Overview

We are committed as an institution to ethical practice in teaching, scholarship, and service. We practice academic honesty in our oral and written scholarship. This means that we take care to appropriately acknowledge the contributions of others to our work. This policy defines and provides examples of plagiarism and outlines the disciplinary actions that follow verified acts of academic dishonesty.

Definition

Academic dishonesty is the deliberate attempt to misrepresent individual efforts, whether in writing, audio-visual representation, or oral presentation. Issues of plagiarism are specific examples of academic dishonesty. Basically, plagiarism is claiming someone else’s ideas, words, or information as your own without acknowledgement or citation. In minor cases, it can be the simple quotation of a sentence or two without quotation marks and without a citation, footnote, endnote, or inclusive note to indicate the true author. In the most serious cases, plagiarism reproduces a significant fraction of an entire work written by someone else. An example of plagiarism consists of removal of the true author(s) name(s) and substituting the plagiarist’s name. Mere reformatting of a text does not constitute “original” thought, but merely juxtaposing someone else’s work and text.

Why is Plagiarism a moral offense?

The basic Judeo-Christian ethical mandate includes “thou shalt not steal” (Exodus 20:15). Plagiarism is first and foremost an act of theft and fraud. To claim others’ work as your own without acknowledgement or citation is an example of academic fraud. Laws in civilized societies protect individual expression as the property of the original author. Plagiarism—either by verbatim copying or paraphrasing without citation—is infringement of most nations’ copyright laws. Repeating words or thoughts of other people and claiming or implying that those precise words are original to you is an example of lying, misrepresentation and theft. Expectations within the academic community assume the production of new knowledge, discoveries of new facts, or new ways of looking at previously known facts. Analysis of data expressed in written form must be attributed to the source of the analysis.

Plagiarism can be an especially challenging issue for international scholars and non-native speakers of English because definitions of acceptable and unacceptable behavior may vary from culture to culture. Culture “A” may say that copying another’s work is “acknowledging the superior mastery and expression of an expert,” while Culture “B” may say that the same behavior is “plagiarism.” This Faculty Handbook section describes the expectations of the U.S. academic community regarding plagiarism.

What must you do to avoid plagiarism?

You must put others’ words in quotation marks and cite your source(s) and must also give citations when using others’ ideas, even if those ideas are paraphrased in your own words. The “work of someone else” includes: original ideas, strategies, outlines, research, art, graphics, computer programs, music, media examples, and other creative expression. Unpublished source materials such as class lectures or notes, handouts, speeches, other students’ or faculty’s papers, or material from a research service must also be cited to avoid plagiarism. Faculty members who use student assistants...
Academic Honesty Policy

for research and writing are required to acknowledge the contribution of the student worker in the
citation portion of a faculty member’s academic work.  

Faculty should educate their students in appropriate forms of paraphrase and citation. Cosmetic
changes in another work without citation is still plagiarism. Writers should avoid single word
substitutions (e.g. “less” for “fewer”), reversing the order of a sentence, or merely using an ellipsis
mark (…). “Common knowledge” facts need not be cited. That Abraham Lincoln was the U.S.
President during the Civil War is common knowledge; that Abraham Lincoln suffered from severe
depression and migraine headaches may require a citation to support the claim.

Purchasing or copying a previously written or published research paper from an on-line computer
service or web site and submitting it as your own work is morally reprehensible and constitutes
plagiarism. Any time you use information from any source, you must provide a citation of
acknowledgement of the original source. Internet websites may be referenced for academic
work, but cited by the date referenced.

Examples of Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism Deemed Unacceptable
Within the Academic Community

• Making a public presentation (e.g., speech, lecture, sermon) where elements of the
presentation are misrepresented as original thought or work.
• Having someone else (including students) write a paper for you and submitting it in as your
own work or writing a paper for someone else.
• Submitting as your own work papers, articles, book chapters, reports formerly written by
students working with a faculty member, or purchased from commercial services.
• Using published materials word for word, without citation or quotation marks, as all or part
of work submitted as your own. (This category also includes media examples covered in a
separate paragraph.)
• Close, deliberate paraphrase of another’s work, published or unpublished, without
acknowledgement.
• Deliberately using false citations to give the appearance of acknowledgement and research.
• Referencing Internet websites without citation or paraphrase.

Plagiarism in Media and Artistic Expression

It is Biola University’s policy that no copyrighted material may be included in media productions
without the written permission of the copyright owner. This pertains to any media production
produced by Biola, its students, staff, or faculty. Copyrighted material is any material created by
someone else that has not come into the public domain, whether or not there is a copyright notice.
It is the responsibility of the one producing the media to ascertain if the material is in the public
domain, or else to receive written permission.

Some copyright issues can be complex. A Beethoven sonata is in public domain because of its age,
but a recording of it is copyrighted. The Grand Canyon is not copyrighted, but a picture of it is.

Performance or exhibition of copyrighted materials falls under different laws than inclusion of
material in media productions. In general, copyrighted materials may be shown or viewed in
classrooms without violating the law, under the provision of “Fair Use.” However, performance rights need to be cleared for material presented in public venues, especially those for which admission is charged.

Quotes or summarization of material from media productions when cited in scholarly papers should be cited in the same way any other material would be.

**Instruction Against and Prevention of Plagiarism**

Every school department should implement a means to teach students about acceptable standards for academic honesty. For undergraduate students, this instruction should begin with sessions housed within the “First Year Seminar” and continued in later writing courses. For graduate students, this instruction should begin with the first research level methodological study courses and sustained throughout the curriculum. Some school departments can elaborate on such issues during a Writing Competency preparatory session or class.

Every school is required to have all syllabi include a paragraph statement regarding the university’s position on academic honesty. For schools or program without a preset statement, the following paragraph can be utilized:

We are committed at Biola University to ethical practice in teaching, scholarship, and service. As such, plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Please see the undergraduate/graduate student handbook and/or the departmental/program/school policy on academic honesty. It is imperative that you present all written, oral, and/or performed work with a clear indication of the source of that work. If it is completely your own, you are encouraged to present it as such, taking pleasure in ownership of your own created work. **However,** it is also imperative that you give full credit to any and all others whose work you have included in your presentation via paraphrase, direct quotation, and/or performance, citing the name(s) or the author(s)/creator(s) and the source of the work with appropriate bibliographic information. To do otherwise is to put oneself in jeopardy of being sanctioned for an act or acts of plagiarism that can carry serious consequences up to and including expulsion from the university.

**Detection of Plagiarism**

Biola University authorizes individual professors and students to use any computer search mechanisms to validate and verify examples of plagiarism, prior to disciplinary action. Detection may also include verification of duplicated student work, current or previous.

**Faculty Academic Honesty Statement**

All of the same standards and expectations for student compliance with issues of plagiarism and academic honesty will be demanded of all faculty members in the university.

No member of the Biola University faculty should use research, written or produced work by undergraduate or graduate students for his/her own personal research, without proper citation and acknowledgement of the student’s contribution. All materials and resources offered as part of a professor’s promotion portfolio must be revealed as the work of the individual faculty member and not the product of a “ghost writer.”
Any faculty member accused of plagiarism from within or without the university has access to due process of law with a disciplinary committee of his/her peers. If the disciplinary process finds that a faculty member is in violation of any aspect of plagiarism, the faculty member's academic position will be evaluated by the department or program chair, the dean, the Vice Provost, and the Provost and a decision of continued service to the university determined.

**Disciplinary Results from Plagiarism or Academic Dishonesty**

Ignorance regarding appropriate paraphrase and citation is not an excuse warranting misrepresentation of original work. Individual professors may determine whether an isolated instance of plagiarism was due to faulty citation skills or misrepresentation with intent. In such cases, the professor may allow a student to correct the citation in a final assignment.

Dishonesty in a minor class assignment (e.g. test, short reaction paper, quiz, etc.) will result in a score of zero for the assignment, or possibly a failing grade for the entire course. Dishonesty or plagiarism of a major assignment (e.g. examination, prominent writing submission, term paper, term project, etc.) will result in immediate grade of “F” for the course and will be referred to the Office of the Registrar, or for graduate programs, the Office of the Dean of the School. Individual departments or programs within the university may hold additional requirements for academic dishonesty (e.g., Torrey Honors Institute or a graduate program policy of dismissal from the program).

If a faculty member discovers evidence of plagiarism or academic dishonesty, the instructor should confront the student with the seriousness of the charge and report the infraction to the department or program chair. For graduate programs a program director will work directly with the school dean to address any issues of academic dishonesty. The disciplinary action by the faculty member should follow the above guidelines. In addition, the undergraduate faculty member shall provide a written report to the Office of the Registrar. The Office of the Registrar shall place a copy of the report in a sealed, confidential envelope in the student's file. At the receipt of a second report on the same student, the Registrar's Office will notify the program or department major chair, the school dean and the vice provost for further disciplinary action. Multiple cases and disciplinary actions for academic dishonesty will result in academic probation or dismissal from the university.

In the case of a student or faculty member denying commitment of academic dishonesty, but not to the satisfaction of the professor or dean, the matter will be referred to the relevant appeal procedure.