

# Avoiding Plagiarism

By the time you reach graduate school, you *should* already have had the opportunity to write a research paper, and so you *should* have had some instruction in how to cite others' work properly to ensure academic honesty and to give credit to those upon whose work they are drawing for their own papers. However, recent problems with plagiarism and improper citation have revealed that many students apparently do not understand what constitutes plagiarism or how to avoid plagiarizing by using others' work correctly. This guide is meant to clarify what **is** acceptable use of others' work and what **is not**.

Even after you have read this guide, however, it is imperative that students consult the instructor in each course if they have questions about properly citing others' work. Don't rely on your friends or other students to tell you what professors expect. Ask the professors themselves, and keep asking questions until you are certain you understand how material drawn from others' work should be credited.

## **What types of materials must I cite to avoid plagiarism?**

In short, **everything**. Any material you use, from any source, **MUST** be properly cited. If you yourself did not write the material – and if you did not write it the way it appears in the paper – you must give credit to the original author or source. This includes material from scholarly publications, newspapers, magazines, advertising, press releases, television programs, web pages, conference papers, speeches, etc.

## **How should I cite material copied word-for-word from another source?**

If you use material copied verbatim from any other source, you must enclose the verbatim material in quotation marks to indicate that the particular wording of the passage was not your own. For instance, look at the material below, drawn from an article published in the *Journal of Health Communication*.

"The results also show that the depiction of young models in ads for youth brands is not simply a consequence of the fact that people generally find younger models more attractive than older models. In the ads for the adult brands, such as Merit, Eve, and Carlton, few people perceived the models as less than 25 years old. Those brands are clearly targeted toward adults, usually promising lower tar and nicotine than other brands in an effort to encourage brand switching by addicted smokers, and consequently the models they depict are also clearly adults. Some brands in this study usually regarded as adult brands, notably Lucky Strike and Parliament, did feature models who appeared to a sizable proportion of participants to be under 25, perhaps indicating an effort to reposition these brands as youth brands."

Talk is Cheap: The Tobacco Companies' Violations  
of Their Own Cigarette Advertising Code  
JEFFREY JENSEN ARNETT  
Journal of Health Communication, 10:419–431, 2005

If you used part of a sentence from this segment of the article, it should appear like this:

Arnett (2005) concluded that the data “also show that the depiction of young models in ads for youth brands is not simply a consequence of the fact that people generally find younger models more attractive than older models” (p. 429).

The citation style might vary depending on which reference style you are using, but all reference styles require that you enclose the word-for-word material in quotation marks and indicate the page on which it appeared.

If you used the entire passage, most reference styles would require that you single-space the material and indent it from both margins. The indentation and single-spacing then take the place of the quotation marks to show that the wording is that of the original author, not yours.

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## What if I want to paraphrase what another author wrote?

The key to paraphrasing properly is to make sure you’re summarizing the meaning of the other author’s work in your own words, not simply making slight modifications to the original author’s wording. For instance, the “paraphrase” below is **not correct**:

Arnett (2005) concluded that his data showed that the **portrayal** of younger models in ads for youth brands was not **merely** a **result** of the **reality** that **consumers** generally find younger models more attractive. He argued that in the ads for adult-**targeted** brands, such as Merit, Eve, and Carlton, **only a few people saw** the models as less than 25 years old. Those brands are **obviously** targeted toward adults, **typically** advertising lower tar and nicotine than other brands in an **attempt** to encourage **addicted smokers to switch brands**, **so** the models they **use** are clearly adults.

In this **incorrect paraphrase**, a few words (which appear in **boldface**) have been changed; however, the essential structure of the information still mirrors what was written by the original author. Thus, it still constitutes plagiarism.

A **correct paraphrase** would read something like this:

One explanation for the use of younger models might be that consumers have been shown to perceive younger models as more attractive. However, Arnett (2005) concluded that model attractiveness did not explain the use of younger models in ads for youth-targeted cigarette brands because few participants perceived the models used in adult-targeted brands, such as Merit, Eve, and Carlton, as appearing younger than 25. These brands, usually aimed at persuading addicted smokers to switch brands, typically emphasize the brands' lower tar and nicotine and use models who are obviously adults older than 25.

**An important note about paraphrasing:**

You'll note that the preceding example of correct paraphrasing still includes the author's name and the year the article was published. This is to make it clear that the ideas stated there are not yours – they are someone else's.

## **What if I don't have the original article but want to cite a work I've seen mentioned in another article?**

First, you should be aware that citing someone else's explanation of what a different author has said generally is not recommended. In most cases, you should seek out the original work because it's always possible that when you read the original work, you will disagree with the interpretation of that work by the author whose citation you had seen.

However, if you cannot find the original work, your in-text citation makes reference to both the original work and the article in which you found it described. In the reference list, you will show that you were quoting from someone else's citation of the work.

For instance, let's say that you want to use this quote from James Tiedge and colleagues concerning the third-person effect:

"In either case, most people appear to be willing to subscribe to the logical inconsistency inherent in maintaining that the mass media influence others considerably more than themselves" (Tiedge, Silverblatt, Havice & Rosenfeld, 1991, p. 152).

But you can't find the original work – instead, you only have the citation from Richard Perloff's chapter in a book. In the text, cite both works:

“In either case, most people appear to be willing to subscribe to the logical inconsistency inherent in maintaining that the mass media influence others considerably more than themselves” (Tiedge, Silverblatt, Havice & Rosenfeld, 1991, p. 152, as cited in Perloff, 2002).

In the reference list, however, you would ONLY list Perloff:

Perloff, Richard M. (2002). The third-person effect. In J. Bryan and D. Zillman, Eds., *Media Effects: Advances in Theory and Research*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, (pp. 489-506). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.

## **What if there’s no author to cite?**

Let’s say you want to use a passage from the First Amendment Center’s report on its 2005 State of the First Amendment Survey. If you were going to use the following paragraph word-for-word, you’d simply enclose the passage (or the part of it you used) in quotation marks. Instead of listing the author – because there isn’t one listed – you would credit the report itself in the reference (according to APA style – other styles may differ). In this case, it’s an online report, so there is no page number to list. Instead, you would list the paragraph number. In the reference list, you would provide the full citation for the report, including the URL at which the report can be found.

“Nearly 80% of respondents agreed that broadcasters should be allowed to televise the proceedings of the U.S. Supreme Court, though less than half agreed that broadcasters should be able to televise any courtroom trial they wish.” (“State of the First Amendment,” 2005, ¶11).

You’d use a similar procedure if you were going to paraphrase the material from that paragraph:

The State of the First Amendment survey (2005) revealed that less than 50 percent of respondents believe broadcasters should have free reign to televise any courtroom trial; however, almost 8 in 10 respondents supported broadcasts of U.S. Supreme Court cases.

## The penalties for plagiarism

**Any violation of the above stated conditions in any class taken at UF is grounds for immediate dismissal from the program and will result in revocation of the degree if the degree previously has been awarded.**

**This document applies to all students taking courses in the College of Journalism and Communications. If you are not a student in our college, please sign the document and return it to your professor.**

I have read and understand this document, and I agree to abide by these standards.

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Print Name

Date

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Signature

Please return signed document to Kimberly Dukes in the Graduate Division Weimer 2014.