

## SCHOOL OF BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES: NOTICE ON PLAGIARISM

### IMPORTANT NOTICE: READ THIS NOW.

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is the inclusion of any material, into any class assignment, that is not your own without adequate reference to its author. Other than the fraudulent manufacture of data, it is the most serious professional breach of ethics that a scientist can commit.

Consistent with the broad authority the university gives faculty in the management of the classroom [<http://academicintegrity.wsu.edu/Resources-for-Faculty/Sample-WSU-Syllabus-Statements/>], SBS views plagiarism in any student assignment as cheating and a serious breach of academic integrity. Students in all our courses (100-700 level) must clearly and unequivocally understand the meaning of this term because the penalties for plagiarism in the sciences can be career ending.

A common dictionary definition of **plagiarism** is

“to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own : use (another's production) without crediting the source”

(<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/plagiarize>) (Accessed 28 October 2013).

As with many terms, plagiarism may have alternative meanings and interpretations in other fields. However, SBS is responsible only for training students under its instruction and training to understand the meaning of plagiarism in the Life Sciences as described herein.

This multi-component view is supported under WAC 504-26-010 definitions.  
<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=504-26-010>

“(i) Plagiarism. Presenting the information, ideas, or phrasing of another person as the student's own work without proper acknowledgment of the source. This includes submitting a commercially prepared paper or research project or submitting for academic credit any work done by someone else. The term "plagiarism" includes, but is not limited to, the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment.”

In accordance with universal practice in the Life Sciences, SBS interprets this definition of plagiarism to include several forms, each of which is explained below.

First, this definition includes incorporation of another author's verbatim phrase(s) and sentence(s) into text purportedly written by the plagiarist without quotation marks and without citation of the true author.

Second, the definition also includes incorporation of another author's verbatim phrase(s) and sentence(s) without quotation marks even if the true author is cited, e.g. at the end of a paragraph within which the plagiarized text appears.

Third, the definition includes superficial paraphrasing, i.e., the substitution of a few words or modification/re-arranging/re-writing of another author's phrases, such that the text is still largely verbatim. Note plagiarism in this form includes copying the flow of logic or ideas in the text such that it follows the order in the original work. This practice is not permitted with or without citing the true author(s) because the original text was altered to give the impression that the plagiarist is the author of the novel idea/hypothesis/proposal ("to steal the idea as one's own"...).

Fourth, this definition includes use of the ideas and writings of classmates and students from prior semesters as described in points one through three above.

Access to papers and other texts on the internet has opened new opportunities for those who would plagiarize, and the School of Biological Sciences (SBS) has in the past year encountered such cases in its courses. As a result, SBS now has access to software that can detect text plagiarized from the internet, and the faculty and the TAs have been instructed to employ these tools.

In the School of Biological Sciences, a confirmed case of plagiarism can result in a final course grade of **F** being immediately assigned and can result in the offense being immediately forwarded to the Office of Student Conduct, which will likely take further more serious action.

If you have any doubt at all about what constitutes plagiarism, you need to discuss immediately this matter with your instructor or T.A.

**In short, make sure all elements of your paper, including text and figures, are your own work.**