

New Mexico State University College of Engineering Academic Integrity Module (AIM)

Goal of AIM

- The goal of this **Academic Integrity Module** is to help you better understand the subject of academic integrity and how it relates to your studies here at NMSU.
- You will learn how to avoid the common mistakes in plagiarism. You will learn the University and College of engineering policies with respect to academic misconduct.
- **The College of Engineering expects the highest level of integrity from students and takes academic misconduct and dishonesty very seriously.**

Academic Misconduct

- Academic misconduct can take many forms, including cheating, unauthorized possession of exams, lab materials, or other course-related materials or plagiarism.
- Many students don't fully understand plagiarism so we will start by looking at the definition as provided by the NMSU student handbook.

Plagiarism Defined

- Plagiarism is using another person's work without acknowledgment, making it appear to be one's own.
- Any ideas, words, pictures, or other source must be acknowledged in a citation that gives credit to the source.
- This is true no matter where the material comes from, including the internet, other student's work, unpublished materials, or oral sources.

Plagiarism Defined

- **Intentional and unintentional** instances of plagiarism are considered instances of academic misconduct.
- It is the **responsibility of the student** submitting the work in question to know, understand, and comply with this policy.

Plagiarism

If no citation is given, then borrowing any of the following would be an example of plagiarism:

- An idea or opinion, even when put into one's own words (paraphrase)
- A few well-said words, if these are a unique insight
- Many words, even if one changes most of them.

Plagiarism

If no citation is given, then borrowing any of the following would be an example of plagiarism:

- Materials assembled by others, for instance quotes or a bibliography
- An argument
- A pattern or idea
- Graphs, pictures, or other illustrations
- Facts
- All or part of an existing paper or other resource

This list is not meant to include all possible examples of plagiarism. See the NMSU Library's web page on plagiarism located at <http://nmsu.libguides.com/c.php?g=381561&p=2585267> for further examples.

How to Avoid Plagiarism

If no citation is given, then borrowing any of the following would be an example Ideas, words, pictures, or other intellectual content, taken from another source **must be acknowledged** in a citation that gives credit to the source. This is true no matter where the material comes from, including the Internet, other students' work, unpublished materials, or oral sources.

Do's and Don'ts to Avoid Plagiarism

Do:	Don't:
put a citation in a footnote at the end of the idea or sentence.	take an idea, even when you put it in your own words (paraphrase).
either quote exactly, or use all your own words. Then cite the source.	take or borrow many words, even if you change most of them.
mark both the beginning and end of what you borrowed. Ex: "as John Smith argues...", give the argument, then give the citation in a footnote at the end of the argument.	take an argument

Do's and Don'ts to Avoid Plagiarism

Do:	Don't:
say something like "Jane Doe has given a good overview...", Then make it clear what Jane contributed and what you did yourself.	take a pattern of ideas
say something like "John Smith, as quoted by Jane Doe..." then give the rest of the citation. Borrowing too many quotes that someone else has gathered is bad form, since they've done all the work.	take the quotes that someone else has gathered and cited

Common Causes of Plagiarism

Cause	How to avoid this
Mixing your own text with source text.	Look away from your source text when writing, and especially when paraphrasing.
Similar to the above, but due to sloppy note-taking.	Use quotation marks (or italicize) to identify someone else's words or ideas, etc. Always keep the citation information next to the quote, etc.
Last-minute panic	Allow time to get the work done.
Insufficient resources to complete project	Check early to see that enough resources are available.
Incomplete citation notes.	Take complete notes. For photocopies, be sure to include the title page and its backside.

Exceptions for Common Knowledge

"Common knowledge" does not need to be footnoted. It consists of facts that are easily findable. No one person can take credit for them. This doesn't mean that everyone knows it, and it may be news to you.

Some examples:

- Kigali is the capital of Rwanda
- Las Cruces is located in the Chihuahuan desert, the largest desert of North America
- Plutonium-239 has a half-life of 24,100 years

By contrast,

- If the idea or research is unique, you need to give credit.
- If the fact is hard to find, you want to indicate where it can be located.

Exceptions for Common Knowledge

When in doubt, cite your source!

- A conservative rule is to cite anything you did not know before you began your research.
- A more liberal standard is that anything that would be in a general encyclopedia is common knowledge.
- Different disciplines and professions have different standards for deciding what is common knowledge. When in doubt, consult your professors.

Frequently Asked Questions about Citations

Q: What if I have a great quote, but it leaves out essential information?

A: You can insert additional information by using the square parenthesis marks: []
This lets the reader know that you have added some part to a quote.

*"According to **[New York Attorney General Eliot]** Spitzer's findings, AOL customer representatives received bonuses of thousands of dollars if they managed to retain about half of the people who called trying to cancel service -- and that led some employees to fail to process such requests. Workers who did not meet that quota were overlooked for promotions or sent for additional training, Spitzer's office said."*

Noguchi, Yuki, "AOL to Pay \$1.25 Million Fine; Dulles Company to Change Customer Service Practices," The Washington Post, August 25, 2005, D05.

Frequently Asked Questions about Citations

Q: What if I want to use a quote but it contains a lot of extra stuff I don't want?

A: You can drop the unwanted part, using ellipsis [...] to mark the omission. This lets you cut pieces off the beginning or end, or from the middle.

Picacho Mountain is "...a Spanish-English double-generic, like Rio River or Laguna Lake." Robert Julyan, *Place Names of New Mexico*, Revised edition, University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, 1998, p. 266.

Frequently Asked Questions about Citations

Q: What if I just want to use a fact from a source, but say it in different words?>

A: Say it in your own words, and then provide a footnote.

In the early days of Las Cruces, riders would race their horses on Alameda Street every Sunday afternoon (ftnt. 1).

1. Hunner, Jon, et al., *Las Cruces*, Arcadia Publishing, Charleston SC, 2003, p. 21.

Frequently Asked Questions about Citations

Q. What if I want to use words that were quoted in another source?

One of the points that Malcom Gladwell makes in Blink is that more thinking does not mean better thinking: talking or explaining can actually impede good judgment. He points to what the psychologist Jonathan W. Schooler calls "verbal overshadowing," when an accurate perceptual judgment is overridden by a misleading verbalization.

Malcolm Gladwell, *Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking*, Little, Brown, and Company, New York and Boston, 2005, p. 119-121. Citing Jonathan W. Schooler, Stellan Ohlson, and Kevin Brooks, "Thoughts Beyond Words: When Language Overshadows Insight," *Journal of Experimental Psychology* 122, no. 2 (1993), 166-183.

Other Types of Academic Misconduct

There are additional types of academic misconduct that students can become involved with. The following list are some examples of other types of academic misconduct.

- Unauthorized possession of examinations, reserve library materials, laboratory materials, or other course-related materials.
- Unauthorized changing of grades on an examination, in an instructor's grade book, or on a grade report; or unauthorized access to academic computer records.
- Nondisclosure or misrepresentation in filling out applications or other University records in, or for, academic departments or colleges.

The Two Strikes Policy

- Students must realize that the College considers all cases of academic misconduct, large and small, to be serious ethical violations.
- The College of Engineering at New Mexico State University has what is known as a '**two strikes policy**'.
- This means that students who have two reported and adjudicated cases of academic misconduct will be subject to **immediate suspension from NMSU for no less than one year.**

Reports of Academic Misconduct

- Professors are required to, and will, report all instances of suspected academic misconduct. If your professor suspects that a student has cheated, copied, plagiarized or committed another form of academic misconduct they will report the incident to the student, as well as the department head and the academic dean.
- If you are reported for academic misconduct, you may appeal the professor's decision.
- The appeal process is provided within NMSU's Student Handbook and can be found directly at
- <http://studenthandbook.nmsu.edu/student-code-of-conduct/academic-misconduct/>

Academic Misconduct Appeal Process

The appeal process contains three levels of appeal.

- Appeal to the Professor
- Appeal to the Department Head
- Appeal to the Dean

All appeals must be submitted in writing.

Appeals via Email are allowable.

Appeal Process Timeline

- The Academic Misconduct Appeals Process has **deadlines** that relate to the Students, Faculty, and Administration
- **Professors that suspect academic misconduct have up to 10 working days from the date of discovery** to report the suspected case of academic misconduct to the student.
- **The Student has 5 working days to present a written appeal to the professor.**
- The remaining details of the appeal process are contained within the student handbook located at
- <http://studenthandbook.nmsu.edu/student-code-of-conduct/academic-misconduct/>

Academic Misconduct Appeal Process

Appeals must contain the following information:

- The appeal must include the name of the individual making the appeal, the action that is being appealed, the date the action took place, and the grounds for appeal.
- **Appeals must be made on the basis of one or more of the following grounds:** Procedural or prejudicial error was committed.
 - The finding of facts contained in the decision included inaccurate information.
 - Specific evidence presented at the hearing is objectionable. Reason for the objection must be stated, i.e., why evidence should not be considered.
 - Evidence not offered during the hearing is now available. Reason why the evidence was not offered during the hearing must be stated.
 - The sanction imposed is excessive or inappropriate. Reasons for believing this must be stated.

Safe Learning Environment

- Students must at all times be respectful of professors and administrators and are expected to conduct themselves in a **professional and courteous** manner.
- The faculty, staff, and administration of NMSU will conduct themselves in a professional and courteous manner.
- The safety of all persons in our learning environment is paramount.
- **Threats or threatening behavior towards students, faculty, staff, and administrators are not taken lightly and will result in immediate notification to the University Police.**

Tips for Avoiding Academic Misconduct

- Always be truthful, honest, and ethical during your education here at NMSU and in your career.
- Be prepared! Don't wait to the last minute to do assignments or prepare for exams. Don't ever put yourself in a position where you might be tempted to cheat.
- Ask for help! If you are struggling ask your professor, TA, GA, or advisor for help with your coursework. There are numerous resources available to you, some that you may not be aware of.
- Accept help, but do not accept assignments or work completed by others.
- Even if you are struggling, do individual assignments yourself and complete them as best you can.
- Discourage others from cheating and never assist someone in cheating.

Tips for Avoiding Academic Misconduct

- Ask your professor what is allowed when taking an exam.
- During exams be sure to have only the required or allowable tools and nothing else.
- Put everything away (especially your phone) and when possible spread out your seating to put space between yourself and other students.
- If you have a question during an exam, ask the professor or exam proctor.
- Do not speak to other students during exams.
- For group assignments ask your professor if you need to turn in a single group assignment or individual work.
- Never copy other's work.
- Never plagiarize! Use quotations and cite you source!

Additional Resources

- Student Handbook <http://studenthandbook.nmsu.edu/>
- COE Academic Website <https://engr.nmsu.edu/academic-integrity/>
- Citation styles <http://nmsu.libguides.com/citingyoursources>
- Plagiarism checkers
<https://www.google.com/search?q=plagiarism+checker&ie=utf-8&oe=utf-8>

References

- NMSU Library Plagiarism Guide <http://nmsu.libguides.com/plagiarism>
- NMSU Student Handbook <http://studenthandbook.nmsu.edu/>
- COE Academic Website <https://engr.nmsu.edu/academic-integrity/>
- [Colorado State University, Writing Center: "Avoiding Plagiarism"](#)
- [Indiana University Bloomington, Writing Tutorial Services: "Plagiarism: What It is and How to Recognize and Avoid It"](#)
- [Indiana University Bloomington, School of Education, "Definition of Plagiarism"](#)
- [UCLA "Success With Less"](#)
- [Purdue University OWL](#)
- [Understanding Plagiarism: Information Literacy Guide - Iowa State University](#)
- [Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Writing Center: "Strategies for Preventing Plagiarism"](#).