

Course Policy on Plagiarism and Cheating

In this course, you are expected to behave in an ethical manner and comply with all academic standards as defined in the DSU Bulletin and Handbook. You are expected to do your own work in this course. Any form of cheating will NOT be tolerated in this course.

Cheating includes attempting to copy the work of others on exams and quizzes; conspiring with other students to receive assistance during exams and quizzes; altering or falsifying course documents, such as the attendance sheet; representing the work of others as your own; or other dishonest acts that would give the student an unfair advantage or would falsely influence the student's grade on any course assignment.

The best policy to follow is to do your own work and to treat the instructor and other students in the course in an open and honest manner.

What is Plagiarism?

Plagiarism is appropriating the work of others and representing it as your own. This is considered a serious violation of ethical standards in academic settings. In short, plagiarism is cheating.

Examples of Plagiarism:

- (1) Buying a paper off the internet or any other source, putting your name on it, and submitting it to fulfill a course requirement.
- (2) Borrowing a paper that a fellow student has submitted for a different course and submitting it as your own work.
- (3) Copying material off the internet, out of books or journals, or from any other source, without citing the source. Even when the source is cited, copying text verbatim (word-for-word) is plagiarism, unless it is included in quotation marks and is explicitly cited with a page number.
- (4) Borrowing ideas (including copying but rewording text) from any source without citing the source.

Why is Plagiarism Wrong?

Plagiarism is unfair.

- (1) It is unfair to other students in the class who do their own work without cheating.
- (2) It is unfair to the author of the original work, who put substantial time and effort into producing that work, and deserves credit.
- (3) It is unfair to the professor, who must dedicate time and effort to catching cheaters, which takes time and energy away from more productive activities.
- (4) It is unfair to the plagiarist, who is not getting the full benefit from their education. A college education should challenge you, should help you learn and should help you grow as a person. You accomplish none of these goals by cheating.

What are the Sanctions for Students Caught Plagiarizing?

The sanctions for plagiarism are severe. If you are caught plagiarizing in this course, you will be reported to the Division of Social Sciences Committee on Academic Honesty and Ethics. You will have to appear before this committee and respond to questions about the incident. The committee will then make a determination of a sanction. At a minimum, your final grade will be reduced by 10 points or the value of the assignment, whichever is greater. For a second offense, you typically will be dismissed from the course with a grade of "F." These are typical sanctions, and the Academic Honesty and Ethics Committee can determine more severe sanctions. In addition, a report of the incident will be filed with the university's Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Copies of this report will be forwarded to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, the Chair of the Division of Social Sciences, and the Chair and Dean of the student's home department. Additional sanctions may ensue from any of these offices. A copy of the report may also be sent to other pertinent groups on campus, such as the Athletics Department or a Fraternity or Sorority.

Why is Plagiarism Punished so Harshly?

Plagiarism is frequently difficult to detect. Generally other students may know what is going on, but they are reluctant to turn in their fellow students, even though the cheater's actions may directly affect them and their own grade in the course. Therefore, when a professor suspects a student has plagiarized, the professor must search for the original source and find other evidence that demonstrates the student is cheating. This is time consuming and difficult. In addition, students frequently challenge the professor and deny any wrongdoing, which makes it more difficult and time-consuming. Because plagiarism is difficult to detect and prove, in instances where it is proven, it must be punished harshly. This is the most effective way to deter students from trying it.

What is the DSU Policy on Plagiarism?

The Regulations in the *Delta State University Student Handbook* state:

“The statements listed below, although not inclusive, enumerate certain violations of the student regulations and may subject violators to appropriate disciplinary action, including suspension and expulsion:

[...]

9. Plagiarism, cheating, or knowingly furnishing false and/or misleading information to the University or other similar forms of dishonesty in University-related affairs.”

The *Delta State University Bulletin 2004–2006* states:

“Cheating and plagiarism are not tolerated. If it is established that a violation has occurred, instructors may determine the penalty and/or may report the offense to the division/department chair, the student’s advisor, and dean. The usual penalty involves a grade of zero on the test, examination, or paper in question. A second offense by any student should be reported immediately for more stringent action” (p. 77).

For more information on plagiarism, see the Delta State Library's "Plagiarism Prevention: A Guide for Students," at: <http://www.deltastate.edu/pages/1268.asp>.