Instructors assume all work submitted is the student’s original work. Therefore, plagiarism is a severe breach of academic honesty. In the university as a whole, possible penalties range from failure on the work in question to failure in the course. I will not tolerate plagiarism and will fail you for the course.

Plagiarism consists of any of the following:

1) **Direct unacknowledged use of another person's words or ideas**, i.e., you can't just copy text or ideas from an encyclopedia, a website, a book, an article, or any other source and pass it off as your own - you must, through a footnote¹ or parenthetical citation (Smith 49-50), let the reader know that you have used someone else's ideas or words. All works you cite need to be noted on a "works cited" page at the end. Any direct use of another person's words in your text (an inline quotation) "must be enclosed in quotation marks and noted" (Smith 10). "If poetry you wish to quote in brief, / Cite just like this, or else be named a thief" (Smith ll. 101-102). **Note the punctuation in the previous examples**; note also that inline poetry citation uses LINE NUMBERS, not page numbers, and a slash to separate poetic lines.

For quoting larger sections of prose, use a **block quotation**, which looks like this - indented half an inch on both margins, single spaced, and with a parenthetical citation or a footnote at the end. **As a general rule, use inline quotations for citations of less than 50 prose words or two lines of poetry; for citations of three or more lines of poetry or 50 prose words or more, use a block quotation. Note the punctuation at the end of these block quotations. Note that this is not centered, but indented.** (Smith 15)

If poetry you wish to quote at length,
This method is a tower of quoting strength;
One line of poet's text per each text line,
And cite the text after the final line.
Again, please note, not centered, but indented;
This way looks nice; the other looks fragmented. (ll. 103-106)

**Improper citation will be held against you;** you may not intend to plagiarize, but instructors can't read your mind, only your writing, and they will have to go with what they see. Also, **one plagiarized paragraph or sentence is all that an essay needs to be failed** - plagiarism applies to an essay in whole or in part. If in doubt, cite it.

2) **Unacknowledged paraphrase of another's work** - i.e. you can't just take a piece of text and put it into your own words without acknowledging it. That counts as copying an idea. If you're going to spend the time to change someone's words, you might as well write your own and avoid risking your grade.

¹ Terry Smith, *My Book about Plagiarism* (New York: Big Publisher, 2014): 51. This is a fictional example for a book: note author, title, city of publication, publisher, date, and page reference. For an article: Chris Smith, "Defining Plagiarism," *Academic Journal* 50 (2014): 49-50 - in this fictional example, note author, article title, journal title, volume number, date, and page reference. If an article originally from a print source is downloaded from the web, you must also indicate the database from which it came and the date of access (e.g. put “JSTOR. Accessed 8/15/14.” after the reference). For a website: Pat Smith, "How to Avoid Online Plagiarism," Anti-Plagiarism Society (www.ihateplagiarism.org/articles/smith), accessed 8/15/14. Note author (if known), article title, the organization sponsoring the website, the COMPLETE URL of the page on which the article occurs, and the date of access. For the most recent updates to scholarly citation methods and for other types of documentation, consult the *MLA Handbook* or the *Chicago Manual of Style.*
3) **Caution!** Having an essay completely or predominantly composed of acknowledged quotes with no subsequent development of your own is not plagiarism; however, since the purpose of citation is to give you ideas with which you subsequently engage (agree but take farther, refute, clarify, etc.), failure to engage with the ideas may cause your grade to suffer.

4) **Self-plagiarism:** It may seem like an oxymoron (how can one steal from oneself?), but it is not automatically acceptable to turn in work for which one has already received credit in a different class, or for turning in the same paper in two different concurrent classes. A paper generally only gets credit once. If there is going to be any overlap, be sure to consult with the instructors of both classes; they will probably insist on two substantially different papers (and will probably compare notes on what you submit), and while it may be more work for you, would you rather have two times the work or two F’s?

5) **Turning your paper over to another person for wholesale or partial revision.** If someone else does your work for you, in whole or in part, it is technically collusion, not plagiarism, but it is still considered academic dishonesty and grounds for failure. Revision needs to be handled carefully because it can leave you open to charges of having someone else do your work. With respect to revision for content, it is OK to ask someone if a paragraph or a sentence or your essay’s main point makes sense, as long as you fix it up yourself; it is not OK to ask someone, “Could you fix it up for me?” Learn to reread your own writing with a critical eye. With respect to proofreading for grammar and mechanics, correct your own work! *The Chicago Manual of Style* is one of the best references available, but any good grammar reference should help. If the instructor allows a group workshop session or other collaborative effort, you should help the group members learn to revise and proofread their own work; don't correct it for them. In general, if the instructor doesn't explicitly say collaboration is allowed on an assignment, don’t assume that it is.

6) **Common knowledge - names, dates of events, etc. - need not be referenced,** but any use of texts that give common knowledge must be cited if your use of those texts goes beyond common knowledge. For example, if Bobby Smith notes that Columbus reached the New World in 1492, that is considered common knowledge because you can find that information in many sources. However, if you mention any particular fact or idea or argument about Columbus that you would have to read Smith to know and couldn’t find anywhere else, then you need to cite it.

7) **You may present ideas from class discussion as your own** if thought and conviction have made them your own. (As much as I like to see my name in print, you need not keep noting "Dr. McFadden, class notes" in your essays!) If you are unsure about how to deal with an idea in your essays, consult your instructor.

8) **Avoid online "research assistance" websites** - they are barely legal and rarely ethical (or even accurate), and besides, we instructors can use a computer too; if something appears suspicious, we know where to look. Also, who is more likely to sell their paper to a "research site" - the A student or the C student? Most of the stuff you download or copy is either terrible or sticks out like a sore thumb, or both. Save your time, money, and reputation - be honest and do your own work.

**When in doubt, consult your instructor!**

**Revised August 2014**