

## Cheating

The Department of Mass Communication has adopted the following policy regarding cheating: **Any student caught cheating on any quiz or exam will receive an "F: on the quiz or test, and a possible "F" for the course.**

## Plagiarism & Fabrication

Plagiarism is passing off someone else's writing as your own, such as (but not limited to) 1) paraphrasing a source too closely without attribution, 2) using a news reporting interview done by another student for your assignment, or 3) using quotes from a news story published elsewhere in your news story.

The Department of Mass Communication maintains the following policy in both written assignments and oral presentations:

1. All assignments and presentations must be the student's own work. No part of an assignment, presentation or citation may be fabricated or falsified. The use of assignments and presentations authored by others—even with their consent—constitutes plagiarism unless such authorship is made known to the instructor.
2. Reusing your own work without acknowledgement is considered self-plagiarism. Assignments may not be re-used for multiple classes.
3. Passing off materials generated by artificial intelligence (AI) technology constitutes plagiarism. AI technology and other assistance tools should only be used if approved by the instructor. All authorized use of such technologies must be properly cited (see below).
4. Any words quoted directly from a source must be in quotation marks and properly cited. Any images taken from a source must also be properly cited.
5. Any paraphrasing or rephrasing of the words and/or ideas within a source must be properly cited.
6. There are ambiguities in concepts of plagiarism. Each instructor shall be available for consultation regarding any confusion a student may have.

**Any student found plagiarizing in any of the above ways will receive an automatic "F" for the assignment and may receive an "F" for the course. Any student discovered soliciting others to write a paper, speech, test, or other assignment for them will receive an automatic "F" for the course.** In compliance with Towson University's [Student Academic Integrity Policy](#), documented evidence of plagiarism will be reported to the Office of Student Accountability & Restorative Practices, and a copy will be kept in the department.

## Avoiding plagiarism

Most students are careful to avoid blatant plagiarism, which can be defined as the unacknowledged copying of exact words of a source. However, students must also be aware that the concept of plagiarism extends not only to wording but to patterns or sequences of ideas. If you paraphrase a section from a book and use the same sequence or structure without acknowledging the original author, then you are plagiarizing.

Here are a few best practices to help you avoid plagiarism:

- Give yourself plenty of time to finish your assignment. Some students in the past have said they accidentally plagiarized because they were working too quickly.
- If you cut and paste content into a document, immediately place it in quotation marks and attribute it to the source. This will help you avoid accidental plagiarism, which has the same consequences as purposeful plagiarism. Your workflow should be:

1. Open quote
  2. Paste the text
  3. Close the quote
  4. Add the citation.
- Remember that all types of content should be quoted and cited if you are using an exact phrase. Some students in the past have said they didn't realize words copied from an instructor's PowerPoint, or copying text from a dictionary definition would be considered plagiarism. If you didn't write it, put it in quotation marks and cite it.
  - Remember: When you quote and cite a credible source, you add credibility to your work.

## Citing material from generative AI

If your professor has directed you to use generative AI for an assignment, then you must cite your source and explain how you used it. [According to the APA](#), authors who use generative AI like ChatGPT should devote a paragraph or section of their paper to describe how the tool was used. The APA also recommends that authors provide the prompt they used in the AI tool and the corresponding response. AI-generated material should be cited in the text of the assignment with a corresponding entry in the reference list. For example, in the case of ChatGPT, the in-text, author-algorithm would be as follows: **(OpenAI, 2023)**. The Reference List citation would be as follows: **OpenAI. (2023) ChatGPT-3.5 (Date text generated) [Large language model]**. Students should also provide a link to the generative AI tool used. For more information, see: <https://apastyle.apa.org/blog/how-to-cite-chatgpt>

*Approved by MCOM Faculty, Dec. 8, 2023*