

A stylized graphic of an open book in orange and white. The pages are represented by two large, rounded rectangular shapes. The spine of the book is a white vertical line. Four small orange arrowheads point outwards from the corners of the book's frame.

Academic
Integrity
at Princeton

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Introduction

All Princeton students pledge to adhere to the Honor Code in the conduct of all written examinations, tests, and quizzes that take place in class. However, much of your work at Princeton—from papers to problem sets to the senior thesis—will be produced outside of class, whether in the library, your dorm room, or elsewhere. Such work is governed by the University’s academic regulations, which are designed to ensure the integrity of your academic work. These regulations fall under the jurisdiction not of the Honor Committee, but of the Faculty-Student Committee on Discipline.

This booklet provides information about Princeton’s academic regulations and how you can safeguard the integrity of your original work. It offers a rationale for the ethic of intellectual honesty that underlies all academic work at the University, discusses when and how to acknowledge your intellectual debts to the work of other people, and considers some of the implications of electronic media as research tools. It defines important terms such as **plagiarism** and provides negative examples of what to avoid as well as positive guidance about how to do your work.

Some of the material covered in this booklet is duplicated and elaborated in *Rights, Rules, Responsibilities*, in the orange pages under “Academic Regulations.” The University faculty and administration believed, however,

that this separate document, with a fuller discussion of the issues and more examples, would be both helpful and handy. You'll also find further information about the Honor System in both the *Undergraduate Announcement* and *Rights, Rules, Responsibilities*.

Please take the time to read this booklet carefully and keep it for your future reference.

The University as an **Intellectual Community**

Princeton is, first and foremost, an intellectual community. Every college or university is an environment rich in intellectual, technological, and information resources where students and faculty members come together to pursue their academic interests. All of us are here to learn from each other and to teach each other, both in our individual quests to mature as thinkers, scholars, and researchers, and in our collective effort to advance and refine the body of human knowledge. All of us benefit from the free exchange of ideas, theories, solutions, and interpretations. We test our own thoughts informally among friends or in class, or more formally in papers and exams; we profit by analyzing and evaluating the ideas of our classmates, friends, advisers, and teachers.

Trust is the central ethic of such an intellectual community, in several respects. You should be able to trust that your ideas, no matter how new or unusual, will be respected and not ridiculed; to trust that your ideas will be seriously considered and evaluated; and to trust that you can express your own ideas without fear that someone else will take credit for them. Moreover, others need to be able to trust that your words, data, and ideas are your own. The right to intellectual ownership of original academic work is as important to the life of the university as the right to own personal possessions.

Our intellectual community is much greater than the current population of Princeton students, faculty, and staff. Such an intellectual community transcends both time and space to embrace all contributors to human knowledge. We may find their theories in textbooks, or their words in books of poetry, or their thoughts in library volumes or journals, or their data on the Web. Through the work they've produced in times past or are producing now across the globe, they share with us their intellectual efforts, trusting that we'll respect their rights of intellectual ownership. As we at the University strive to build on their work, all of us—from freshman to full professor—are obligated by the ethic of intellectual honesty to credit that work to its originator.

The Challenge of **Original Work**

During the course of your Princeton education, you'll be exposed to the ideas, scientific theories, and creative works of countless scholars, scientists, and artists. Inevitably, your own ideas will be shaped by the words and ideas that you encounter. The intellectual challenge you face in your academic work is to go beyond what you learn in your textbooks, in lectures, and in the library—to evaluate, rethink, synthesize, and make your own the information, data, and concepts you find in your sources. The greatest satisfaction of academic work comes from making something original—something distinctly your own—out of the material you've learned in your courses and discovered in your research. Doing original work is the most demanding, but also the most rewarding, part of your Princeton education.

Your original work—whether an essay, a solution to a math problem, or a research paper—is also the basis for your professor's evaluation of your performance in a course. For that reason, intellectual honesty is the cornerstone of our academic community. **You must always distinguish your own words and ideas from the words and ideas of others**—including the authors of print or electronic sources, faculty members, classmates, and friends. Making those distinctions isn't always easy and can be made even more difficult by less-than-careful research habits or the time pressure of submission deadlines.

Take the time now to learn to recognize when it's necessary to cite your sources and how to provide adequate and accurate bibliographic information for your reader. In this booklet, you'll find definitions, discussions, and examples of terms such as **plagiarism, collaboration, and common knowledge** as well as useful advice on how to protect the integrity of your academic work.

Acknowledging **Your Sources**

There are a variety of reasons for acknowledging the sources upon which you have built your own work. At right are the key reasons:

In all of these reasons, the essential element is intellectual honesty. You must provide your reader with an honest representation of your work so that he or she may evaluate its merits fairly. Proper citation demonstrates the depth and breadth of your reading—in effect, documenting the hard work you’ve put into your research. Proper citation permits a reader to determine the extent of your knowledge of the topic. And, most important, proper citation permits a reader to more readily understand and appreciate your original contribution to the subject. In contrast, a very well-informed, complex, or sophisticated piece of work, without adequate or accurate acknowledgment of sources, will only provoke your reader’s concern or suspicion.

Such intellectual honesty is important, not only for your reader, but also for you as the author. For example, you may footnote a paper diligently only to discover that you can hardly find an original idea or sentence of your own. Then you’ll know you have more work to do in order to develop a substantial original idea or thesis.

This booklet emphasizes the positive reasons for properly citing your sources rather than the negative consequences for failing to do so. You need to know, however, that those consequences can be severe. Failure to

- To distinguish your own work from that of your sources.
- To receive credit for the research you’ve done on a project.
- To establish the credibility and authority of your knowledge and ideas.
- To place your own ideas in context, locating your work in the larger intellectual conversation about your topic.
- To permit your reader to pursue your topic further by reading more about it.
- To permit your reader to check on your use of source material.

acknowledge the sources—textual, personal, electronic—upon which you’ve relied is a serious breach of academic integrity. Such a failure can lead to the accusation of **plagiarism**—defined as the use of any source, published or unpublished, without proper acknowledgment. Plagiarism is a very serious charge at Princeton, which can result in disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion. The disciplinary process is explained later in this booklet.

The most important thing to know is this: **if you fail to cite your sources, whether deliberately or inadvertently, you will still be found responsible for the act of plagiarism.** Ignorance of academic regulations or the excuse of sloppy or rushed work does not constitute an acceptable defense against the charge of plagiarism. As a Princeton student, you’re expected to have read and understood the University’s academic regulations as described in this booklet and in *Rights, Rules, Responsibilities*. In fact, you must type the following sentence and sign your name on each piece of work you submit: **“This paper represents my own work in accordance with University regulations.”** For electronic submissions, you may type your name preceded by the notation /s/, which stands for “signature.” This signed pledge symbolizes your adherence to the University’s core values of honesty and integrity in intellectual work.

When to **Cite Sources**

You'll discover that different academic disciplines have different rules and protocols concerning when and how to cite sources, a practice known as "citation." For example, some disciplines use footnotes, whereas others use parenthetical in-text citations; some require complete bibliographic information on all works consulted, whereas others require only a list of "Works Cited." As you decide on a concentration and begin advanced work in your department, you'll need to learn the particular protocols for your discipline. Near the end of this booklet, you'll find a brief sampling of commonly used citation styles.

The five basic principles described below apply to all disciplines and should guide your own citation practice. Even more fundamental, however, is this general rule: **when in doubt, cite**. You'll certainly never find yourself in trouble if you acknowledge a source when it's not absolutely necessary; it's always preferable to err on the side of caution and completeness. Better still, if you're unsure about whether or not to cite a source, ask your professor or preceptor for guidance before submitting the paper or report.

1. **Quotation.** Any verbatim use of a source, no matter how large or small the quotation, must be placed in quotation marks or, if longer than three lines, clearly indented beyond the regular margin. The quotation must be accompanied, either within the text or in a footnote, by a precise indication of

the source, identifying the author, title, place and date of publication (where relevant), and page numbers. Even if you use only a short phrase, or even one key word, you must use quotation marks in order to set off the borrowed language from your own, and you must cite the source.

2. **Paraphrase.** Paraphrase is a restatement of another person's thoughts or ideas in your own words, using your own sentence structure. A paraphrase is normally about the same length as the original. Although you don't need to use quotation marks when you paraphrase, you absolutely do need to cite the source, either in parentheses or in a footnote. If another author's idea is particularly well put, quote it verbatim and use quotation marks to distinguish his or her words from your own. Paraphrase your source if you can restate the idea more clearly or simply, or if you want to place the idea in the flow of your own thoughts—though be sure to announce your source in your own text (“Albert Einstein believed that...”) and always include a citation. Paraphrasing does not relieve you of the responsibility to cite your source.
3. **Summary.** Summary is a concise statement of another person's thoughts or ideas in your own words. A summary is normally shorter than the original—a distillation of the source's ideas. When summarizing other people's ideas, arguments, or conclusions, you must cite your sources—for example, with a footnote at the end of each summary. Taking good notes while doing your research will help you keep straight which ideas belong to which author. Good note-taking habits are especially important when you're reviewing a series of interpretations or ideas on your subject.
4. **Facts, Information, and Data.** Often you'll want to use facts or information to support your own argument. If the information is found exclusively in a particular source, you must clearly acknowledge that source. For example, if you use data from a scientific experiment conducted and reported by a

researcher, you must cite your source, probably a scientific journal or a website. Or if you use a piece of information discovered by another scholar in the course of his or her own research, you must cite your source. But if the fact or information is generally known and accepted—for example, that Woodrow Wilson served as president of both Princeton University and the United States, or that Avogadro's number is 6.02×10^{23} —you do not need to cite a source. Note that facts are different from ideas: facts may not need to be cited, whereas ideas must always be cited. Deciding which facts or pieces of information require citation and which are common knowledge, and thus do not require citation, isn't always easy. Refer to a later section in this booklet, "Not-So-Common Knowledge," for more discussion of this issue. But remember: when in doubt, cite.

- 5. Supplementary Information.** Occasionally, especially in a longer research paper, you may not be able to include all of the information or ideas from your research in the body of your own paper. In such cases, insert a note offering supplementary information rather than simply providing basic bibliographic information (author, title, place and date of publication, and page numbers). In such footnotes or endnotes, you might provide additional data to bolster your argument, or briefly present an alternative idea that you found in one of your sources, or even list two or three additional articles on some topic that your reader might find of interest. Such notes demonstrate the breadth and depth of your research, and permit you to include germane, but not essential, information or concepts without interrupting the flow of your own paper.

In all of these cases, proper citation requires that you indicate the source of any material immediately after its use in your paper. For quotations, the footnote or parenthetical citation immediately follows the closing

quotation marks; for a specific piece of information, the footnote or parenthetical citation should be placed as close as possible; for a paraphrase or summary, the footnote or parenthetical citation may come at the end of the sentence or paragraph.

Simply listing a source in your bibliography is not adequate acknowledgment of that source. This point is extremely important and too often misunderstood by students. If you list a source in your bibliography, but do not properly cite it in the text of your paper, you can be charged with plagiarism. In Faculty-Student Committee on Discipline hearings, students who did not set off verbatim quotations with quotation marks and provide a citation, or who used ideas or information from a source without proper citation in the paper itself, sometimes argue their innocence because the source is listed in their bibliography. But whether the error was a mistake based on a misunderstanding of the rules of citation or an intentional effort to deceive the reader, the student will be found responsible for the act of plagiarism.

For international students, it's especially important to review and understand the citation standards and expectations for institutions of higher learning in the United States. Students who have done their college preparation at schools in other countries may have learned research and paper-writing practices different from those at Princeton. For example, students from schools in East Asia may learn that copying directly from sources, without citation, is the proper way to write papers and do research. Students in France, preparing for the Baccalaureate examination, may be encouraged to memorize whole passages from secondary sources and copy them into

papers and exam essays. Those cultural differences can sometimes lead to false assumptions about citation practices and expectations at Princeton. Make sure you understand the University's academic regulations and ask for assistance from your professors or preceptors if you're not sure.

The Writing Center, located in Whitman College, is also a key resource for students wanting to learn more about proper note-taking and citation practices. To make an appointment, visit www.princeton.edu/writing/appt or drop in without an appointment Sunday through Thursday evenings.

Nonprint and **Electronic Sources**

The requirement to acknowledge your sources is not limited to printed material such as books or journal articles. You may need to acknowledge information that you've found in graphical form, sources that are works of visual or musical art, handwritten notes from a lecture or a laboratory, or even personal conversations. Again, you should find out the disciplinary protocols for citing such nonprint sources by consulting a citation style manual, such as the *MLA Handbook* or *The Chicago Manual of Style*.

Instant access to global electronic information through computers and the Internet is having a significant impact on the way we conduct research. Information is now readily available through the Web, e-mail, and other electronic media. Information and quotations from any of these sources must be properly acknowledged, including personal e-mail correspondence. The protocols for citing electronic sources are still being developed. At a minimum, cite the name and author of the website (if available), the Internet address, and the date you accessed the site.

Although electronic media present powerful new opportunities for research, they also present new and different dangers that deserve some consideration. Unlike most books and journal articles, which undergo strict editorial review before publication, much of the information on the Web is self-published. To be sure, there are many websites in which you can have

confidence: mainstream newspapers, refereed electronic journals, and university, library, and government collections of data. But for vast amounts of Web-based information, no impartial reviewers have evaluated the accuracy or fairness of such material before it's made instantly available across the globe. As a researcher using the Web, you must be extremely careful about the validity of the information that you find. Seldom will the author of a website make explicit his or her own sources of information; there may be no way to trace the accuracy or authenticity of the information. Websites may provide partial, deceptive, or false information in order to promote explicit or hidden agendas.

Often Web-based information appears to have no author at all, but is seemingly anonymous, almost disembodied. The unprecedented ease with which text, images, and data can be copied and reused can undermine both the idea and the value of intellectual ownership. The combination of immediate, unlimited access to information, plus the ability to appropriate and alter it with a few keystrokes, is both exhilarating and dangerous. The electronic media are transforming not just the means of communicating and retrieving information, but also our ways of thinking about information: what it is, where it comes from, and to whom it belongs. Some of the implications of this transformation are discussed in the next section.

Not-So-Common **Knowledge**

You may have heard that it's not necessary to cite a source if the information it provides is "common knowledge." In theory, this guideline is valid. (See [principle #4](#) in "When to Cite Sources.") In high school, the guideline is often further simplified: if you can find the information in *The World Book Encyclopedia*, then it's "common knowledge."

However, when you're doing sophisticated original work at the college level, perhaps grappling with theories and concepts at the cutting edge of human knowledge, things are seldom so simple. This guideline can often lead to misunderstanding and cases of potential plagiarism. The concept of "common knowledge" can never be an objective criterion for the obvious reason that what is commonly known will vary radically in different places and times. Human understanding is constantly changing, as the tools by which we can observe and comprehend the universe develop and as the beliefs that shape that understanding evolve. In medieval times, for example, it was an incontrovertible fact that the Earth was at the center of the universe. What a Chinese acupuncturist knows about human anatomy and health is remarkably different from what an American-trained surgeon knows. And what Princeton concentrators in molecular biology know today about the human genome would bewilder and astound Princeton biology students of only two generations ago. To complicate matters, each discipline has its own evolving definitions, and its

own tests, for what constitutes a “fact.” And even within disciplines, experts sometimes disagree.

The bottom line is that you may be unable to make informed decisions concerning what is and is not “common knowledge.” That will be less true as you get to know a topic in depth, as you will for your senior thesis. But, especially in fields with which you’re less familiar, you must exercise caution. The belief that an idea or fact may be “common knowledge” is no reason not to cite your source. It’s certainly not a defense against the charge of plagiarism, although many students offer that excuse during the disciplinary process. Keeping in mind that your professor is the primary audience for your work, you should ask your professor for guidance if you’re uncertain. If you don’t have that opportunity, fall back on the fundamental rule: **when in doubt, cite**. It’s too risky to make assumptions about what’s expected or permissible.

The new era of electronic media and the Internet has made this issue even more complex and uncertain. The depersonalized nature of electronic information can devalue the sense of intellectual ownership: the information seems to belong to nobody and to everybody. The protocols for borrowing, reusing, and modifying information on the Web are less well-defined than they are in more traditional scholarly research and far less diligently observed. Indeed, much of the ethic of the Internet, which emerged from the computer culture of collaborative work and shareware, is in tension with the values and practices of traditional scholarship, especially in the humanities and social sciences. With the Web’s countless sites offering text and images for the taking, and with commercial sites offering free educational versions of their software, the lines between public and private ownership of intellectual property have become

blurry. Many of us have been tempted to download and save a particularly appealing image from the Web, never quite knowing whether or not the image is copyright-protected.

Because you can't readily trace the sources for the information found on the Web, you may feel less obligated to acknowledge electronic sources. **However, at Princeton, you are expected to observe the regulations for academic citation of all sources, print or electronic.** The same rules apply to copying verbatim text or images, paraphrasing, and summarizing material from the Web. And given that information and data available on the Web may not receive the same stringent review as more traditional scholarly sources, you must be extra careful about evaluating and acknowledging your Web sources for such information.

Finally, all of us are aware of websites that offer academic papers for sale or that offer to do the research and writing for you. For Princeton students, such services are far less tempting because the academic quality of such papers tends to fall short of any acceptable Princeton standard. Nevertheless, you should know that any use of such services by a student is considered not just plagiarism but academic fraud, and is subject to the most severe penalties.

Examples of Plagiarism

The examples below demonstrate a few varieties of textual plagiarism, from verbatim copying to thorough paraphrasing. The comments that follow the examples offer guidance about how a source may be used and when a source must be cited. (These examples can also be found in *Rights, Rules, Responsibilities*.)

Text example 1

*verbatim plagiarism, or unacknowledged direct quotation
(lifted passages are underlined):*

Almost all of Shakespeare's Hamlet can be understood as a play about acting and the theater. For example, there is Hamlet's pretense of madness, the "antic disposition" that he puts on to protect himself and prevent his antagonists from plucking out the heart of his mystery. When Hamlet enters his mother's room, he holds up, side by side, the pictures of the two kings, Old Hamlet and Claudius, and proceeds to describe for her the true nature of the choice she has made, presenting truth by means of a show. Similarly, when he leaps into the open grave at Ophelia's funeral, ranting in high heroic terms, he is acting out for Laertes, and perhaps for himself as well, the folly of excessive, melodramatic expressions of grief.

Original source (text)

Alvin Kernan

The Playwright as Magician. New Haven:
Yale University Press, 1979. pp. 102–103.

From time to time this submerged or latent theater in *Hamlet* becomes almost overt. It is close to the surface in Hamlet's pretense of madness, the "antic disposition" he puts on to protect himself and prevent his antagonists from plucking out the heart of his mystery. It is even closer to the surface when Hamlet enters his mother's room and holds up, side by side, the pictures of the two kings, Old Hamlet and Claudius, and proceeds to describe for her the true nature of the choice she has made, presenting truth by means of a show. Similarly, when he leaps into the open grave at Ophelia's funeral, ranting in high heroic terms, he is acting out for Laertes, and perhaps for himself as well, the folly of excessive, melodramatic expressions of grief.

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Comment for example 1

Aside from an opening sentence loosely adapted from the original and reworded more simply, this entire passage is taken almost word-for-word from the source. The few small alterations of the source do not relieve the writer of the responsibility to attribute these words to their original author, Alvin Kernan. A passage from a source may be worth quoting at length if it makes a point precisely or elegantly. In such cases, copy the passage exactly, place it in quotation marks, and cite the author.

Text example 2

lifting selected passages and phrases without proper acknowledgment (lifted passages are underlined):

Almost all of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* can be understood as a play about acting and the theater. For example, in Act I, Hamlet adopts a pretense of madness that he uses to protect himself and prevent his antagonists from discovering his mission to revenge his father's murder. He also presents truth by means of a show when he compares the portraits of Gertrude's two husbands in order to describe for her the true nature of the choice she has made. And when he leaps in Ophelia's open grave ranting in high heroic terms, Hamlet is acting out the folly of excessive, melodramatic expressions of grief.

Comment for example 2

This passage, in content and structure, is taken wholesale from the source. Although the writer has rewritten much of the paragraph, and fewer phrases are lifted verbatim from the source, this is a clear example of

plagiarism. Inserting even short phrases from the source into a new sentence still requires placing quotations around the borrowed words and citing the author. If even one phrase is good enough to borrow, it must be properly set off by quotation marks. In the case above, if the writer had rewritten the entire paragraph and used only Alvin Kernan's phrase "high heroic terms" without properly quoting and acknowledging its source, the writer would have plagiarized.

Text example 3

paraphrasing the text while maintaining the basic paragraph and sentence structure:

Almost all of Shakespeare's Hamlet can be understood as a play about acting and the theater. For example, in Act I, Hamlet pretends to be insane in order to make sure his enemies do not discover his mission to revenge his father's murder. The theme is even more obvious when Hamlet compares the pictures of his mother's two husbands to show her what a bad choice she has made, using their images to reveal the truth. Also, when he jumps into Ophelia's grave, hurling his challenge to Laertes, Hamlet demonstrates the foolishness of exaggerated expressions of emotion.

Comment for example 3

Almost nothing of Kernan's original language remains in this rewritten paragraph. However, the key idea, the choice and order of the examples, and even the basic structure of the original sentences are all taken from the source. This is another clear example of plagiarism. When paraphrasing, it's absolutely necessary (1) to use your own words and structure, and (2) to place

Original source (text)

From time to time this submerged or latent theater in *Hamlet* becomes almost overt. It is close to the surface in Hamlet's pretense of madness, the "antic disposition" he puts on to protect himself and prevent his antagonists from plucking out the heart of his mystery. It is even closer to the surface when Hamlet enters his mother's room and holds up, side by side, the pictures of the two kings, Old Hamlet and Claudius, and proceeds to describe for her the true nature of the choice she has made, presenting truth by means of a show. Similarly, when he leaps into the open grave at Ophelia's funeral, ranting in high heroic terms, he is acting out for Laertes, and perhaps for himself as well, the folly of excessive, melodramatic expressions of grief.

a citation at the end of the paraphrase to acknowledge that the content is not original.

A note on plagiarism in computer programs:

The organization of courses involving computer programming varies throughout the University. In many courses, you will work with other students in pairs or in larger groups. In those cases where individual programs are submitted based on work involving collaboration, you must acknowledge the extent of the collaboration when the program is submitted. Expectations for citing the use of code in completing a computer programming assignment may vary from course to course, so it is particularly important for you to check with the faculty member in charge of the course on citation policies when completing programming assignments.

Misrepresenting **Original Work**

Failing to acknowledge one's sources isn't the only form of academic dishonesty. Citing a source when the material wasn't obtained from that source also constitutes a violation of University regulations. Students commit **false citation** when they cite sources they didn't directly consult; such a violation is subject to the same penalties as plagiarism. **Fabricating or falsifying data** of any kind is also a serious academic violation. If, for example, you discover that the data you collected in a chemistry lab are somehow contaminated, useless, or wrong, you must contact the instructor for guidance. Perhaps you'll receive permission to write your report based on data collected by another student; perhaps you'll be asked to figure out what went wrong with your own lab work. But in no case should you fabricate data.

Without proper permission, submitting the identical or similar work in more than one course is also a violation of University regulations. **Unauthorized multiple submission** of academic work is subject to the same penalties as plagiarism. Under certain conditions, a student may receive permission to rewrite earlier work submitted in another course, or to satisfy two requirements by

producing a single piece of work (typically more extensive than the work that would have satisfied only one of the assignments). In such cases, the student must secure prior permission, in writing, from each professor if the work is being submitted in two courses during the same semester. If a student is revising or using all or part of an earlier piece of work, the student must receive prior permission, in writing, from the professor and must submit the original assignment along with the new work. In order to avoid any possible misunderstanding, discuss your plans with your professor and get prior permission in writing.

The Question of **Collaboration**

In many courses, particularly in the sciences or engineering where you may work with a laboratory team or on a group project, some of the work may be done in collaboration with fellow students. In such courses, a portion of your grade may be based on joint efforts with other students, and a portion may be based on independent work on papers and examinations.

To avoid confusion and possible violations of academic regulations, you must clearly understand what work must be done independently and what work may be done collaboratively. The standard for permissible collaboration varies from course to course. Some professors permit students to do problem sets together and even to turn in an assignment together; other professors allow students to discuss the problems but require them to write up their own answers; still others prohibit any collaboration at all on homework. In many computer science courses, such as COS 126, students are encouraged to think through programming strategies together but are prohibited from sharing actual code with each other. The penalty for copying weekly problem set solutions or programming assignments can be just as severe as it is for plagiarism on a major term paper.

In the ideal case, your professor will make explicit on the syllabus the expectations for your academic work. If the course policy is clear, follow it scrupulously. If the expectations and rules are unstated or unclear, **ask your professor**. If a deadline is imminent and you're not sure of the course policy, do your work independently. Never assume that you have permission to do a problem set or lab report collaboratively. Given the variability from professor to professor, it's also very dangerous to rely on the "rules" from another course, even within the same department. Too many times, students have turned in identical or similar problem sets, lab reports, or papers, only to discover that they were operating under a false set of assumptions. The wise thing to do is to ask.

It's also a good idea to ask your professor to establish guidelines for informal modes of electronic communication in the course. For example, the course may have an e-mail discussion group to which students are expected to contribute. How relaxed, if at all, are the rules for citation in these less-than-formal communications between classmates and instructors?

Other Forms of **Assistance**

Discussing paper topics. Giving a roommate feedback on a draft. Comparing lab data. Working on a problem set side-by-side with a classmate. These are among other forms of mutual assistance that students often give one another. Most fall into a “gray area” that requires you to use your own good judgment.

As always, you should exercise caution to ensure that the assistance you give or receive is within acceptable limits. Brainstorming ideas with someone else before writing is fine, and acting upon general suggestions for revision could also be fine. But writing, rewriting, or copy-editing another person’s paper is not fine, nor is telling someone exactly how to revise. This level of involvement constitutes an infraction of Princeton’s academic regulations.

Remember, your goal is to maintain the integrity of your own work and that of others’. Be sure to ask your instructor before comparing and analyzing your laboratory data with classmates. And just to be on the safe side, solve your problem sets privately.

If you do receive assistance from others—classmates, friends, or family members—acknowledge it in writing. In a long work, such as a senior thesis, your acknowledgments might take up an

entire section, which would appear after the table of contents and before the first chapter. In shorter works, your acknowledgments would appear in a footnote or after your references.

One final caution: be careful about allowing others unauthorized access to your work. Don’t leave the library for a coffee break with your newly written history paper on the screen of your laptop; don’t let the hardcopy of your sociology take-home sit in the computer cluster printer for hours, or leave extra copies or earlier drafts around in public places. There’s no need to be unreasonably suspicious. Just use common sense to safeguard your work.

Working Habits **that Work**

1. **Take complete and careful notes.** Whatever note-taking system you use, make sure to distinguish carefully between any words and ideas from your source and your own words and ideas. When copying passages verbatim from a source, make sure to use quotation marks and to be precise about recording the page number(s) of the source. You'll save yourself time and aggravation if you take complete and accurate notes the first time around. Students often get into trouble because their notes are incomplete or confused, and they run out of time to go back to check their sources.
2. **Keep all of your notes** until after you have had your graded papers returned to you. If any question is raised about your work, it's to your advantage to be able to produce your notes and preliminary drafts of your papers.
3. **Be scrupulous in drafting and checking your papers** to make sure all words borrowed from your sources are placed in quotation marks or indented and that all ideas and necessary information that require citation are followed by a footnote or parenthetical citation.
4. **If you do all of your work on a computer—from note-taking to drafts to final version—be especially careful.** The ease with which text can be copied and pasted, moved around, and

edited on a computer can make the work of writing a paper quicker and more efficient, but it can also lead to serious errors. A good practice is to keep your note files distinct from the file in which you're writing your paper. In your note file, clearly label any quotations, and create your citations as you go—for both quotations and other kinds of references to source material. Too often quotation marks and citations can get lost or confused in the drafting and revision process; don't rely on your memory or on incomplete notes in the final stages of writing. Instead of cutting and pasting from your note files to your paper file, use the "copy and paste" function so that your original note files remain intact. If you move a phrase, a sentence, or a paragraph from your notes into your paper, be certain to move any quotation marks and the citation.

Keep track of the file names of the various drafts of your papers so that you don't confuse them in the final rush to print and submit your work. Sloppy work habits and the pressure of deadlines are not valid defenses if you're charged with plagiarism or another violation. It's also a good idea to print out a hard copy of your work periodically and to back up your files in order to avoid a crisis if your computer fails. Develop a sensible plan to keep track of your work on the computer and stick to it.

5. **Understand the difference between primary and secondary sources, and know that you must cite quotations, ideas, and information from both.** Most high school students learn how to quote from a primary source. For example, if you're writing a paper about *The Great Gatsby* or the United States Constitution, you know to put any quotation from that primary source in quotation marks. Too often, however, high school students are not trained to use secondary sources, such as an essay of literary criticism on Fitzgerald's novel or a scholarly book on the Constitution. Students in disciplinary hearings sometimes claim that they didn't know that ideas or words from secondary sources require citation, or that they thought such material was common knowledge. However, the principle is clear: you must always distinguish your own words and ideas from the words and ideas of others, whether in primary or secondary sources.
6. **Don't rely on a single secondary source** when doing a research paper. Be sure to find multiple sources that provide varying perspectives and draw different conclusions on your research topic. Your paper will be better if you respond to a variety of sources, and you'll avoid any possibility of depending so much on a single source that you can be charged with plagiarism.
7. Whenever possible, **show all of your work in problems sets** that require calculation.
8. **Be sure you understand the instructor's expectations and guidelines for collaborating** on assignments such as lab reports, problem sets, and research projects. If the rules for the course aren't explicit, do yourself (and your fellow students) a favor and ask the professor to clarify them.
9. Be extra careful to **verify the accuracy or validity of information obtained from electronic sources.** Be sure to cite such sources just as you would print sources.
10. If you're unsure whether or not to cite a source, ask your instructor. If that's not possible, follow the basic rule: **when in doubt, cite.**
11. **Be your own hardest critic.** Reread your papers to see how much is your own and how much is quotation, paraphrase, or summary from primary or secondary sources. If your paper is replete with ideas and quotations from your sources, are you confident that you've found some idea or thesis of your own to argue? Conversely, if there are few citations, have you done sufficient reading and research to be confident in your information and analysis?
12. Be sure you **understand your instructor's expectations for your work.** Are you supposed to be summarizing a source or analyzing it? Are you expected to go beyond the assigned readings? How many sources are you expected to use?
13. **Be cautious about using notes belonging to other students,** even if you're in the preliminary stage of writing your own paper or doing your own problem set. Keeping others' ideas distinct from your own is an important way to protect the integrity of your own academic work and to avoid unintended plagiarism.

14. **If you don't understand an assignment or need additional time to complete it, ask your instructor.** Out of desperation, students occasionally make the wrong choice by plagiarizing their sources rather than requesting an extension.
15. This last piece of advice is the hardest of all to follow: **Give yourself enough time to do your work well and carefully.** Proper citation takes time. Avoid last-minute rushes when the pressure of the due date may tempt you to get sloppy or cut corners just to finish. At 5 a.m. after an all-nighter, you may not be thinking clearly enough to make the right choices about properly acknowledging your sources, not to mention that you're unlikely to be doing your finest work at that hour.

The Disciplinary Process

The section below provides you with a brief summary of the disciplinary process at Princeton. The Faculty-Student Committee on Discipline hears all cases of alleged academic infractions as well as any other violations of University codes of conduct that might result in a penalty of suspension, withheld degree, required withdrawal, or expulsion. In a typical year the committee considers 20 to 30 cases involving alleged academic infractions. You'll find recent discipline summary reports online at www.princeton.edu/odus/standards.

Because this booklet concerns itself with the issue of academic integrity, this section summarizes the disciplinary process as it pertains to academic infractions only. Cases of suspected dishonesty during in-class examinations are the jurisdiction of the student Honor Committee.

You'll find the complete and official description of the Faculty-Student Committee on Discipline, its membership, procedures, and the possible range of penalties in *Rights, Rules, Responsibilities*. Remember that, as a Princeton student, you're held responsible for the content of *Rights, Rules, Responsibilities*.

Ignorance of the regulations does not constitute a valid defense if you are charged with plagiarism or another violation.

The Allegation: If a student is alleged to have made any violation of the University's academic regulations, he or she is first asked to meet with an assistant or associate dean of undergraduate students, who is charged with investigating all such complaints promptly. The facts of the case are discussed, the student may give his or her account of the incident, and the dean explains the procedure by which the case will be heard by the Faculty-Student Committee on Discipline. The student has the opportunity to prepare a statement, collect any documents and other supporting materials, enlist the help of an adviser to be present at the hearing, and ask other members of the University community to serve as character witnesses.

The Hearing: The Faculty-Student Committee on Discipline is chaired by the dean of undergraduate students and consists of five student members, four members of the faculty, an assistant or associate dean of undergraduate students (who serves as secretary), and a representative of the Office of the Dean of the College.

Shortly before the hearing, the committee members receive any materials prepared by the student, the faculty member involved, and the secretary. The faculty member bringing the allegation will usually be present at the hearing, and other persons with information about the case may be asked to appear by the student or secretary. The student may be accompanied by an adviser, who must be a current member of the University community and who may participate fully in the proceedings.

The student has the opportunity to make an opening statement, to review any pertinent materials, and to question any individuals who have provided information to the committee. The committee members may then question the student; they may also direct questions to the faculty member or other individuals who have provided information. After such questioning, the committee may hear from a member of the University community who may speak about the character and personal qualities of the student. Students may also submit additional written statements from character witnesses. Please understand, however, that the positive testimony of character witnesses cannot outweigh or cancel out evidence presented to the committee. The student then has an opportunity to make a final statement, after which the student, the adviser, and other others who are not members of the committee are excused.

The committee immediately adjudicates the case. A majority of the committee members present must conclude that the evidence

presented constitutes a clear and persuasive case in support of the charges in order to determine that the student has violated a University regulation. If that is the committee's finding, a determination of the appropriate penalty is then made. The secretary informs the student promptly of the committee's decision.

The Appeal: A student may appeal a decision and/or penalty of the Faculty-Student Committee on Discipline to either the Judicial Committee of the Council of the Princeton University Community or to the dean of the college. The judicial committee considers appeals based only on questions of procedural error or unfairness. (See *Rights, Rules, Responsibilities* for the procedures of the judicial committee.) The dean of the college will consider an appeal on either of two grounds: (1) that new, pertinent information not available to the committee has come to light, or (2) that the imposed penalty does not fall within the range of penalties imposed for similar misconduct. After a review, the dean may decide that an additional hearing is warranted or may recommend to the president that the penalty be altered. If the appeal does not provide convincing grounds for an additional hearing or for altering the penalty, the dean will affirm the original finding and penalty. The dean's decision is final.

Possible Penalties: The committee may administer any one of the following penalties, depending upon the severity of the violation: warning, disciplinary probation for a set period of time, withholding of degree for a set period of time in cases involving

graduating seniors, suspension, required withdrawal, or expulsion. In addition, to underscore the seriousness of the violation, the committee may elect to add University censure to any of the above penalties. See *Rights, Rules, Responsibilities* for a more complete description of these penalties.

In determining the seriousness of an offense, the committee considers whether the student ought reasonably to have understood that his or her actions violated the standards of academic integrity described in *Rights, Rules, Responsibilities*. When the committee concludes that a student ought to have known that he or she had committed a violation, the penalty is normally separation from the University.

Sample Citation Styles

Any time you quote, paraphrase, summarize, or reference a source, you must cite that source in a parenthetical note or a footnote and append a bibliography, which, depending on the discipline, may be called “Works Cited” or “References.”

All citations share some basic components, including the title of the work being referred to, the name of the work’s author(s), the publisher, and the date of publication. Beyond these general requirements, styles of citation vary by discipline and by professor’s preference. In the humanities, the most commonly accepted citation style is that of the Modern Language Association (MLA). In the social sciences, the American Psychological Association (APA) style is widely used. Historians typically employ the footnote style described in *The Chicago Manual of Style* (CMS). Each scientific discipline has its own protocols and formats, usually available in a style manual produced by the discipline’s scholarly organization. You’ll see that many academic disciplines encourage the use of in-text parenthetical citations rather than footnotes.

Once you join a department as a concentrator and begin your junior year work, the department should provide you with information about expected citation formats and practices in the discipline.

Often, individual professors will provide you with information about their preferred citation format.

The examples that follow employ four different citation styles. For the specifics of each style, you should consult an official style manual, because the rules for citation vary greatly for different kinds of sources. For example, books are cited differently from articles, which are cited differently from e-mail correspondence. You’ll need to consult a style manual to determine the proper format for each source type. (A list of recommended style manuals may be found at the end of this section.)

Example 1: Literary Studies (MLA)

The MLA requires a parenthetical citation in the body of the text that corresponds to an entry in the Works Cited at the end. A citation for a quotation from a book in the MLA style is formatted this way:

As Frank Lentricchia argues, *The Waste Land* should not be understood as a logical sequence of events but as “an intellectual and emotional complex grasped in an instant of time” (194).

The parenthetical citation “(194)” refers to a page number from a book by Frank Lentricchia. Publication information about the book would be found in the Works Cited, where it would be formatted this way:

Lentricchia, Frank. *Modernist Quartet*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

Example 2: Psychology (APA)

The APA also requires parenthetical citations in the body of the text, though these citations typically include the author and the date. A citation for a summary of an article in the APA style is formatted this way:

Studies that examine links between cardiovascular and mental activity must understand that cardiovascular activity itself comprises a suite of variables (Van Roon, Mulder, Althaus, and Mulder, 2004).

The parenthetical citation “(Van Roon, Mulder, Althaus, and Mulder, 2004)” refers to an article by the four listed co-authors. Publication information about the article would be found in the References, where it would be formatted this way:

Van Roon, A., Mulder, L., Althaus, M., and Mulder, G. (2004). Introducing a baroflex model for studying cardiovascular effects of mental workload. *Psychophysiology*, 41, 961–981.

Example 3: History (CMS)

CMS, or “Chicago,” is a style in which citations are presented in footnotes. A citation for a quotation from an article in the Chicago style is formatted this way:

Nineteenth-century bohemians were more dependent on mainstream culture than might at first appear. As one scholar puts it, “Bohemia’s self-designated types always existed in symbiotic relation to bourgeois culture rather than in opposition to it.”¹

The footnote “1” would refer to a note at the bottom of the page containing full publication information and formatted this way:

1. Christine Stansell, *American Moderns: Bohemian New York and the Creation of a New Century* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 2000), 18.

Example 4: Biology

Citation styles in math, science, and engineering tend to vary from journal to journal. Following a quotation or a reference to the text, the author might name the source, or might use a superscript number such as ¹ or a parenthetical number such as (1), to indicate the number of the article in the final list of references. The journal *Nature Genetics* uses the following format for articles, and the references are listed numerically rather than alphabetically:

13. Herron, B.J. *et al.* Efficient generation and mapping of recessive developmental mutations using ENU mutagenesis. *Nat. Genet.* 30, 185–189 (2002).

Because of the variety of citation styles for math, science, and engineering, you should consult your professor about his or her preferences and expectations.

Electronic Sources

An electronic source is any source that exists primarily in electronic form and is accessed primarily through electronic means. Websites, online periodicals, online books, e-mails and postings, and even CD-ROMs are all forms of electronic sources. But be careful: not all materials found through electronic means are necessarily electronic sources. For example, if a PDF of an article you found through a database on the library's website was originally published in a printed journal, then the article doesn't qualify as an electronic source. In short, there's a difference between electronic sources and sources that are accessed electronically.

When citing an online source, your citation should contain the following elements:

- the author or editor (if available),
- the title of the text (if different from the name of the website)
- the name of the website,
- the name of the site's sponsor or associated institution or organization,

- the date you accessed the site,
- the electronic address (URL).

For example, a short work posted on a website would be formatted in MLA style as follows:

McCort, Dennis. "Kafka and the Coincidence of Opposites." *Romantic Circles Praxis Series: Romanticism and Buddhism*. February 2007. *Romantic Circles*. 21 April 2008. <<http://www.rc.umd.edu/praxis/buddhism/mccort/mccort.html>>

This citation includes not only the author's name and the work's title, but also other important information, including the date of the work's publication on the site (February 2007) and the date the website was accessed (21 April 2008).

The published guides of the MLA, APA, and Chicago styles include detailed descriptions of how to cite most electronic sources. As explained earlier in this booklet, the emerging nature of this new technology means that conventions are forming quickly, and the variations among citation styles vary considerably. Be sure to look up the appropriate form of citation and to consult your professor about any points of confusion.

Recommended Style Manuals

For complete coverage of MLA, APA, and Chicago citation styles, you should obtain the most recent edition of each style's

official manual: *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (6th edition, 2003), the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th edition, 2001), and *The Chicago Manual of Style* (15th edition, 2003). For an online guide to these styles, visit the Library website, at www.library.princeton.edu/help/citing.php. A good commercially published guide is *A Pocket Style Manual*, by Diana Hacker (5th edition, 2008), which includes brief but substantial overviews of the MLA, APA, and Chicago styles.

Campus Resources

Below are useful campus resources where you can get answers to your questions about academic integrity. These and other resources are also listed on the Princeton Writing Program's website, at www.princeton.edu/writing/integrity.

Your Professors, Preceptors, and Lab Instructors

Your instructors can give you guidance on which citation style to use and whether you're permitted to get feedback from a classmate or to collaborate on a problem set or lab report. If you're unsure of your instructors' expectations, just ask.

The Writing Center

South Baker Hall/Whitman College

Appointments: www.princeton.edu/writing/appt

Drop-in Hours: Sunday–Thursday evenings, 7 p.m.–10 p.m.

The Writing Center offers free one-on-one tutoring sessions with experienced fellow writers trained to consult on assignments in any discipline. Writing Center Fellows can offer you advice on any aspect of the writing process, including distinguishing your own ideas from those of your sources, and properly incorporating and citing sources.

Academic Consulting for Excellence (ACE)

The McGraw Center for Teaching and Learning

328 Frist Campus Center

Appointments: www.princeton.edu/mcgraw/ace.html

ACE consultants provide free one-on-one consultations and workshops on reading and note-taking strategies, time management, and dealing with procrastination—all integral to avoiding situations that may lead to plagiarism.

The University Library

Home: library.princeton.edu

Subject Specialists: libweb.princeton.edu/help/sub.php

Research Appointments: library.princeton.edu/help/appointment.php

Online guides to source citation are available through the library home page (click on “Citing Sources”). You can also talk with librarians in Firestone Library or any of Princeton's branch libraries about your research projects. Ask at the Firestone Reference Desk, make an appointment with a subject specialist, or make a research appointment online.

Counseling and Psychological Services

University Health Services

McCosh Health Center

Information: www.princeton.edu/uhs/ss_counseling.html

Appointments: (609) 258-3285

Panic is a risk factor for plagiarism. If you're in a panic about a paper or project—or anything else—just pick up the phone and call. Counseling and other psychological services are available to you 24/7 during the academic year.

Online Resources

“Academic Regulations” in *Rights, Rules, Responsibilities*

www.princeton.edu/pr/pub/rrr

Guides to Source Citation

library.princeton.edu/help/citing.php

Writing Resources

www.princeton.edu/writing/resources

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