

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT CHEATING and PLAGIARISM

The following stories are true. Any similarities with actual persons or events are not a coincidence. But it doesn't have to happen to you!

"My prof said I needed to improve my writing. I hired a tutor to help me with my essays, and now I am accused of plagiarism. I received an F!"

"My friend and I worked in the lab together, as authorized by the prof. Obviously, a lot of our answers are similar. When we handed in our reports, we were accused of cheating and failed!"

WHAT IS PLAGIARISM?

- Submitting the work of another person as original work
- Paraphrasing or directly quoting material from a source without sufficient or appropriate acknowledgment.

Plagiarism takes many forms, including:

- Self-plagiarism (e.g.: submitting an assignment or part of an assignment written for another course or purpose)
- Working on an assignment with another person when asked to hand in individual work
- Failing to differentiate clearly between your words and the language of your source
- Failing to note areas of agreement between your work and the work of other writers
- Using quotation marks in the wrong place
- Providing inadequate or incomplete footnotes or references
- Submitting a paper from the Internet (by the way, your instructor can trace it back!)
- Putting together ideas from various sources (i.e.: patchwork) without putting them in the context of your work, or without offering original work.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Cheating and plagiarizing are serious academic offenses.** Instructors and academic units have the responsibility to ensure that standards of academic honesty are met. Depending on the severity of the case, penalties include a warning, a failing grade, a record on the student's transcript, or a suspension.
- Plagiarism is sometimes due to ignorance or confusion, but **it is the responsibility of the student to know the rules.** Different disciplines may have different norms. Students who are unsure about the standards for citations or for referencing their sources **must** seek that information from their instructors.
- Students are entitled to a fair process when they are accused of plagiarism or cheating. This includes notification of the offense, which must be fully documented by the instructor, and a reasonable opportunity to be heard.

Please see the UVic Calendar pp. 31-32 for regulations and appeal procedures.

WHERE TO FIND ASSISTANCE WITH YOUR WRITING?

If an instructor identifies areas for improvement in your writing, (grammar, style, syntax, organization of essay, etc), or if you think you need to improve your writing,

- contact the **Writing Centre**: 721-7276 or writers@uvic.ca
- register for a writing course, if possible, one for students in your discipline
- use the program offered by **Counselling Services** on writing essays and reports, critical thinking, organizing information, etc. (721-8341 or see www.coun.uvic.ca)

THINGS TO REMEMBER TO AVOID PLAGIARISM

- **Your instructor, TA, academic advisor, Department or School can give you information** about appropriate style for referencing sources in your discipline (including footnotes, bibliography, use of quotations).
- Keep copies of your work in progress, and when it is possible, submit an early version of your work to the instructor or TA for comments.
- Keep an accurate record of all your sources (including page numbers).
- Always distinguish between your ideas and the ideas of others, your words and the words of others. Acknowledge areas of agreement between you and others.
- If you are not sure, **ask questions and keep your instructor or TA in the loop**
- Request assistance from University services (see above).

SO WHERE DID OUR FRIENDS GO WRONG?

- **If you hire a tutor, remember that his or her role is only to critique your work or your writing.** The paper you submit must be written entirely by you.
- **When doing a group task, ask the instructor or TA to clarify to what extent students are allowed to work together, and what is to be done separately.**

WHAT IF YOU STILL HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM?

Talk to your instructor, TA, academic advisor or the Ombudsperson. We're here to answer your questions. The Ombudsperson also assists students with appeal procedures.