

Ways to avoid plagiarism in the IE Program: Message to Students

The IE Program provides a foundation for your more specialized studies in the English Department at AGU. In addition to improving your speaking, listening, and reading skills, you will be given many opportunities to develop your writing through book reports, paragraphs and essays in IE Writing, a 1500-word thesis in Academic Writing, media reports in IE Core, scripts or notes for presentations, “listening logs” in IE Active Listening, and journals or blogs. It is important to avoid plagiarism in all of the assignments that you do in the IE Program — including copying from other students’ assignments.

What is plagiarism?

Plagiarism is the use of another person’s ideas or words without properly acknowledging the source. Generally, work done for your courses – essays, examinations, oral presentations, homework assignments, journal entries – is expected to be your independent effort. If you use information from other sources (such as books, academic journals, podcasts, or Web pages, etc.), it is necessary to cite these sources properly. In the IE Program, your teachers will teach you how to do this, but it is **your** responsibility to carefully follow their instructions.

When is it necessary to cite sources?

In some cases, for example, in journal writing or when expressing personal opinions, your writing may be based on your own experiences and make use of your personal background and common knowledge. In such cases, it is not necessary to cite sources because YOU are the source of the information or opinions. However, most academic writing requires the use of material from other sources, including dictionaries, encyclopedias, books, magazines, video streaming sites, etc. When you use information from such sources, it is necessary to clearly show what information came from which source.

Submitting an assignment with even one part that has been copied from another source is a violation of the rules against plagiarism unless you follow the guidelines for quotations and cite the source properly. You may quote directly from a source with proper citation, but it is usually better to paraphrase or summarize information in your own words. Even when you paraphrase, summarize, or translate information, it is still necessary to cite the original source. Be careful if the statement, “Free use is allowed” appears on a Web page. Use of material from **any** Web page without citing the source is plagiarism.

How can we show our good manners and respect others?

Acknowledging the contributions of others, and citing sources properly, demonstrates good manners, and it is a sign of respect. Remember that you would not like the writing that you have worked so hard on to be copied by others without credit given to you. If you expect others to treat your writing respectfully, respect theirs.

What is the IE Program Plagiarism Policy?

Plagiarism of any assignment in any IE course – including Academic Writing and Academic Skills – will lead to failure on that assignment, without the option to rewrite. If a student plagiarizes on a second assignment, s/he will fail the entire course.

Teachers in the IE Program are very experienced at identifying plagiarism, and all cases must be reported to the IE Program Coordinators. A database of written work submitted in IE courses is being created to discourage the re-use of reports, essays, and other assignments that have been previously turned in by other students.

What are other consequences of plagiarism?

Being caught plagiarizing can have a negative effect on a student's reputation. In some cases, there are legal and financial consequences. For example, an author may sue someone who plagiarizes his/her work.

Benefits of original, plagiarism-free work

These are just some of the ways that you and your classmates can benefit from avoiding plagiarism:

- * Your English skills will develop more rapidly.
- * You will be able to express **your own** ideas and opinions.
- * You will be able to communicate better with others.
- * You can take pride in your accomplishments.
- * Students will not feel pressured or bullied by classmates who want to copy their work.
- * You will carry forward the reputation for excellence in English that AGU and the English Department have built up over many years, which will help you and your classmates in your job-hunting.