Whose "Work" is it Anyway?

Linda L. Black Ed.D.
Dean of the Graduate School
& International Admissions

Outline

✓ From Definitions to Differentiation
✓ Instructional strategies to Inform and
  Empower students
✓ Plagiarism in the digital age
✓ Plagiarism in an ethical context
From Definitions to Differentiation

- A typical definition: the intentional or deliberate use of another's "language, ideas, or other original material without acknowledging the source" (Council of Writing Program Administrators, January, 2003).
- Definitions assume knowledge, intent, and purposeful misuse of sources to hide or distort the contribution of the original author(s).
- Claiming the work of another as one's own

From Definition to Differentiation

- Unintentional or erroneous misuse of sources is not plagiarism
- Is evidence of a failure to accurately and appropriately cite or document sources
- Difficult to determine the intent or knowledge
YET.....

• Some college instructors assume students possess a clear understanding of what does and does not constitute plagiarism

• Students
  – Are often uninformed or poorly informed
  – Will make mistakes
  – Benefit from direct and repeated instruction
  – Must recognize generational differences in the use and “sharing” of files

Education, Early and Often

• Instructional Strategies
  – Requires an ongoing contextual dialogue during and across semesters
    • Explain the relationship between academic integrity, ethical decision making, the academic enterprise and values of the academic community
    • Talk openly about risky behavior- not asking for clarification from the instructor, poor time management, “buying papers”, fear of failure or taking risks, the lure and belief “I won’t get caught”
Education, Early and Often

• Model, model, model (Noskin, 2005)
  – What is paraphrasing and what is not
  – To cite or not to cite—putting it in your own words?
  – Shared responsibility

• Provide opportunities to practice writing skills and development of one’s voice
  – 3 scenarios—early in the term
  – Multiple drafts with notes and documentation
  – Concrete examples—appropriate citation & paraphrasing
  – Require the evaluation of sources

*Material Adapted from http://writing.umn.edu/tww/preventing/instructors.html*

---

Education, Early and Often

• Present expectations clearly in syllabus including resources like MLA or APA manuals

• Assignments, particularly research assignments must expect
  – Explore topics in depth
  – Assign and support rigorous and authentic inquiry rather than simple recycling or repeating course information
  – Demonstrate the sequencing from inquiry to final ‘product’
The Digital Age

• Recognize the generational differences in beliefs about file sharing, accuracy of content on the internet (Slide share, limewire, P2P)
• Easier to do and easier to detect (Cox, 2012)
• The copy and paste writer
• Wikipedia is not an original source
• Detection software still requires human oversight
• Determining what is fair use, intellectual property related to print, sound and visual images

Integrity, Personal and Academic

• Determining what is ‘yours’ and what is not ‘yours’
• Importance of trust and accountability in academic enterprise
• Contributions of veracity and accuracy in research and scholarly inquiry
• History and legacy of ideas
Reference List


Elfbein, A. (n.d.) *Preventing Plagiarism.*
http://writing.umn.edu/tww/preventing/instructors.html

*Students Listen When Teachers Discuss the Issues.* Retrieved from http://www.ncte.org/magazine/archives/122871