

PLAGIARISM PREVENTION USING TURNITIN: INTRODUCING A PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH

A PEDAGOGICAL BASIS FOR USING THE TURNITIN PLAGIARISM-DETECTION SOFTWARE

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Plagiarism Prevention Using Turnitin: Instructor Procedures

Plagiarism Prevention Using Turnitin: Student Procedures

Plagiarism Prevention Using Turnitin: Sample Syllabus Statements

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PREFACE: FACULTY RESPONSIBILITY FOR DEALING WITH PLAGIARISM

SFSU faculty are responsible for handling academic dishonesty and reporting the action taken to the judicial affairs office. (In the College of the Humanities, reports are submitted through the Associate Dean who forwards them on.) Your actions must be consistent with the student's infraction. You may give no credit or fail to the plagiarized assignment, which may cause the student to fail the class. You may not give the student a failing grade for the course if failure on the plagiarized assignment would not result in F/NC for the course according to the terms of the syllabus.

RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

SFSU Faculty Manual

Each faculty member who requires outside written work as part of course requirements should carefully define the meaning of plagiarism and outline the proper methods for using outside sources. Students should be cautioned about the consequences should plagiarism be discovered.

If cheating or plagiarism occurs, it is the instructor's responsibility to handle the situation. The grade assigned must be based on the student's academic performance and must not be used as a punitive measure. The Judicial Affairs Officer in the Office of Student Affairs will assist the instructor and is responsible for determining whether formal disciplinary action should be taken.

http://www.sfsu.edu/~acaffrs/faculty_manual/9_3.htm

Executive Order 969, issued January 30, 2006:

Academic dishonesty cases that occur in the classroom shall be handled by faculty members. However, after action has been taken by the faculty member, the faculty member shall complete a form that identifies the student who was found responsible, the general nature of the offense, the action taken, and a recommendation as to whether or not additional action should be considered by the campus judicial affairs office. The completed form should be sent by the faculty member either to the provost or to the vice president for student affairs whenever academic dishonesty cases are handled by the faculty member.

This process provides an opportunity to hold students accountable for multiple academic dishonesty situations that may occur with several departments but never be known because there is no central location to gather the information. By having a central location for all academic dishonesty cases, there is a better understanding of the trends in academic dishonesty and the opportunity for academic affairs and



student affairs to address any problem trends in a formal way, e.g., Honor Code, more academic dishonesty education/information.

<http://www.calstate.edu/eo/EO-969.html>

THE PEDAGOGICAL CHALLENGES OF PLAGIARISM

Students have always plagiarized or failed to cite completely, but technology has made this practice easier:

- Based on a review of the literature and their own study, Weinstein and Dobkin (2002) find roughly one out of every five or six student papers is plagiarized.
- In a survey of over 40,000 undergraduates, "51% ... acknowledged at least one incident of serious cheating on written work." Of these, four out of five reported that their cheating included cutting and pasting from the Internet or downloading product from a paper mill. (McCabe, 2005, p. 27)

Faculty are exhorted to prevent plagiarism by making assignments unique and relevant, but all assignments are open to small-scale plagiarism and even the most exciting assignment may attract a plagiarism from students who don't feel up to the challenge, especially those juggling school, work and family. Without specialized software, teachers are left to the difficult task of identifying plagiarized work and finding the source is time-consuming and difficult without specialized software.

- Internet search engines find plagiarism only if the teacher senses a problem and the source material is on the web.
- Many of the free papers on the Internet and even some of the papers-for-pay are indistinguishable from marginal student work. (Faber & Lindsay, 1999).
- Students also submit work from their peers, not Internet sources. Bloomfield (as cited in Weinstein & Dobkin, 2002) finds that 3% of essays matched previously submitted work.

Teachers become especially frustrated by this work, framing the activity in moral terms, seeing plagiarism as a capital crime, resenting time spent in uncovering what they believe is dishonesty (Valentine, 2006).

Yet plagiarism doesn't always come from a desire to take the easy way out:

- At a mechanical level, students may not know how to cite outside material completely and correctly.
- As a literacy practice (Valentine, 2006), the appropriate use of sources is culturally-situated. What is plagiarism to faculty at SFSU may be good and honest work in other cultures.
- Students may have a naïve view of the writing process and naturally value writing less if they don't see it as a way to make meaning,
- They may be unclear as to how much original writing is required or how to use outside sources to support their own ideas.



HOW TURNITIN CHANGES THIS

Faculty can promote writing as a way of learning and making knowledge and acknowledge the complexity of proper use of sources, offering Turnitin as a tool for students to use in this work, submitting their essays themselves. While this approach has the obvious advantage of relieving teachers of much of the detective work, it does much more, letting students know explicitly that proper citation is their responsibility and implicitly that plagiarism will not be tolerated.

Turnitin allows teachers to easily identify errors arising from ignorance: Why else would a student fail to cite work clearly flagged by the system as a quotation? Turnitin also provides statistics showing what percent of each essay matches other sources, allowing teachers to comment on over- or under-reliance on sources. With this tool, we can largely leave aside the adversarial approach to plagiarism and return to our teaching objectives.

REFERENCES

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