Plagiarism and Citing Sources

What is Plagiarism?

- Occurs when you use the words or ideas of others without properly acknowledging the source where you found the information.
- Includes:
  - Claiming someone else's words, thoughts, or ideas as your own, even if you rephrase them!
  - Copying material straight from a book, journal, newspaper, handout, website, or other source
  - Using someone else’s words, thoughts, or ideas in a presentation and not acknowledging the source
  - Using another student's paper or a paper you found online and claiming it as your own
  - Submitting the same paper for two classes, even if the paper is your own
  - Using images or music created by someone else without acknowledging the creator
  - Copying code to create a website or application

Common Knowledge

- Information that is widely known and accepted by many people.
- Can be easily located in a number of sources and cannot be disputed (ex. historical dates and facts)
- May differ from one academic field to another
- Does not need to be cited. However, when in doubt about whether or not information is common knowledge, CITE YOUR SOURCE.

Terms

Paraphrasing

- Summarizing a written passage in your own words while maintaining the meaning of the passage
- Often necessary when proving evidence to support your own argument.
- Can still be plagiarism if all you do is rearrange the author’s words, delete a phrase or two, or insert a few synonyms and claim the passage as your own.
- You must give credit to the author even though have not directly quoted his or her work

Example

Original Passage
Yet clinically, the utility of the admission assessment for planning discharge is questioned as changes in the patient's function during hospitalization may significantly alter the discharge plan.

In Paper
However, because the patient's function may change, requiring major adjustments to the discharge plan, others question whether basing the plan on the admissions assessment is really useful (Nsameluh et. al, 2007).
Quoting

- Using someone else's exact words and surrounding the statement with quotation marks. You must also cite your source for the quote.
- Use sparingly. Your professor wants to read your words, not someone else’s.

Example

**Original Passage**
What [RC/AL] was not promoted as--but what it has increasingly become--is a residential setting for individuals with dementia.


**In Paper**
Zimmerman, et al. (2007) note, "What [RC/AL] was not promoted as--but what it has increasingly become--is a residential setting for individuals with dementia.

Original Ideas

- Ideas you form on your own, independently of other authors
- Do not need to be cited
- Are clearly distinguished from those taken from other sources

Citing Sources

- If you use someone else's research, thoughts or ideas to support your own arguments, you should properly acknowledge the author.
- Helps you avoid committing plagiarism.
- Draws a clear line between your original ideas and those of others.
- If the information is available, most citations should include:
  - Title of article
  - Author name(s) or editor name(s)
  - Title of book, journal, or website
  - Volume and issue number
  - Date of publication
  - Page number(s)
  - Website URL

Citation Styles

- Vary from one academic field to another as well as from one publication to another.
- The journal publisher or your professor may request that your citations be in a particular style.
- Three common citation styles in the health sciences are **MLA**, **APA**, and **AMA**.

Reference Software

- Can help you keep track of all of your sources and format your citations in the correct style.
- Compare citation managers at [http://hsl.lib.unc.edu/citing](http://hsl.lib.unc.edu/citing)
- The Health Science Library provides [online tutorials](http://hsl.lib.unc.edu/citing) and offers [classes](http://hsl.lib.unc.edu/citing) and [one-on-one consultations](http://hsl.lib.unc.edu/citing) on reference software.