THE PURLOINED PAPER:

A Plagiarism Workshop for Faculty

Because plagiarism is not just a student issue…

3-PRONGED APPROACH

In this Workshop you will learn three steps to deal more effectively with plagiarism

- ➢ **Understanding**
- ➢ **Prevention**
- ➢ **Detection**

Plagiarism Defined

➢ **Plagiarism is the intentional or accidental intellectual theft of someone else's thoughts, words or ideas.**

➢ **CCC Defines plagiarism: Plagiarism is defined as submitting assignments, examinations, or other academic work, which is not entirely the work of the student. This can include, but is not limited to such practices as: quoting without giving proper credit to a source, expanding someone else's work without giving proper credit, adopting as one's own an actual document (including the copying of computer or other electronic media), directly using someone else's ideas rather than words without giving proper credit. (Policies & Procedures #303.11)**

Types of Plagiarism I

- **Using someone else's idea, opinion or theory without properly citing the source**

- **Using anything that is not common knowledge: words, drawings, images, facts, statistics or graphs without proper citation**

- **Using quotations of another person's actual spoken or written words without citation**

- **Paraphrasing or summarizing another person's spoken or written words without citation**

Types of Plagiarism II

- **"Borrowing" from Internet or other electronic sources without citation**

- **Cutting & pasting text or images directly into an essay without citation (Cyber-Plagiarism)**

- **Recycling a peer's paper from the same class**

- **Downloading an essay from a "<u>paper mill</u>" and taking credit for the work**

- ➢ <u>**NOTE:**</u> Plagiarism is nothing new; however, electronic resources such as the Internet have made it faster & easier!

A Word on 'Paper Mills'

Paper mills are websites that offer down-loadable essays on a variety of topics; some essays are free & some must be purchased.
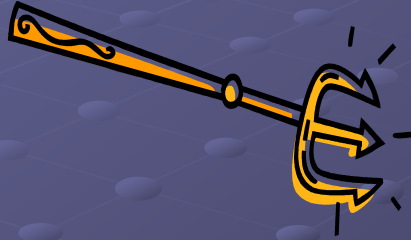
Some examples of paper mills are:

- Planet Papers
  http://www.planetpapers.com

- Evil House of Cheat
  http://www.cheathouse.com

- School Sucks
  http://www.schoolsucks.com

- Free Essay Network
  http://www.freeessay.com

MOST STUDENTS DO NOT SET OUT TO INTENTIONALLY PLAGIARIZE

Prong 1:

Understanding

why students plagiarize

Why, Oh Why, Do They Do It?

- Under-developed organization & time management skills

- Limited research experience

- Performance pressure

- Miscalculated research time

- Procrastination

- Misunderstanding of plagiarism and its consequences

- Accustomed to sharing information (file sharing, social networking, etc.)

"to educate," from

Creating an environment focused on <u>learning</u> rather than on <u>grading</u> may help students to relax and enjoy learning the process of research.

But I'm Not an English Teacher!

Teaching solid research skills is the job of every instructor who assigns research.

- Do not assume your students know how to locate, evaluate and manage sources.

- Do expect plenty of questions about the research process, plagiarism and documentation.

- Do not expect students to search for the academic integrity policy in the Student Handbook.

- Do include *your* definition, policies & penalties, as well as CCC's, on your syllabus; discuss them with students.

PREVENTION IS ABOUT INSTRUCTOR DO'S SO THAT STUDENTS DON'T
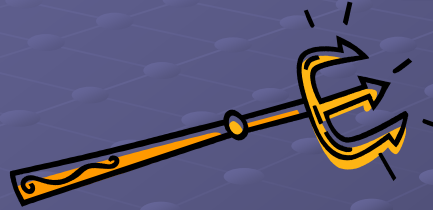
Prong 2:

Preventing plagiarism in your classroom

The Do's of Prevention
The Assignment I

- <u>Do</u> **create complex assignments with a twist.** This makes it difficult to find a paper to download from a paper mill.

- <u>Do</u> **rotate assignments every semester.** This makes it more difficult for students to "recycle" papers with peers.

- <u>Do</u> **create a list of appropriate topics. {You may allow for other topics if they are pre-approved.}** This allows you to be well prepared by researching websites students might copy & paste or buy papers from.

- <u>Do</u> **require submissions each step of the way. (e.g., thesis question, preliminary bibliography, outline, first draft)** This makes "faking it" more difficult than just doing the research.

The Do's of Prevention
The Assignment II

- **<u>Do</u> require an annotated bibliography be submitted a couple of weeks before the final paper.** This "forces" students to read and comprehend their sources—it's hard to create an annotated bibliography for a purchased paper.

- **<u>Do</u> require a first draft be submitted about a week before the final.** This gives you the opportunity to "catch" accidental plagiarism before it really counts.

- **<u>Do</u> require various types of resources be used.** This makes it more difficult for students to copy & paste their paper together.

The Do's of Prevention
The Assignment III

- **Do** require that sources be current. This makes most paper mill essays unusable since they are typically not current. A good rule of thumb is one source must be published within the year and all others must be published within the last 5 years.

- **Do** require a research trail by requesting notes, printouts and drafts to be submitted as part of the project. This discourages plagiarism because students must supply their work.

- **Do** require a "What I learned about the research process" essay as a conclusion to the assignment. This discourages plagiarism—the details of the research process are tough to fake.

The Do's of Prevention
The Classroom I

- **Do refer students to additional resources such as the Library & Learning Enhancement Center (LEC).** This is a way for students to get help outside of the classroom.

- **Do refer students to the Library's Avoiding Plagiarism Online Workshop.** This will inform them as to the types of plagiarism and ways to avoid them. http://www.coconino.edu/lec/workshops/plagiarism.pps

- **Do set aside "research days" when students bring in their questions for you to answer.** This gives students a chance to get specific answers from the expert.

- **Do consider reserving a computer classroom for these dates.** This way you can see the question—often, students don't know how to phrase their research questions.

The Do's of Prevention
The Classroom II

- <u>Do</u> plan short individual conferences with students. This lets you & them know if they are "on-track."

- <u>Do</u> remind students that they must think about documentation from the beginning of the research. This helps students keep track of the publication information they will need to document sources.

- <u>Do</u> request an In-class Research Workshop. This allows students to get valuable information about research methods, plagiarism and documentation from someone other than you. Each Workshop will be tailored to your specifications. <u>Call the Library Services Representative at 226-4205 to request a Research Workshop</u>.

The Do's of Prevention
The Classroom III

- [Do](#) **make the process as public as possible--for example, have students present their findings in class.** This makes students who consider plagiarizing feel more exposed, and therefore, less willing to take the chance.

- [Do](#) **base some of the assignment on in-class work.** This gives you the chance to notice students who seem to be unengaged, and possibly who are planning on "taking the easy way out."

The Do's of Prevention
The Teaching I

- <u>Do</u> let student know that <u>you</u> know about paper mills, cyber-plagiarism, etc. This will make them think twice about intentionally plagiarizing.

- <u>Do</u> teach students how to document – yours may be the first class in which they have encountered citations. This illustration of accurate citations makes the concept more concrete, and therefore, easier to comprehend.

- <u>Do</u> include the Library's Research & Writing Room URL on the assignment sheet and/or syllabus. This lets students know they can access research & writing help 24/7. <u>http://www.coconino.edu/library/room.htm</u>

The Do's of Prevention
## The Teaching II

- <u>Do</u> **hand out and discuss examples of plagiarism.** This helps students <u>see</u> exactly what they are being asked to do.

- <u>Do</u> **begin talking about plagiarism from day one and discuss it often.** This lets students know that it is important.

- <u>Do</u> **make the assignment and your expectations explicit; be specific about types of research allowed, type of documentation style accepted and currency of research boundaries.** This lessens student anxiety about this often overwhelming process. They are less likely to plagiarize if they understand what you want.

The Do's of Prevention
The Teaching III

- <u>Do</u> **give specific examples of quotations, paraphrasing and summaries.** This puts an abstract concept into a tangible process. It is common for students to accidently plagiarize summarizing and paraphrasing.

- <u>Do</u> **choose one standard documentation style.** This helps avoid more confusion as students tend to "blend" all the styles together if more than one is allowed.

- <u>Do</u> **ask a Librarian. Send students to the Library and Learning Enhancement Center (LEC) for assistance.** This is what we love to do—guide students through the research process.

SOME WILL TRY, NO MATTER WHAT
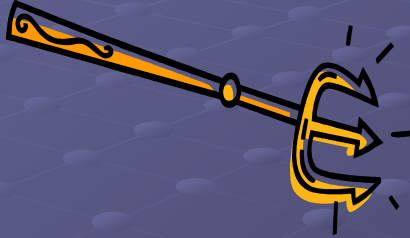
Prong 3:

Detect

plagiarism in student papers

The Basics of Detection

- Assign a diagnostic essay the first day of class. This will provide you with a writing sample if you need to later support that parts of a paper were not written by the student.

- Photocopy the first page of every essay submitted to you and keep an organized file. This will prove your case if a student "recycles" a paper.

- Require students to submit an electronic copy of the paper, even if you also require a paper copy. This makes it easy for you to copy & paste passages into a search engine to locate suspected plagiarism.

Identify Essays From Paper Mills

Every paper mill has differing essay quality, but many common issues include:

- Old or outdated references
- Stilted or archaic language
- Misspellings
- Awkward transitions between paragraphs
- Odd formatting, such as different fonts, shifting margins, etc.

Cyber-Plagiarism Clues

Look for:

- Another student's last name in the header with the page numbers.

- URL's running along the bottom where the student printed the paper directly from the paper mill website.

- Last pages that say something like, "This essay is provided by schoolsucks.com"

- ❖ <u>NOTE</u>: **Pay close attention to students who are not submitting assignments through the process—this could be a sign that the student is not researching…**

More Cyber-Plagiarism Clues

- The paper is off-topic and/or choppy. It may have a few paragraphs written by the student, but other parts are "patched together" from various electronic resources. The paper may go back and forth between being on & off topic.

- The paper includes old references to political or historical events that appear to be recent (i.e., "It is hard to say why President Carter signed the bill last week.")

Considerations for Instruction

- Consider sharing an essay from a paper mill with students, pointing out weaknesses to illustrate that it is not the quality you are expecting.

- Consider having students work in teams in class. Peers can catch accidental plagiarism & lead the student back to solid ground.

- Consider having students sign an "honor statement" saying they understand the College's definition, policies and penalties for academic dishonesty, and that they have honored these policies.

- Remember: one of the reasons the student is here is to learn…that means making mistakes.

What To Do When You Suspect Plagiarism: Step-by-Step

- Copy & paste a phrase from the paper into a search engine like Google, Google Scholar, Yahoo or MSN to find sources of plagiarism.
- Check the CCC Library databases for plagiarism sources.
- Once you have found proof, discuss the issue with your department chair.
- Discuss the issue alone with the student.
- Follow the policies & procedures for CCC faculty in plagiarism cases.

➢ **Remember:** You must stand behind your policy! Students talk and if you are thought of as a push-over, you will consistently struggle with this issue.

Practice for the Teacher

- Get familiar with the paper mills to see what is available to students.

- Check out your plagiarism-detection skills by reviewing the sample paper mill essays at: http://www.plagiarized.com/workshop.html

- Explore the websites listed in the Works Cited for more information.

- Contact your CCC Library to learn how they can help you with the research process, documentation and plagiarism.

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