DEAR STUDENTS AND PARENTS/GUARDIANS:

I always begin discussions of plagiarism early in the semester, but because of the article on plagiarism that appeared in the May 2010 columns, I decided to attach this handout to my syllabus. I have either bracketed my additions/alterations to the two University statements or clearly signaled the switch to my words.

FROM A 1999 HOME PAGE OF BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR ANDREAS TEUBER:

2. Definitions of Plagiarism

3.1 Plagiarism

Plagiarism is passing off a source's information, ideas, or words as your own by omitting to cite them, an act of lying, cheating, and stealing. Plagiarus means kidnapper, in Latin, because in antiquity plagiarii were pirates who sometimes stole children: when you plagiarize, as several commentators have observed, you steal the brain child of another. But since you also claim that it's your own brain child, and use it to get credit for work you haven't really done, you also lie and cheat. You cheat your source of fair recognition for his or her efforts, and you cheat the students who have completed the same assignment without plagiarizing.

Incidents of plagiarism vary in seriousness and in circumstance. Occasionally, a student is truly confused about the rules of acknowledgement, or obliviously incorporates a few vivid phrases from a source. And occasionally, at the other end of the scale, a student calmly plagiarizes a whole paper because he or she simply doesn't care about a course, or is unwilling to give it any time. Most often, however, the plagiarist has started out with good intentions but hasn't left enough time to do the reading and thinking that the assignment requires, has become desperate, and just wants the whole thing done with. At this point, in one common scenario, the student gets careless while taking notes on a source or incorporating notes into a draft, so the source’s words and ideas blur into those of the student, who has neither the time nor the inclination to resist the blurring. In another scenario, the student simply panics and plagiarizes from a secondary source or from another student copying from the source directly or slightly rephrasing hoping to get away with it just this one time.

Plagiarism can occur on any kind of assignment, from a two-page problem set or response paper to a 20-page research paper. More common than wholesale copying, especially in longer papers, is piecemeal or mosaic plagiarism [also called patchwriting], in which a student mixes words or ideas of a source (unacknowledged) in with his or her own words and ideas, or mixes together uncited words and ideas from several sources into a pastiche, or mixes together properly-cited uses of a source with uncited uses. But at any point in any paper, plagiarism usually takes one of these forms:

(a) An uncited idea: In the first paragraph [of this] page, the fact that the Latin root of the word "plagiarism" is plagiarus or kidnapper is knowledge commonly available in dictionaries, so it doesn't need citing [unless you use all or some of the source's words]. The move from this fact to plagiarism as stealing a brain child is a distinctive idea, and (unless it's your own idea) it does need citing. And if, having read that paragraph on [this] page, you write in an essay of your own about plagiarism in Ivy League colleges that "etymologically, plagiarizing involves taking the brain child of another" and that "plagiarism involves the dastardly trio of lying, cheating, and stealing," you plagiarize an idea in both cases, if you don't cite this [handout] even though your language differs from that of your source.

(b) An uncited structure or organizing strategy: If, having read the second paragraph on [this] page, you break down your own analysis of plagiarism into (a) patch plagiarizing out of ignorance of the rules or obliviousness, (b) wholesale plagiarizing out of indifference or laziness, and (c) plagiarizing in a time-panic, and then you say that those who plagiarize in a time-panic do so either by (1) careless note-taking or (2) deliberate copying, you are plagiarizing a distinctive intellectual structure or way of proceeding with a topic, even though the language of your own discussion differs from that of the [handout].

(c) Uncited information or data from a source: If, in your essay on plagiarism, you observe that Harvard College acted on 25 cases of academic dishonesty in 1993-94, and you don't cite this [handout] or the User's Guide to the Administrative Board, you are plagiarizing information. Commonly plagiarized kinds of information include details of a topic's historical background or accounts (in secondary sources) of previous work done on the topic.
If, in your essay on plagiarism, after reading the second paragraph on the previous page, you observe that "at a certain point in the writing process the student has neither the time nor the inclination to resist the blurring of his source's words into his own" but don't use quotation marks at least for the words in the middle of the sentence, you are plagiarizing even if you do cite the [handout]. You may fix on certain words in a source as more striking or apt than those around them, but this is all the more reason to give credit for the words by quoting.

**AVOID ALL-BUT QUOTING**

If your own sentences follow the source so closely in idea and sentence structure that the result is really closer to quotation than to paraphrase (as in the hypothetical sentence in [d] above), you are plagiarizing, even if you have cited the source. You may not simply alter a few words of your source, even of an abstract you read for a literature review. You need to recast your summary into your own words and sentence structure, or quote directly.

3.2 Other Ways of Misusing Sources

(d) **Abetting Plagiarism:** You are also guilty of misusing sources if you knowingly help another student plagiarize, whether by letting the student copy your own paper, or by selling the student a paper of yours or somebody else's, or by writing a paper or part of a paper for the student: as, for example, when in the course of "editing" a paper for another student you go beyond correcting mechanical errors and begin redrafting significant amounts of the paper. .... (If another student asks you for help with a paper, **try whenever possible to phrase your comments as questions that will draw out the student's own ideas.**)  

MRS. KLEIN: **ADULTS/STUDENT HELPERS: RESIST THE TEMPTATION TO TAKE A DRAFT AND REWRITE WORDS, PHRASES, AND/OR SENTENCES. PLEASE KNOW THAT THERE SHOULD NOT BE A MARKED DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE WRITING VOICE OF AN ESSAY WRITTEN IN CLASS AND AN ESSAY WRITTEN OUT OF CLASS.** I WILL SPEAK TO ANY STUDENT WHO BRINGS IN AN ESSAY THAT SOUNDS NOTHING LIKE THE VOICE I KNOW FROM OUR MANY IN-CLASS ESSAYS. **RESIST THE TEMPTATION TO SIMPLY CORRECT PUNCTUATION WITHOUT A DISCUSSION ABOUT RULES AND CHOICES. IT IS APPROPRIATE, HOWEVER, TO PROOFREAD AND CORRECT TYPOS AND MISSPELLINGS.** ADULTS, **PLEASE EMAIL ME IF YOU WANT FURTHER GUIDANCE ON HOW TO ASSIST YOUNG WRITERS.**

STUDENTS: **DO NOT LET ANYONE WRITE YOUR PAPER FOR YOU! I ONCE SAID TO A STUDENT, “IT MIGHT SOUND BETTER IF YOU WROTE...” BEFORE I COULD FINISH, SHE INTERRUPTED ME AND SAID, “STOP. DON’T SAY ANYMORE. I WANT THE WRITING TO BE MINE.” STUDENTS, PLEASE FALL MADLY IN LOVE WITH YOUR DISTINCT WRITING VOICE.**

BACK TO CITATION INFORMATION FOR A. TEUBER'S HOME PAGE.

- Extract from **WRITING WITH SOURCES: A Guide for Harvard Students**, by Gordon Harvey, Expository Writing Program, Copyright 1995, The President and Fellows of Harvard University Chapter Three: Misuse of Sources: 3.1 Plagiarism and 3.2 Other Ways of Misusing Sources

August 2, 1999

USEM 27B

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FROM A 2000 HANDOUT OF THE GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY ENGLISH DEPARTMENT:
I. PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is the representation by a student of another’s ideas or writing as his or her own. There are basically two types of plagiarism. The first, which is more serious, involves a deliberate attempt on the part of the student to pass off as his or hers the writing or ideas of another writer; it generally consists in the direct or nearly direct copying of a source which the student attempts to conceal. The second type of plagiarism, which results from the student’s lack of familiarity with the proper procedures for acknowledgment and use of a source, involves one or more technical errors; the student in this case attempts to acknowledge the indebtedness to outside material but does so incorrectly or incompletely.

Both types of plagiarism are serious violations of the principles of academic honesty upon which every university is based. They cannot and will not be tolerated. Penalties, especially for those who commit deliberate plagiarism, may be quite severe.

MRS. KLEIN: AS TO PENALTIES FOR PLAGIARIZING, I DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN THE TWO AFOREMENTIONED TYPES OF PLAGIARIZING. STUDENTS WHO CHOOSE TO ENGAGE IN THE FIRST TYPE OF PLAGIARISM WILL EARN A ‘0’ ON THEIR WORK AND MUST MEET WITH MR. MATHIS AND ME TO DETERMINE ADDITIONAL ACTIONS. PENALTIES FOR THE SECOND TYPE OF PLAGIARISM WILL VARY DEPENDING ON THE TYPE OF ERROR, THE FREQUENCY OF THE ERROR, AND THE TIME OF YEAR WHEN THE ERROR OCCURS. ON EACH ASSIGNMENT, I WILL BE CLEAR AS TO EXPECTATIONS AND PENALTIES. WE SPEND MUCH TIME ON HOW TO RESPONSIBLY USE OUTSIDE SOURCES IN YOUR HOMEWORK/ESSAYS/PROJECTS/DISCUSSIONS, ETC.

II. USE AND ASSIMILATION OF SOURCES

Keep the following rules in mind:

All specific examples of indebtedness must be acknowledged at the appropriate points by means of parenthetical citations, footnotes, or endnotes. Quotation marks are necessary with all direct quotations. Quotations must be accurate.

Any outside source used in the preparation of an assignment should be noted on the Works Consulted page, bibliography, or similar listing of resources required by the style manual, even if it did not furnish the writer with specific ideas. All sources quoted, paraphrased, and summarized must be listed on the Works Cited page (if MLA styled) or bibliography.

In doing research for the paper, the writer should aim at thoroughly digesting the material consulted. Attempting to paraphrase by simply changing the key words or sentence structure of the source suggests that the writer has not thought carefully about the reading. If you must paraphrase, do so without the source in front of you. Rely on your notes; then, check for accuracy after you finish the paraphrase.

Stringing together a series of quotations and paraphrases from various sources without attempting an original interpretation or analysis is not proper form for a research paper.

Georgia State University handout (GSU Department of English//ms revision 2000)

MRS. KLEIN: THE MOTIVATION FOR AVOIDING PLAGIARISM SHOULD NOT BE FEAR OF PENALTY; INSTEAD, THE MOTIVATION SHOULD BE YOUR DESIRE TO VALUE YOUR VOICE/IDEAS AND HONOR THE VOICE/IDEAS OF OTHERS. I LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH YOU. PLEASE EMAIL ME ON FIRSTCLASS WITH ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS.