

# Content Avoiding Plagiarism

The UVU “Student Rights and Responsibilities” states, “Each student is expected to maintain academic ethics and avoid dishonesty in all its forms, including but not limited to, cheating and plagiarism . . .” (*UVU Catalog 2008-2009*, 31-32).

## WHAT IS PLAGIARISM?

Plagiarism is defined as “the act of appropriating any other person’s or group’s ideas or work (written, computerized, artistic, etc.) or portions thereof and passing them off as the product of one’s own work in any academic exercise or activity” (*UVU Catalog 2008-2009*, 31-32).

### Types of plagiarism include the following:

- ◀ Claiming that any portion of another person’s writing or ideas is your own work. It does not matter if the material is purchased, borrowed, or stolen—it is still plagiarism.
- ◀ Summarizing (briefly stating an author’s main ideas), paraphrasing (putting the author’s words into your own words), or quoting (copying specific words, sentences, and/ or paragraphs) without crediting the source, accurately citing the information, and fairly representing the author’s intentions.
- ◀ Using facts (statistics, research findings, graphics, etc.) that are not common knowledge without citing the source you obtained them from.

You need to give credit for anything that is not common knowledge. Common knowledge is information that can easily be found in a wide variety of resources (i.e., birth dates or places). However, if it is new information to you or not well-known within your subject area, cite the information.

## WHY SHOULD I GIVE CREDIT TO OTHER AUTHORS?

### Giving credit to authors adds to your credibility as a writer.

- ◀ Doing research shows that you know what other people are saying about the subject.
- ◀ Responding to others’ ideas gives you added authority on the subject.
- ◀ Providing citations also gives readers needed information to locate your sources for further research.

### Plagiarism destroys credibility.

- ◀ Using stolen information ruins any authority and reliability you have as a writer. Ideas are owned by the person who originated them, and using another author’s ideas constitutes dishonest behavior.

## HOW DO I AVOID PLAGIARISM?

### DO:

- ◀ Be accurate and careful in note taking and when cutting and pasting from the Internet.
- ◀ Distinguish between quotes, paraphrases, and summaries, so you can reference each appropriately.
- ◀ Clarify the source of each quote, paraphrase, or summary. Include author, title of work, and page numbers along with pertinent publication information.
- ◀ Put direct quotes in quotation marks, use the exact wording as the original quote, and convey the meaning intended by the author.
- ◀ Place paraphrases and summaries in your own words and be true to the author’s ideas.
- ◀ Always include an accurate *Works Cited/ References/ Bibliography* page.

### DON’T:

- ◀ Misrepresent others’ work as your own.
- ◀ Go to online sites where papers can be bought or think that web information doesn’t need to be cited.
- ◀ Procrastinate your assignments; allow yourself time to do the assignment correctly.

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## HOW DO I RECOGNIZE PLAGIARISM?

Plagiarism may be either intentional or unintentional. To avoid plagiarizing, always remember to cite *any* material that is not your own. The following examples demonstrate correct and plagiarized summaries and paraphrases from the same text.

### ORIGINAL TEXT:

*Teaching Sociology* reminds us in each issue that sociology instructors need not follow the traditional teaching model of lecturing to a captive audience. Fiction, film, and music are popular cultural media that have been suggested as means for establishing links between sociology and the “real world” outside our classrooms (Laz 1996; Loewen 1991; Martinez 1995; Pescosolido 1990). Given the visibility of comic book characters in American culture, it is surprising that more sociologists have not looked to comic books as another resource for teaching.

Hall, Kelley J., and Lucal, Betsy. “Tapping into Parallel Universes: Using Superhero Comic Books in Sociology Courses.” *Teaching Sociology* 27, 60-66.

## SUMMARY

### CORRECT:

While teachers often use movies and music in the classroom, instructors can similarly learn how to use comic books as teaching tools to connect sociology to the outside world (Hall and Lucal 60).

### PLAGIARIZED:

Through reading *Teaching Sociology*, instructors are reminded that they need not follow the traditional teaching model of lecturing to a captive audience and instead can learn how to use popular media such as comic books as teaching tools to link sociology to the real world outside the classroom.

- ◀ A correct summary states the author’s main ideas (without quoting too closely) and gives a source for the information.
- ◀ Problems in a plagiarized summary can include incorporating word-for-word quotations, stating the main ideas without including a source or citation, or giving the wrong citation.

## PARAPHRASE

### CORRECT:

Hall and Lucal’s innovative teaching technique of using comic books in sociology classrooms opens exciting and practical possibilities for instructors struggling to connect abstract sociology principles to student understanding (60).

### PLAGIARIZED:

With the high visibility of comic book characters in society, the innovative teaching technique of using comic books in classrooms opens exciting and practical possibilities for sociology instructors struggling to connect abstract principles to student understanding.

- ◀ A correct paraphrase references the authors and cites the material.
- ◀ Problems in a plagiarized paraphrase can include using wording that is too similar to the original text, not giving any reference to the authors, not including a citation, or including the wrong citation.

**REMEMBER: WHEN IN DOUBT, CITE THE MATERIAL!**