

Academic Integrity in Graduate Study
Department of Political Science, Western Michigan University

The Department of Political Science fully conforms to the university's position on academic integrity as described on the university web site:¹

WMU is a member institution of the Center for Academic Integrity (CAI) at Duke University. The CAI has identified academic integrity as a commitment to five fundamental values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Academic integrity is important at WMU because it enables each of us to fulfill our potential, learn effectively with and from one another, acquire specialized knowledge and skills, become informed, responsible and creative thinkers and have pride in our institution's standing.

WMU takes all forms of academic dishonesty seriously, including plagiarism. Plagiarism undermines academic integrity values and WMU's educational goals. Plagiarism is defined in the Student Rights and Responsibilities section of the WMU's Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs as follows:

Definition

Plagiarism is intentionally, knowingly, or carelessly presenting the work of another as one's own (i.e., without proper acknowledgment of the source). The sole exception to the requirement of acknowledging sources is when the ideas, information, etc., are common knowledge.

Instructors should provide clarification about the nature of plagiarism.

Clarification

1. **Direct Quotation:** Every direct quotation must be identified by quotation marks or appropriate indentation and must be properly acknowledged, in the text by citation or in a footnote or endnote.
2. **Paraphrase:** Prompt acknowledgment is required when material from another source is paraphrased or summarized, in whole or in part, in one's own words. To acknowledge a paraphrase properly, one might state: "To paraphrase Locke's comment, . . ." and then conclude with a footnote or endnote identifying the exact reference.
3. **Borrowed facts:** Information gained in reading or research which is not common knowledge must be acknowledged.
4. **Common knowledge:** Common knowledge includes generally known facts such as the names of leaders of prominent nations, basic scientific laws, etc. Materials which add only to a general understanding of the subject may be acknowledged in the bibliography and need not be footnoted or endnoted.
5. **Footnotes, endnotes, and in-text citations:** One footnote, endnote, or in-text citation is usually enough to acknowledge indebtedness when a number of connected sentences are drawn from one source. When direct quotations are

¹ <http://www.atis.wmich.edu/integrity.html>. The definition is also contained in the graduate and undergraduate catalogs.

used, however, quotation marks must be inserted and acknowledgment made. Similarly, when a passage is paraphrased, acknowledgment is required.

It is essential that students in all three Political Science graduate programs observe the highest standards of academic honesty in order for the department and its programs to maintain their standards and integrity. Issues related to academic honesty are covered in PSCI 6960 (Research and Professional Skills) and PSCI 6640 (The Nature of Political Inquiry and Analysis), as well as other classes. In addition, the Waldo Library web site posts numerous link to sources (including tutorials) on how to avoid plagiarism.² Course syllabi in the department regularly contain this language:

You are responsible for making yourself aware of and understanding the policies and procedures in the student catalog that pertain to Academic Integrity. These policies include cheating, fabrication, falsification and forgery, multiple submission, plagiarism, complicity and computer misuse. If there is reason to believe you have been involved in academic dishonesty, you will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct.

The Department and its faculty will work with students to help them understand proper citation practices and forms of attribution. However, the department will not tolerate plagiarism in course papers, conference papers, theses, dissertations, and published work.

Penalty

Should plagiarism occur, students will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct and the Academic Integrity Hearing process outlined on OSC's web site.³ Penalties can include:

1. a failing grade for the assignment and/or course in which academic dishonesty takes place,
2. revocation of funding for graduate appointees, and/or
3. dismissal.⁴

More Information

The department encourages students to discuss with the faculty any questions about academic integrity issues, including what constitutes plagiarism, and how to avoid it. In addition, reference librarians in Waldo Library are experts on the topic and able to offer advice.

² <http://www.wmich.edu/library/services/faculty/plagiarism.php>

³ <http://www.osc.wmich.edu/academicintegrity/index.html>

⁴ The dismissal policy and procedure can be found in the Graduate Manual at <http://www.wmich.edu/politics/grad/graduate.manual.pdf>.