

# AVOIDING PLAGIARISM

**Plagiarism** is a violation of the ethics of research and a violation of the the St. John's Academic Honor Pledge. Part of a good education is to learn how to use information ethically. The following pages will help you recognize plagiarism and teach you some guidelines for avoiding it.

## What is Plagiarism?

“plagiarize:

1. To use and pass off [the ideas or writings of another] as one's own.
2. To appropriate for use as one's own passages or ideas from [another].”

*The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 4th ed.*  
Copyright 2000 by Houghton Mifflin Company.



## Forms of Plagiarism Include:

- Copying from published or unpublished sources without giving credit, including materials and/or ideas from the Internet.
- Purchasing a pre-written paper, speech, essay, presentation, or other work (whether by mail or electronically).
- Having someone else write a paper for you (whether you pay them or not).

## Why Should You Care About Plagiarism?

- It's dishonest.
- It undermines the learning process.
- It devalues the work of those plagiarized.
- It gives a person unfair advantages over other students.
- It shows disrespect to professors and fellow students.
- It violates University policy and may result in severe consequences for the offender...

According to the *SJU Student Handbook, 2001-2002*, penalties for plagiarism may include:

1. Loss of credit, in whole or in part, for the work involved.
2. Loss of credit for the course.
3. Written reprimand in the student's record.
4. Academic probation.
5. Suspension.
6. Expulsion, imposed by recommendation to the Provost.



## How to Avoid Plagiarism.

Plagiarism is often unintentional, so the best way to avoid it is to educate yourself about how to use information responsibly. Here are some guidelines:

### 1. Citing Your Sources.

You must always show where you got the information used in your research.

A **citation** must clearly point to the specific sources of information used, and may include author, title, publisher, date, web address, and/or other relevant information.

There are several citation styles. For more information, see the “Citing Sources” in the SJU Information Literacy Tutorial, or ask your professor.

### 2. Quoting.

When you use someone else's exact words, you must place quotation marks around the borrowed text, **AND** cite the source. For example:

“In the last four decades, more than two and a half million immigrants have settled in New York City. They come, in the main from Latin America, the Caribbean, and Asia, although sometimes it seems as if every country in the world is represented” (Foner 1).

### 3. Paraphrasing.

When you put another person's ideas into your own words, you **must** still cite the source. For example,

According to Nancy Foner, in the past forty years, millions of immigrants have come to New York City from Latin America, the Caribbean, Asia, and all parts of the world (1).

### 4. Common Knowledge.

Common knowledge is information that is likely to be known by many people, and that is found in several sources. Information that is common knowledge does **not** need to be cited.

COMMON KNOWLEDGE

NOT COMMON KNOWLEDGE

•NY is a multicultural city.

• 6.3% of Brooklyn's population is Asian.

### 5. Plagiarism & the Web.

Because information on the Web is available so freely, it can be easy to plagiarize, whether intentionally or not.

## HAVE A QUESTION?

In Person: Ask at the Reference desk in any Library!

Telephone: (718)990-6727

E-mail: <http://libraries.stjohns.edu/askus>