Clark College English Department Plagiarism Statement

Much of your college education will involve making use of work done by other scholars. Your own work will benefit from and build on other people’s research, articles, books, films, art, theories, and ideas. By following the laws and etiquette that govern academic work, you may borrow what others have written, which allows you to further develop and support your thoughts. The rules of citation, and the laws of copyright, require you to give credit and acknowledge this borrowing anytime you make use of any facts, ideas or language (including short phrases) that did not originate with you. Ideas or language not credited to a source and documented with attention to detail are assumed to be yours. Allowing your reader to make this assumption when it’s not true means you are committing plagiarism. It is possible to plagiarize simply by failing to either cite your sources accurately or use quotation marks appropriately, but carelessness is not an acceptable reason for failing to name (or cite) your sources properly.

Most students are aware that plagiarism is a significant breach of ethics and a violation of academic rules. Most instructors will identify penalties for plagiarism on the class syllabus. Clark College and the English Department impose serious penalties against those who commit plagiarism of any kind. However, students who study and follow the rules for giving credit should have no concerns: learning to credit your source(s) is neither complicated nor difficult. Students have multiple resources from which they can learn the steps to follow to ensure they do not accidentally violate the rules. The statement below briefly describes the rules, and students will receive more detailed instruction from their teachers. Your instructor will introduce you to strategies to avoid plagiarism, the conventions for using and citing sources, and good note-taking procedures. Your instructor will also help you gain confidence in your own writing so you can limit your use of others’ words. The following is a guide to help you learn the rules of attributing—or giving credit—to sources.

**YOU DO NOT HAVE TO CITE:**

1. Your own ideas, knowledge, and reasoning, which you present in your own words.
2. Common knowledge, which you present in your own words. If most people know something without having to do research on it, you need not cite it. Common knowledge includes such things as the names of U.S. Presidents, the fact that we need water to survive, or the proper use of a seatbelt.

**YOU MUST CITE:**

1. Knowledge you gain from a source. If you are uncertain as to whether the information or ideas you want to use are common knowledge, cite the source. In addition, if you paraphrase or quote a particularly good explanation of common knowledge, cite your source. To add credibility, demonstrate thorough research, and guide readers to additional information, you may want to cite a credible source for some common knowledge even though the information is both widely known and written entirely in your own words.
2. Any quotation, whether direct or indirect (i.e. a second source quoted in your source), even if it contains common knowledge or information widely available. Use of quotations requires not just signal phrase and page numbers, but quotation marks as well.
3. Paraphrases and summaries of sources, or ideas you got from any reading, regardless of whether you read the material during class or in some other context. Even if you discuss something you learned from your textbook, you must name the source.
4. Statistics, charts, tables, images, and graphs from any source. You must credit all statistics even if you saw them in a chart and translated them into text, or read them as text and created your own chart.

If you stick to the guidelines above, and carefully follow the citation methods as instructed by your teacher, you will avoid most types of plagiarism, including accidental plagiarism. Below are other actions that constitute plagiarism.
The purchase of research papers or the employment of a person or agency to prepare such papers is also considered by the English Department to be plagiarism. You may get assistance from your classroom peers and the Writing Center while writing your paper, but there are limits to the amount of help you can honestly receive. Others may read your paper and point out weaknesses, but they must not rewrite substantial portions for you.

The English Department also considers it an act of dishonesty to rewrite or resubmit to any course a paper that you wrote in an earlier or concurrent course (unless you get explicit permission from all instructors involved).

Consequences of Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism: The Plagiarism Policy of the English Department is consistent with and supported by the Student Conduct Code, which prohibits academic dishonesty. Under the Student Conduct Code of Clark College (WAC 132N-125-035: Prohibited Student Conduct), a teacher who suspects a student has plagiarized can prevent the student from withdrawing from the class. Specifically, WAC 132N-125-035, Section 1E, states that “no student shall be allowed to withdraw from a course or from the college to avoid the consequences of academic dishonesty.” In such cases, the faculty member will do the following:

When a faculty member discovers a student has violated the academic integrity policy within the first eight weeks, the following procedure is followed:

1. The teacher will submit a Student Conduct Referral form:
   To access the form visit the directory http://www.clark.edu/directories/index.php and select “Student Conduct Referral Form” for instant download, or the policies and procedures page http://www.clark.edu/about/governance/policies-procedures/student_code.php and select Student Conduct Referral Form from the right side menu.

2. A representative of the Office of Student Conduct will then place an administrative hold on the student’s account until the case is resolved, and communicate back to the faculty member that action has taken place.

3. Faculty should confront the student and work with the conduct officer for resolution
   a. Faculty member will retain authority to decide academic consequences, consistent with academic freedom.
   b. Conduct officer will implement sanction, if appropriate, and document the incident for institutional records.

If the plagiarism occurs after the first eight weeks, use the same referral form listed above in step one.

Plagiarism is an extremely serious violation of academic honesty leading to irreversible consequences. The standard departmental penalty for plagiarism discovered in any English course will be failure of that course. Please see The Clark College Code of Student Conduct to note that the Dean of Students can authorize additional penalties for “Academic cheating or plagiarism or aiding or abetting cheating or plagiarism.” Expulsion from the college is possible.