

## My Classroom Plagiarism Policy

The Oxford Dictionary defines plagiarism as “the practice of taking someone else’s work or ideas and passing them off as one’s own.” Unfortunately, incidents of plagiarism continue to rise through increased use of the Internet by students to complete essays and homework. As a high school English teacher, I take plagiarism seriously because the consequences for the offense can destroy a person’s academic or life career. Thus, I attempt to educate students on what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid committing unintentional errors in attribution. Furthermore, I clearly outline the consequences for deliberate instances, so there can be no confusion later for parents and students.

The practice of “taking someone else’s work or ideas and passing them off as one’s own” occurs for one of two possible reasons, and sometimes both: 1) misunderstanding of acceptable use or attribution, and 2) mental laziness. About the latter, I can do nothing, but the first is easily preventable. The Internet is rife with examples of how to attribute or give credit for sources used in an essay. Various styles are also available and my preferred source is Purdue University’s Online Writing Lab, or Owl, as it is commonly known. In the classroom, I provide instruction on how to not only attribute sources, but also how to develop original ideas and use sources to support them properly. Should students have difficulty understanding the lessons, I am available after school and at various times throughout the day to advise them on the process. Therefore, there will be no accepted excuse for submitting plagiarized work to me or another teacher at any time.

Cheating consists of 1) deliberately submitting plagiarized work as one’s own, and/or 2) copying another student’s work and submitting it as one’s own. No distinction will be made among short homework or classwork assignments, longer essays, or tests and the penalties will be the same for all offenses.

### PENALTIES FOR CHEATING

First Offense:

1. zero for the assignment
2. parental contact
3. after school session to review cheating definition, which may include additional student work

Second and Subsequent Offense(s)

1. repetition of penalties for first offense
2. detention with offense recorded in official student record

You need to think seriously about the unofficial consequences of cheating as well as those that more directly affect your grades. If attending college or acquiring scholarships is a priority, then you need to consider that colleges ask for teacher recommendations. Asking a teacher for a recommendation when you have cheated in that teacher’s class can make for an awkward conversation at best. If you cheat in my class, don’t even bother to ask for one. If I have already provided one to you for scholarship or college application purposes, be prepared for me to contact the scholarship or college admissions committee to have the recommendation revoked *with an explanation*.

Clearly, your best interests can be served by working with me and other school faculty to prevent these consequences. My goal is to ensure your future academic success through rigorous attention to developing your academic integrity as well as your academic potential. So, please see me if you have any questions.