

TO: Honors Students  
 FROM: Dr. Rachelle Goldsmith, Honors Program Director  
 RE: Plagiarism

Given that the honors program holds its students to the highest standards of academic excellence, it is your responsibility to insure that your Honors Contract does not contain any plagiarism. Below find a description of plagiarism and information on how to avoid it. Please familiarize yourself with this information, seek out other sources if needed, or talk with your honors contract faculty mentor, honors academic liaison, writing fellow, or program director from the department in which you are doing the contract.

### What is plagiarism?

**Plagiarism** is the act of the presenting another person's ideas, research or writings as your own. Example of plagiarism include:

- **Copying** another person's actual words or images without the use of quotation marks and footnotes attributing the words to their source.
- Presenting another person's ideas or theories in your own words **without acknowledging the source**.
- **Failing to acknowledge collaborators** on homework and laboratory assignments.
- Internet plagiarism, including submitting downloaded term papers or parts or term papers, paraphrasing or copying information from the internet without citing the source, or "**cutting & pasting**" from various sources without proper attribution.

Source:

*CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity*. Kingsborough Community College. Web. 6 Nov. 2014.

### What does plagiarism look like?

**Imagine that a student wants to use information from the following passage**, on pg. 102 of Kernan, Alvin. *The Playwright as Magician*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979. Print.

"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."

What NOT to do:

### Plagiarism through unacknowledged direct quotation (lifted passages are underlined):

**Plagiarized example:** Almost all of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* can be understood as a play about acting and the theatre. 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 at the heart of his mystery.

**Comment:** *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. 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.*

### Plagiarism through using selected phrases without proper acknowledgement (lifted passages are underlined):

**Plagiarized example:** Almost all of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* can be understood as a play about acting and the theatre. For example, in Act 1, 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.

**Comment:** *This passage, in content and structure, is taken wholesale from the source. Although the writer has rewritten much of the sentence, 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.*

### Plagiarism through paraphrasing the text but maintaining the basic paragraph and sentence structure:

**Plagiarized example:** Almost all of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* can be understood as a play about acting and the theatre. For example, in Act 1, Hamlet pretends to be insane in order to make sure his enemies do not discover his mission to revenge his father's murder.

**Comment:** *Almost nothing of Alvin 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. Although it would no longer be necessary to use quotation marks, it would **absolutely be necessary to place a citation at the end of this paragraph** to acknowledge that the content is not original. Better still would be to acknowledge the author in the text by adding a phrase such as "Alvin Kernan argues..." and then citing the source at the end of the paragraph.*

*Adapted from:*  
Academic Integrity at Princeton. Princeton University, 2011. Web. 6 Nov. 2014.  
<<http://www.princeton.edu:80/~compub/pubs/rrr/63-69.htm>>

How can I prevent plagiarism?

Remember: **quote, paraphrase or summarize!**

**Quotations** must be identical to the original, using a narrow segment of the source. They must match the source document word for word and must be attributed to the original author.

**To quote our passage** from Alvin Kernan’s book on Shakespeare:

According to Alvin Kernan, “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” (102). *Then add, in your own words, why this passage is important to your argument.*

**Paraphrasing** involves putting a passage from source material into your own words. A paraphrase must also be attributed to the original source. Paraphrased material is usually shorter than the original passage, taking a segment of the source and condensing it slightly.

**To paraphrase our passage:**

Alvin Kernan argues that Shakespeare’s critique of theater emerges in Hamlet’s peculiar behavior (102). *Then add, in your own words, why this is important to your argument.*

**Summarizing** involves putting the main idea(s) into your own words, including only the main point(s). Once again, it is necessary to attribute summarized ideas to the original source. Summaries are significantly shorter than the original and take a broad overview of the source material.

**To summarize our passage:**

In *The Playwright as Magician*, Alvin Kernan shows that Shakespeare’s Hamlet is not about the intricacies of Hamlet’s own life, but about the theater itself. *Then add, in your own words, why this is important to your argument.*

*Adapted from:*

Driscoll, Dana Lynn and Allen Brizee, *Quoting, Paraphrasing, and Summarizing*. Purdue OWL. Web. 6 Nov. 2014. < <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/owlprint/563/>>

Still have questions?

- Visit the plagiarism section of the Purdue University Online Writing Lab (OWL) at: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/01>.
- Talk to:
  - Your honors contract faculty mentor
  - Your honors academic liaison
  - A writing fellow
  - A librarian
  - The program director from the department in which you are doing the contract.