

Policy on Intellectual Integrity, Plagiarism, and Documentation¹

Department of International Relations Lehigh University

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Intellectual Integrity

Intellectual integrity is perhaps the highest value in all academic and scientific work. If we cannot tell who is responsible for particular contributions, it becomes impossible to assign credit where it is fairly due, impossible to tell whether several works with similar conclusions were arrived at independently or all depend on only a single original insight, and—most important—nearly impossible to tell whether a work constitutes an addition to human knowledge, either to the knowledge of the purported author, or to the collective knowledge of humanity.

All work submitted for credit in the Department of International Relations must meet normal standards of intellectual integrity as described in this document.²

Consult your instructor if uncertain about any intellectual integrity issue.

Individual Responsibility

Normally all work submitted for credit in the Department of International Relations must be solely your own work. You may not turn in as your own work any materials written for you by another person or computer program, whether purchased or not, and regardless of how large or small a portion of the work that you submit was obtained in such ways.

This restriction does not apply to certain kinds of non-substantive assistance, such as help in locating research materials, or in typing, printing, or computer repair. Seeking assistance in editing for spelling, style, or grammar is permitted so long as the assistance does not affect substantive content of the work.

¹ This document draws heavily on a comparable document published by the Lehigh English Department, the Modern Language Association's *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 7th ed. (New York: Modern Language Association, 2009), and Stephen Van Evera, *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997).

² This document is concerned with standards of integrity for assignments submitted in writing. Standards of integrity for in-class exams are described in the Lehigh University *Student Handbook* (July 1, 2015), 15-16.

Instructors may sometimes permit specific forms of collaboration for group projects or for other reasons.³

Plagiarism and Documentation

Plagiarism is defined as passing off as your own work words, ideas, or factual information provided by another without giving appropriate credit to your source. Your source may be an article, book, or document authored by another, a verbal statement, broadcast, film, or interview, conversation with a classmate or a former Lehigh student, or even a computer program.⁴ Paraphrasing to change a few words or even completing re-writing the idea in your own words does not alter this situation—you must still acknowledge the source of the ideas, words, or factual information.

Additional forms of plagiarism include:

- Incorporating information from a course text without reporting the fact.
- Incorporating information from a commercial study guide (such as *Cliffs Notes*) without reporting the fact.
- Using part of a paper written by another student, whether or not written for the current course, without acknowledging the contribution.
- Submitting a paper that you originally wrote for another course, whether or not in International Relations, or material drawn from it, without reporting the fact and the extent of the borrowing.

Per the section on “individual responsibility,” normally the last three categories would be prohibited regardless of documentation unless specifically permitted by the instructor of the current course.

Plagiarism, even in some of its milder forms, is unfair to others and demeans you. Even if you are clever enough, foolish enough, or lucky enough to get by with it a few times, somewhere or sometime after you leave Lehigh the habit will get you into trouble—possibly desperately serious trouble.

³ For instance, an instructor might permit consultation with classmates or others *prior* to beginning the writing of your own essay or paper, but not after.

⁴ With three exceptions—you need not report the sources of any benefit that you gain from lecture or discussion in meetings of the same course, or by the course instructor or by a Lehigh reference librarian in any setting.

Documentation Requirements

In general, you must document your sources for:

- Facts that you would expect to be obscure to a well educated reader who is not a specialist on the issues covered by the assignment. Since in most cases, the main reader will be the instructor, your instructor may inform you that you can assume a higher baseline.
- Factual interpretations that are considered controversial. In such cases, you must decide whether it is appropriate to cite alternative views and to explain the controversy, which might include explaining why you favor a particular interpretation or why you consider the question undecidable. This explanation might appear in the main text or in a footnote.
- Ideas, insights, or interpretations that you gained from authors you read or from anyone else, with the exceptions noted above. You should cite insights gained from a classmate outside of class meetings, such as when studying together, or from anyone else. No embarrassment should attach to this; rather, giving credit where it is due is professional on your part and (appropriately) generous to your colleague.
- Any direct quote or paraphrase, regardless of whether the content falls into any of the first three categories.

Instructors will inform you of special policies for particular courses or assignments.

Documentation Formats

Unless your instructor allows—or requires—a different standard, follow either the standard prescribed in Modern Language Association, *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 7th ed. (New York: Modern Language Association, 2009) [“MLA style”], or those laid out in Kate L. Turabian and Wayne C. Booth, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 8th. ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013) [“Chicago style”].

You may use one of the following:

- Citations directly in the text (aka “scientific format”), covered in both MLA and Turabian—or you may simply follow the style of the *American Political Science Review*.
- Citations in footnotes (aka “standard format”), also covered in both MLA and Turabian—or you may simply follow the style of *International Security*.⁵

⁵ Standard format allows use of either footnotes or endnotes (but not both in the same paper). Some instructors may specify which you should use.

Note that scientific format requires a “list of works cited” in a very specific format, which is explained in both MLA and Turabian. Standard format does not require a bibliography unless your instructor tells you to provide it.

You must use the same format throughout the paper, and should follow it strictly; one purpose of using a consistent style of citation is to allow others to locate with ease the material that you have used in your work.

Web-based Sources

In effect web sites are treated in most ways just as ordinary documents, with the URL serving in place of the publication information.

Unlike scholarly publications and (most) mainstream news sources, there are no filters that can exert any quality control on what may be posted to the Internet.

Accordingly, always try to make sure that you can identify the author or organization that is behind a particular web page.

Both MLA and Turabian cover this well. Another good guide is “MLA Style for Electronic Formats,” found on Lehigh's website under /libraries/electronic resources/footnotes. Note that more than just the URL is required.

Also include the date that you accessed the material, since not all web-based material remains accessible indefinitely.

Other Uses of Footnotes

Be aware that footnotes can also be used simply for discussion of subsidiary issues that you judge to be worth mentioning, but which would not fit neatly into the main text. In scientific format, this would be the only use of footnotes. In standard format, footnotes can be used for citation, discussion, or even both in the same footnote.

Instructor Authority

Instructors in particular courses may demand stiffer requirements on certain points, or may relax standards for certain assignments (for instance, short essays may not always be held to the same standards as research papers). Your instructor will inform you of such exceptions.

They might also allow—or require—different citation standards from those described above.

In determining what practices are permitted or required in any given course, the instructor's authority is always paramount, superseding anything in this document or elsewhere.

Various units of the university provide additional resources that attempt to encourage intellectual integrity and explain integrity concepts. The department takes no position on whether or how faculty should make use of these.

Possible Penalties for Violations

Intellectual integrity violations (whether related to in-class exams or to plagiarism) are handled by the University Committee on Discipline. The Committee may impose penalties such as a grade of F for the course, disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion. Regardless of any action (or not) by the committee, instructors may impose penalties at their own discretion, up to a maximum of a grade of F for the course.