

National-Louis University Policy On Academic Honesty

AP: 302 (10896)

Recommended: Academic Standards Committee	Date: February 20, 1996
Recommended: Faculty Senate	Date: March 20, 1996
Reaffirmed:	Date: September 18, 1996
Approved: President's Cabinet	Date: October 8, 1996

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 8, 1996

National-Louis University subscribes to the principle that academic quality and a productive learning environment are inextricably linked to academic honesty.

Like other colleges and universities, National-Louis University has expectations regarding academic honesty on the part of students enrolled for course work, faculty and staff, and, indeed, to professional people at all levels of academic activity.

With respect to the academic honesty of students, it is expected that all material submitted as part of any class exercise, in or out of class, is the actual work of the student whose name appears on the material or is properly documented otherwise. The concept of academic honesty includes plagiarism as well as receiving improper assistance. Students found to have engaged in academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary action and may be dismissed from the University.

When evidence of academic dishonesty is discovered, an established procedure (see below) of resolution will be activated to bring the matter to closure.

Procedure for Handling Incidents of Academic Dishonesty

1. A faculty member (or other university employee) who has reason to believe that a student has violated the university's policy on academic honesty has an unequivocal obligation to confront the student for an explanation and resolution.
2. The faculty member (or other university employee) shall arrange private meeting¹ with the student within fourteen days of the occurrence of the alleged incident of academic dishonesty or within fourteen days of the date he/she learned of the incident to (1) explain the allegation(s) of violation of the Policy on Academic Honesty, (2) present the reasons or evidence to support such allegations, and (3) provide a copy of the University's Policy on Academic Honesty. The desired outcome of this meeting shall be the identification of a mutually satisfactory remedy (see below) by which to correct the breach of the Policy on Academic

¹ It may be appropriate for the faculty member to have a witness present during the private meeting with the student.

- Honesty. The outcome of this meeting becomes a part of the official record only at such time as Step 3, herein below, is activated. If the faculty member (or other university employee) and the student are unable to agree mutually on an available remedy (see below), either party may petition for a formal hearing procedure to resolve the matter.
3. The petitioning party shall file a Petition for Hearing on Academic Dishonesty (hereinafter Petition) within twenty days of the private meeting described at Step 2, hereinabove. Said Petition shall be filed with the Chief Academic Officer of the University. The twenty-day period may be extended by the mutual consent of the parties, but in no event shall any such extension exceed the twenty-day period by more than forty days.
 4. The Chief Academic Officer, within ten days of receiving the petition, or such other time as may be mutually agreed among the parties, shall convene a hearing committee (hereinafter committee)² which shall hear and decide the matter. The petitioner's presence is required. An accused student shall have a right to appear at the hearing with or without an advocate. However, the absence of an advocate shall not abrogate the Committee's responsibility to proceed and reach resolution.
 5. The Committee shall evaluate all available evidence and materials, including the direct personal statements of the parties in attendance, including others who have direct knowledge of the matters under review. The Committee shall then in private session decide upon the remedy (see below) to be applied. That decision shall be reported within three days to the Chief Academic Officer who shall inform both parties in writing of the decision and place a copy of said notification in the student's file maintained by the Registrar.
 6. Either party shall have the right to file a written appeal of the Committee's decision. Said appeal shall be received in the Chief Academic Officer's office within fourteen days of the Committee's decision.
 7. The Chief Academic Officer shall act on said appeal within twenty-one days of receipt, using whatever means of fact-finding that may be available. All parties shall be notified of his/her decision. This action shall be the final administrative remedy available to resolve matters concerning academic dishonesty. Any remedy requiring further action by the President or Board of Trustees shall be carried out within a reasonable period of time.

Remedies

1. No further action.
2. Further investigation.

² The Hearing Committee shall be comprised of a hearing officer appointed by the Chief Academic Officer and two faculty members appointed by the Chair of the Faculty Senate. None of the above individuals may sit on the Committee if he/she is a party in the dispute.

3. Mediation by a third party.
4. Extra or repeated assignments.
5. Reexamination.
6. Lowered grade or no credit for assignment, examination thesis, course or internship.
7. Suspension from the University.
8. Dismissal from the University.
9. Rescission of an awarded certificate.
10. Recommendation to the Board of Trustees to rescind an awarded degree.

Note: Remedies #7 - #10 shall be imposed only by the President.

Time Lines:

<u>Day 1</u>	Date of alleged incident of academic dishonesty or the date the accusing party learned of said incident.
<u>Day 14</u>	Deadline for private meeting between accusing party and student.
<u>Day 34</u>	Deadline to petition Chief Academic Officer for a Hearing on Academic Dishonesty
<u>Day 44</u>	Deadline for the Chief Academic Officer to convene the Committee on Academic Standards.
<u>Day 47</u>	Deadline to report Committee's decision(s).
<u>Day 63</u>	Deadline to file written appeal of Committee's decision.
<u>Day 84</u>	Deadline for Chief Academic Officer to act on appeal.

Note: All days are calendar days; not working days.

Definitions and Guidelines

Plagiarism - In general, plagiarism is commonly defined as using the words or ideas of another person without proper acknowledgment. In previous times, the term "plagiarism" was applied only to unacknowledged borrowing from published or otherwise copyrighted work; today, it is generally agreed that the concept and term "plagiarism" can also apply to improper use of anyone's materials, whether or not that material has been previously published or copyrighted.

It is important to note that the definition does not limit the term "plagiarism" only to extensive borrowing (e.g., a sentence or more). A few words (or even one single word, if it is a key term or a freshly-coined term) can be considered plagiarism, if not properly attributed to the original author. Moreover -- and here is where many writers run into trouble -- ideas contained in the work of another, even if they are rewritten into new words, must be attributed to their original author unless they fall into the category of "Public Information," a term which will be explained shortly.

To summarize: 1) any verbatim reproduction of the work of another, no matter how brief, must be properly documented. 2) Any summary or paraphrase of the ideas of another, unless they are public information, must be properly documented.

By way of example, consider the following excerpt from a personal opinion essay appearing in *Newsweek* on September 24, 1984. Note that it is not "straight news" (which might be considered a "matter of public record"), but one person's viewpoint. It is entitled "Space Odysseys on Tight Budget" by Joseph N. Horodyski:

Further down the road and far more frightening is President Reagan's Star Wars program...which will cost hundreds of millions of dollars in its final form, place an unprecedented strain on this country's budget and lead to the eventual militarization of space, perhaps the last natural environment to feel man's violence. Faced with this prospect, American space science as an intellectual endeavor might cease to exist.

Almost everybody knows that quoting a sentence or more of Mr. Horodyski's ideas, without quote marks, would be plagiarism. However, these following samples would also qualify as plagiarism.

1. The use of key phrases:

Far more frightening is the Star Wars plan of President Reagan.
We could see the end of American space science as an intellectual endeavor.

2. The patch work of borrowed words and phrases:

Further down the road is the Star Wars plan which is far more frightening. Costing hundreds of billions of dollars, it will raise taxes and place an unprecedented strain on this country's budget. Thus space, the last natural environment, will be spoiled.

3. The unattributed use of ideas:

President Reagan's Star Wars program poses a still greater danger. If our country begins to see space as a military arena worth hundreds of billions of dollars to exploit, we may lose the concept of space exploration as a true intellectual science.

As they presently stand, all three of the above examples exhibit incorrect (and illegal) use of a source. What might be done, in each case, to correct the problem? In simple terms, the writer must make it clear that he is using a source and that he is not attempting to conceal that fact.

More specifically: In cases #1 and #2 the writer must first decide whether the phrases copied from the original are valuable enough as quotations to be kept as such. If so, each

word or phrase must be enclosed in quote marks and a formal or informal reference must be added as a footnote or in the text itself indicating the source. Handbooks or members of the faculty can supply various forms or suggestions for actually writing the documentation, whether it is a formal footnote or an informal explanation.

On the other hand, it is often the case that the quoted material is simply saving the writer the trouble of composing his own prose. In such cases it is better to eliminate the verbatim quotations entirely. This may well produce a situation like that of the third example; i.e., paraphrased, summarized, or otherwise borrowed ideas. In these cases no quote marks are necessary but the source must still be cited, perhaps near the end of the passage. Some brief phrase like "These ideas were discussed in _____" will tell the reader that the ideas appeared in some form in another person's work.

There is one situation where ideas found in the work of another do not need to be documented as to source. That is the area of "Public Information." Ideas which appear repeatedly in discussions of certain subjects, in the work of various individuals, are usually considered to be in the public domain, and it may not be necessary to give credit for these ideas to any particular individual. Descriptions or explanations of things like autism or mainstreaming or the double helix can now even be found in encyclopedias and, assuming no direct verbatim quotations are used, can be considered shared cultural information. Also, facts which are available to any observer, such as the length of the Brooklyn Bridge or the plot of a book or movie or who is married to Elizabeth Taylor, are not considered to be the property of any individual and sources for them do not need to be cited (although it usually does no harm to tell the reader where the fact was verified). In the above example, for instance, Mr. Horodyski's personal opinions, right or wrong, are considered to belong to him; but items of general news (which would appear, in similar form, in many newspapers and news magazines) could be considered a matter of public record and, if no direct quotations were used, a writer could choose whether or not to mention where he obtained the information. Encyclopedia information is usually considered public, but a courtesy footnote is often given.

In all cases, however, a general rule applies: WHEN IN DOUBT, FOOTNOTE. Nobody's reputation has ever been damaged by an unnecessary footnote; many careers have been destroyed by the absence of a necessary one.

Receiving Improper Assistance - In addition to plagiarism, the academic community categorizes several other kinds of behavior as "dishonest" and liable for disciplinary or even legal action. In general these can be divided into four types:

1. Turning in an assignment (test or paper) written wholly or partly by another person or agency without so specifying.
2. Turning in an assignment (test or paper) substantially edited or otherwise improved by another person without so specifying. (The relative or friend who retypes a paper and corrects all of its errors fits in here.)

3. Turning in an assignment (test or paper) written wholly or partly for another course for which academic credit was received without so specifying.
4. Otherwise defeating the purpose of the course by dishonestly violating the faculty member's rules.

Students, like all professionals, must recognize the following fact: since the evaluation of student work results ultimately in a formal grade recorded on a student's official transcript, any work offered in support of that grade which reflects the unacknowledged efforts of another person is an attempt at fraud, and must be dealt with as such.