Plagiarism is the intentional — or unintentional — implication that someone else’s thoughts, words, or research findings are your own. You must always give credit to the people whose ideas or words you are using.

Why Should I Avoid Plagiarism?

How would you feel if someone tried to pass your hard work off as their own? We can show respect for a writer’s contributions by giving credit to original work.

Proper citation creates a roadmap that your reader can use to find more information on a topic. Imagine that you are reading a fascinating paper on a subject of great importance to you — wouldn’t it be handy to have a list of resources that provide more detailed information?

What Are The Consequences of Plagiarism?

Plagiarism is defined as academic dishonesty in the “Code of Student Conduct.” Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action, and instructors are well within their rights to push for student expulsion. The disciplinary procedures for academic dishonesty are described in Section 5.36 of the Code, which can be found on the SHSU website.

Intentional Plagiarism

When students put their name on a paper purchased on the Internet — or when they claim ownership of pages copied from a book or website — they know they are cheating. Do not resort to these pathetic measures. Remember: we all have access to the same Internet.
Inadvertent Plagiarism

Inadvertent plagiarism occurs when a student commits one of the following careless mistakes:

- They quote, paraphrase, or summarize a source without proper citation.
- They adopt someone else’s methods or ideas without proper citation.
- They use the exact words from a source — and provide citation — but fail to put those words in quotation marks.
- They paraphrase a source — and provide citation — but the paraphrase is too similar to the original document.

Tips to Help You Avoid Plagiarism

- Cite the source of every quotation, paraphrase, or summary.
- Signal every quotation with quotation marks, even when you cite its source. Your reader needs to know exactly which words are not yours.
- Do not paraphrase too closely.
- Cite any ideas or methods that are not your own.
- When in doubt, cite.
- Think about it this way: if the person you borrowed from read your report, would she recognize your work — including paraphrases, summaries, and general ideas or methods — as her own?
- Material is probably common knowledge that does not require citation if: you have found the same information documented in at least five separate sources; you are confident your readers already know the information; the information could easily be found by anyone with general reference sources.