

Plagiarism Statement for Dr. McFadden's Courses Revised January 2024

I adhere to the TTU Plagiarism statement: <https://www.depts.ttu.edu/tlpc/PlagiarismStatement.pdf>

TTU Operating Procedure 34:12: "Academic integrity is taking responsibility for one's own class and/or course work, being individually accountable, and demonstrating intellectual honesty and ethical behavior. Academic integrity is a personal choice to abide by the standards of intellectual honesty and responsibility. Because education is a shared effort to achieve learning through the exchange of ideas, students, faculty, and staff have the collective responsibility to build mutual trust and respect. Ethical behavior and independent thought are essential for the highest level of academic achievement, which then must be measured. Academic achievement includes scholarship, teaching, and learning, all of which are shared endeavors. Grades are a device used to quantify the successful accumulation of knowledge through learning. Adhering to the standards of academic integrity ensures grades are earned honestly. Academic integrity is the foundation upon which students, faculty, and staff build their educational and professional careers." Instructors assume all work submitted is the student's original work. Therefore, plagiarism is a severe breach of academic integrity. At TTU, possible penalties range from failure on the work in question to failure in 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 (period after citation, not inside the quotation); note also that inline poetry citation uses LINE NUMBERS, not page numbers (l. for one line, ll. for two or more), and a slash to separate poetic lines. A good general rule is that you use inline citations for three or fewer lines of poetry and fifty words or fewer of prose.

For quoting larger sections of prose, use a *block quotation*, which looks like this - indented half an inch on both margins, single spaced, no quotation marks (unless the text you are citing is itself in quotation marks), and with a parenthetical citation or a footnote at the end. As a general rule, for citations of four or more lines of poetry or fifty prose words or more, use a block quotation. Note the punctuation at the end of these block quotations is different from inline quotes in that the period comes before the citation. **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.
Quotation marks should not finish or start,
"[U]nless the text itself makes them a part."
Again, please note, **not centered, but indented;**
This way looks nice; the other looks fragmented. (ll. 103-110)

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.

¹ Terry Smith, *My Book about Plagiarism* (New York: Big Publisher, 2022): 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 (2022): 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, put "Web" or the DOI number after the entry. For a website: Pat Smith, "Avoiding Online Plagiarism," Anti-Plagiarism Society, www.ihateplagiarism.org/smith.html, accessed 1/5/2022. 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* (either one is acceptable in the discipline of English literature, but find out whether or not your instructors have a preference).

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 someone's ideas, even if you aren't copying their direct words; it is taking someone's intellectual property. If you're going to spend the time to change someone's words, you might as well take the time to write your own and avoid risking your grade.

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. See the generative AI policy below in section 6.

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 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 had 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 your instructor doesn't explicitly say collaboration is allowed on your work, don't assume it is. Generative AI is prohibited in the proofreading process in my classes - see the next section.

6) *ChatGPT and other generative AI resources are prohibited in my classes*. ChatGPT and other AI sites use what they find on the web to predict what an average reader would say about a topic; basically, it is a glorified version of the predictive text in the address line of a web browser. My first issue is that to come up with its answers, it uses the work found on other websites without permission or acknowledgment, so its responses start as plagiarized material. Second, while it can perhaps give solid basic information, it cannot truly analyze texts or respond to prompts, and as I expect engagement beyond simple textual knowledge in my assignments, it will give you a bad essay. Last, AI's are not immune from simply making up information such as citations, or going on a tangent that is not part of the assignment; they cannot focus in the way that a human reader can and can give some blatantly wrong output, which again will hurt your grade. As my assignments are generally short and depend on analytic responses, not merely rehashes of the text, you really don't need AI's anyway, and they will not help you get a good grade.

7) *Common knowledge - names, dates of events, etc. - need not be referenced, but any use of texts that report 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.

8) *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 saying "Dr. McFadden, class notes" in your essays!) If you are unsure about how to deal with an idea, consult your instructor.

9) *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. Save your time, money, and reputation - be honest and do your own work. Also, beware of the new AI sites that can produce prose - a machine doing your work for you isn't any better than a person doing your work for you.

When in doubt, consult your instructor! If you are worried about looking foolish because you don't know whether something is permissible or not, just remember: the only foolish question is the one that needs to be asked but isn't. People wise enough to realize they don't know something are acting wisely when they try to find it out.