettled linguists and startled animal behaviorists (Davis 26).

UNACCEPTABLE BORROWING OF STRUCTURE

If the presence of a sign-language-using chimp was disturbing for scientists studying language, it was also surprising to scientists studying animal behavior (Davis 26).

ACCEPTABLE PARAPHRASE

When they learned of an ape's ability to use sign language, both linguists and animal behaviorists were taken by surprise (Davis 26). (p. 171)

Faculty Responsibility for In-house Resolution

"Allegations of violation of the graduate policy on academic honesty and integrity not resolved within the department (or appropriate academic unit) shall be submitted to the dean of Graduate Studies" (*Portland State University Bulletin*, 2001-02, p. 62). For purposes of this guide, attempts to resolve such allegations must first be carried out at the department or some other level(s) within the Graduate School of Education. Subsequent procedures for handling unresolved allegations within the Graduate School of Education are outlined on page 62 in the 2001-02 *Portland State University Bulletin*. The following are recommendations for faculty to follow in addressing violations within the Graduate School of Education.

Recommended faculty responsibilities and procedures include:

1. Distribution of policy materials on Academic Honesty and Integrity when students are admitted to the Graduate School of Education.
2. Encouragement of students to seek clarification regarding correct attribution of any material.
3. In case of suspected violation of the Policy on Academic Honesty and Integrity, faculty members should treat the situation with confidentiality.
4. Faculty members may contact the student to discuss concerns, and may ask the student to provide verification of specific citations or material.
5. If there has been a violation, faculty members may use their own discretion to determine consequences. Individual faculty have the authority to resolve the situation within the course context and are encouraged to use the following guidelines:
 - a. If plagiarism is the result of minor lapses and a pattern does not exist, the student may be asked to re-write the paper. The student would be given an "I" in the course and a specific date would be negotiated for the completion of the re-written paper. If the paper is not received by this date, the grade would be changed to a "D" or an "F."
 - b. If the plagiarism is extensive (i.e., there is a pattern), the student may be given a "D" or an "F" and credit would be denied for the course in which the violation occurred. If this occurs in a required course, a substitute course must be taken to fulfill the credit requirements.
 - c. Faculty resolution of the situation only involves academic consequences. In addition, students may be subject to disciplinary actions as provided in the University Student Conduct Code.

6. Faculty members must inform the department chair of the situation and its resolution, and of any concerns regarding further action with the student.
7. If a violation of academic honesty occurs on more than one occasion, and the student is given a "D" or an "F" in these courses, the student may be disqualified for a period of one to three calendar years. The student must petition for readmission after completion of the period of academic disqualification.
8. Students who are dissatisfied with the process of resolution or the final course grade may initiate a grievance with the department chair. This student's case may be referred to the Vice President for Student Affairs for further action.

III. A PROACTIVE APPROACH TO THE PROBLEM OF PLAGIARISM

Reasons Students Plagiarize

Students, as adults or children, tend to engage in undesirable behavior for a number of reasons. One should not always assume, for example, that they "misbehave" simply because they are not nice people or that they are "lazy," "crazy" or "stupid." The following are offered as possible explanations for student plagiarism (e.g., copying someone else's ideas and/or work and representing it as your own). Since behavior does not occur in a vacuum, we must assume that in addition to personal variables (i.e., student attributes) there are also environmental factors that contribute to one's behavior. These factors are also discussed below along with some suggestions for prevention of the problem.

1. They don't know what behavior is expected of them. Students may know what plagiarism is but they don't know that it is unacceptable behavior. An environmental contributing factor is that faculty may be inconsistent in enforcing (or even discussing) the rule, so students are often confused about whether it is permissible or not. Faculty may also provide inappropriate models (in lectures or in handouts).
2. They are not aware of when they are engaging in plagiarism and when they are not. The student's knowledge of what constitutes plagiarism may be fuzzy or totally lacking. Again, an environmental factor may be inconsistent or conflicting input and/or modeling from faculty leading to more confusion in the student.
3. They may not be able to control their behavior. These are typically students who are under enormous pressure (either externally or self-imposed) and their performance anxiety clouds their better judgment and pushes them into plagiarism. An environmental factor may be the rigid and unrealistic demands and/or standards set by faculty.
4. They may not know how to engage in appropriate behavior. For example, these students may not know how to paraphrase the work of others and feel compelled to simply copy it. An environmental factor may be the acceptance of this practice as well as the lack of instruction in paraphrasing.

5. They may not know the consequences of their actions. Many students are totally unaware of the University policy regarding plagiarism. They may know that they are breaking the rules when they engage in plagiarism but are unaware of the seriousness of the consequences. An environmental factor may be that faculty do not call these consequences to the attention of the student. Faculty may simply assume that students will read the University catalogue cover to cover or that by raising the issue of plagiarism in class, they are demonstrating a lack of trust in the student.
6. They don't consider the consequences of plagiarism aversive or at least more aversive than the consequences of not cheating. While most students would consider the negative consequences of plagiarism aversive, they are too far removed from it and it tends to lose its power. When they are faced with the prospect of having to turn in an assignment in a matter of days (or hours), they have difficulty thinking about some consequence that may or may not occur several days (or weeks) in the future. Right now, the consequence of cheating (i.e., getting the work over with) is, because of its immediacy, more reinforcing than disciplinary action is punishing. An environmental contributing factor may be faculty accepting whatever work students turn in and not requiring rewrites until it is acceptable. If students knew the assignment they turned in would not be accepted until it met pre-specified criteria, they might not be in such a rush to submit anything just to get it out of the way.
7. They may endorse beliefs that are compatible with cheating (or at least make cheating behavior more acceptable) and/or do not endorse beliefs that are compatible with doing ones own work. These students may hold a belief that is compatible with plagiarism [e.g., "Everybody else does it, why shouldn't I?"; "Everybody else gets away with it, why can't I?"; "Who's going to find out? Ill never get caught."; "Cheating is sometimes OK as long as you don't get caught."; "The end (an A or a passing grade) justifies the means (cheating)."; "They wouldn't really kick me out of college just for copying a few lines from a book."; "It's OK to cheat on an assignment if the assignment is too hard (or unreasonable or irrelevant or boring)"]. Students may hold other beliefs that make it more likely that they will cheat [e.g., "My ideas are no good (have no value). To get a good grade on this assignment, I've got to use somebody else's ideas."; "No matter how hard I try, Ill never learn this stuff. Its better if I just copy this out of the book."; "She (he) doesn't listen to anybody else's ideas, Id better tell her (him) what she (he) wants to hear even if I don't believe it."]. Environmental factors include giving students assignments that are overly difficult or unreasonable, irrelevant or not stimulating or challenging; looking the other way when students do cheat; not teaching professionalism directly; not accepting students ideas or giving them the opportunity to disagree or express their ideas in an open forum.

Suggestions and Recommendations for Faculty

The following information includes suggestions and recommendations for Graduate School of Education faculty to consider in preventing plagiarism among students. These guidelines represent a proactive approach on the part of the faculty in dealing with academic honesty and integrity. Instead of focusing on the problem and consequences for students who plagiarize, these suggestions focus on the importance of education and provide faculty with various methods to promote ethical behavior among students. Such an approach better ensures that students will learn ethical standards of behavior both academically and in future practice as professionals.

1. Faculty should have a set of specific standards regarding plagiarism and what constitutes acceptable written work (e.g., papers, abstracts, projects, take-home assessments) completed outside of class. When such standards are lacking, vague, or are not communicated to students, they may be confused about what is or is not acceptable or they may assume that the instructor does not care whether or not they represent other peoples work as their own.
2. At the time written work is assigned, faculty should make an effort to discuss with students what is and is not considered plagiarism. They should not assume students know. Many students inadvertently commit plagiarism because they do not know APA guidelines regarding citations (i.e., what does and does not need to be cited). Others don't know how to cite and may not bother to look up guidelines. Giving students instruction in this area at the time of the assignment would, at the very least, eliminate excuses later on (e.g., "I didn't know I was supposed to cite that" or "I didn't know how to cite that").
3. At the time written work is assigned, faculty should make an effort to provide students with acceptable models of work from past classes. This would eliminate the possibility of students drawing their own conclusions about what is and is not acceptable work. They can't say "I didn't know what you wanted." Modeling is also an empirically proven teaching tool.
4. Faculty should discuss or, at the very least, provide students with written material regarding PSU and GSE policy regarding plagiarism. This should be done at the same time assignments are given. An effort should be made to present the subject in a positive light focusing on the importance of professionalism in graduate work and how it relates to their roles as educators of (and models for) children and youth. The material should not be presented in a negative or punitive vein (e.g., "I better not catch any of you doing this or else!").
5. Faculty may need to help students access writing style manuals (e.g., APA guidelines). Efforts should be made to help students understand the rationale behind these guidelines. Many students don't understand the need for following a set of guidelines and may see it as simply satisfying a "picky" instructor.

6. The GSE should make an effort for all faculty to follow these guidelines so that individual faculty are not singled out for criticism. The same is true for the entire issue of plagiarism. The GSE faculty should all support whatever policy is adopted, not simply by paying "lip service" to it but by their actions.
7. Faculty should make an attempt to infuse content regarding professionalism in all courses so that it becomes part of the manifest curriculum (instead of the latent curriculum) in the GSE. Not all students learn professionalism vicariously or secondhand. It should be taught directly in as many classes as possible.
8. Faculty should provide environments in which students are not compelled to pass off others work as their own in order to earn a passing grade. Faculty should be flexible and take individual differences into account. They should also be accessible and provide help and encouragement when needed. Whenever possible (and appropriate) students should have the opportunity to redo work to improve their performance. This means more work for faculty but in the long run, it will result in more learning for students. It would also provide them with a model of how to teach their own students. If at first you don't succeed, try again.
9. Faculty should encourage collaborative efforts among students. Students can learn a great deal from each other. However, sometimes there is a tendency to let one person in the group do the bulk of the work, especially where a finished product is concerned. Students may need some guidelines about what is acceptable and unacceptable collaboration.
10. Faculty should try to establish the credibility of their students early in the term (before problems might arise with work assignments). Making an effort to get to know individual students can foster trust and help eliminate doubts about the credibility of student work.
11. Faculty should also attempt to identify as soon as possible those students who might have difficulty with certain assignments. This can be accomplished by surveying students at the outset of the course. In addition to the standard information faculty collects (e.g., name, telephone and SSN, major, what they want/expect to learn, etc.), students could be asked to evaluate themselves in terms of their strengths and weaknesses and learning styles. For example, which types of course activities do they have difficulty with: in-class assessments, oral presentations, term papers, etc. This information could alert faculty to potential problems and lead to early intervention. Students who have difficulty writing term papers could be given extra encouragement and support in the process. This could help to eliminate the possibility of students engaging in plagiarism out of ignorance and/or need.
12. Faculty should encourage and use peer editing and review groups so that students can have the opportunity to evaluate each other's work. This can help them become more knowledgeable about the writing process and also give them the opportunity to recognize plagiarism and to advise their peers as to how to avoid it. The best way to learn something is to teach it to somebody else.

13. Faculty should give students the opportunity to practice paraphrasing during course sessions. Have students paraphrase concepts taught during lectures to each other. Tell them to turn to the person next to them and, in their own words, state the concept communicated by the speaker. Then have the listener rephrase what was said to him or her by the speaker. Paraphrasing develops comprehension skills so that students won't feel compelled to copy statements word for word from reading material.
14. Survey student knowledge and attitudes regarding plagiarism to determine the extent of the problem. Learning more about the problem will better enable faculty to treat it.
15. Faculty must present an acceptable model for students. They should be careful to avoid acts of plagiarism, regardless of how trivial, at all times. When giving students a handout that includes another writer's work, faculty should be careful to cite that writer. When quoting or even paraphrasing another person's ideas during a lecture, faculty should give credit to that person. This provides a model for students, by practicing what we preach, and also demonstrates how serious we are about the issue.

IV. ETHICS AND STANDARDS FOR PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

It has previously been stressed that, in addition to ethical behavior in academic work, graduate students should also be educated about ethical behavior related to professional practice. As future educators, they will be expected to adhere to the code of ethics and professional standards of practice required by the particular field of education they enter. As a case in point, the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) has adopted a set of "Standards for Professional Practice" that specify ethical behaviors expected of special educators in relation to: (a) exceptional persons and their families, (b) professional employment, and (c) the profession and to other professionals (CEC, 1983, pp. 205-209).

A set of Codes of Ethics and related performance standards employed by professional organizations with their membership is available to interested Graduate School of Education faculty. A listing of these organizations is presented in this section. It is intended that these Codes of Ethics might serve as a resource for faculty interested in including instruction on professional standards in their course work. This is not a complete listing, and it is recommended that examples of other professional codes be added to this resource. The current resource of Ethical Codes and Standards represent the following national organizations:

- American Association for Counseling and Development
- American Association of School Administrators
- American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
- American Psychological Association
- Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)
- National Association for the Education of Young Children
- National Association of Social Workers

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