Plagiarism

What is Plagiarism?

• Plagiarism is a form of cheating
• When you plagiarize, you use someone else’s ideas, information or words as if they were your own
• This denies the original author credit for his or her work
• It is unethical and can be illegal
• In all cases, plagiarism is wrong

How does plagiarism happen?

• By mistake
  o Students may not keep track of their research materials carefully
  o They may not know how to quote, cite or paraphrase correctly
• On purpose
  o Students buy, borrow or steal a paper or parts of a paper
  o They deliberately cheat because they want a good grade, positive feedback or one less piece of work

Who cares?

• If you plagiarize, you are likely to get caught
• Professors are good at detecting plagiarism
  o It’s usually obvious when work is done by someone else
  o Many professors have access to software that helps detect and prove plagiarism
• Plagiarism damages your reputation and grades, and can eventually lead to expulsion from the university
• If you plagiarize habitually, you’ll miss out on learning important skills

How can I avoid plagiarism?

• Always give original authors credit for their facts, ideas, and wording.
  o Paraphrase or use quotation marks properly
  o Use proper in-text citations
  o Include a Works Cited page whenever you use sources
• For research papers, keep track of whose ideas are whose in your notes
• If you jot down the exact words from any source in your notes, put them in quotes so you don’t mistake them for your own words later on
What if I don’t know how to cite correctly?

- Visit the SALT Writers Lab
- Ask an instructor for help