

Tips for Faculty • safe assign™ by Blackboard

Strategies and Suggestions for Success

Submitting Papers

- ❖ Submit text only; Safe Assign will flag a Works Cited or References page.
- ❖ Encourage a Safe Assign check during the draft process to allow students to address possible issues.
- ❖ Consider using Blackboard's new *Learn Assignment* function, which allows students to submit and review multiple drafts in Safe Assign.

Reading Reports

- ❖ Look beyond the number; there is no minimum or maximum allowance to determine plagiarism.
- ❖ Consider common knowledge. Students writing for courses with broad bases of common knowledge can produce texts that connect, coincidentally or unintentionally, to outside sources. This happens often with nursing students.
- ❖ Be aware of *false flags*. Our experience has shown that correctly paraphrased/quoted and cited passages do get incorrectly identified. Each one should be closely reviewed.
- ❖ Use the review process as an opportunity to discuss academic sources; sometimes a passage that a student attributes to a legitimate source has actually been lifted from personal blogs, Wikipedia, and general information databases.
- ❖ On the flip side of that issue, if Wikipedia has legitimately cited the same source that the student has, then the perception from the report could be that the student is citing Wikipedia directly. Investigate thoroughly and track the research before labeling work as plagiarized.
- ❖ With group assignments, it is often clear that one member of the group is the source of plagiarism; consider ways to structure both the revision and grading processes so that innocent students aren't penalized.
- ❖ Multiple paragraphs flagged back to back are far more likely to be true plagiarism, specifically patchwork writing; isolated sentences within paragraphs are more likely to be improper citation.
 - Signs of improper citation without intent include:
 - Author attribution given in sentence, but citation incomplete/missing.
 - Student inserts their own wording between two passages from the same author, yet only gives one passage a citation.
 - All signs of citation attempt are there, but paraphrase falls short. (Paraphrase *without* a citation more likely to reflect intent to plagiarize.)

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The Speaking, Reading, and Writing Center

TVB 1306 • 409-933-8703 • email srwcenter@com.edu



1200 Amburn Road • Texas City, Texas 77591 • www.COM.edu



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Guiding Revision and the Safe Assign Conference

- ❖ Offer to walk through the Safe Assign report with the student and explain each concern in person. A face-to-face conference gives both of you the best opportunity to communicate effectively.
- ❖ Often the issue is a weak attempt at paraphrase; brainstorm possibilities and allow the student to talk through alternative options.
- ❖ Block quotes will distort the report percentage, even when correctly cited. Encourage students relying on block quotes to break them down, when possible.
- ❖ Praise and point out successful places of citation and research integration. Those will be the anchors the student can come back to as they revise.
- ❖ Revision is one of the key differences between novice and experienced writers. Present the opportunity to revise as a natural, beneficial, and vital part of the writing process.
- ❖ If time allows, encourage or even require a student struggling with research-based writing to visit the SRWC and review their paper and report with one of our tutors. They can also participate in the Preventing Plagiarism workshop.

The Plagiarism Seminar

When students are referred to Kris Kimbark for plagiarism, they will complete a two-part Plagiarism Seminar. This seminar is not intended to be punitive; it is an opportunity for students to learn from their mistakes in a positive, constructive way.

The first part of the seminar includes a one-on-one, private tutoring session with a professional tutor specially trained to mediate plagiarism issues. Students will be asked to bring their paper so the tutor can identify specific issues and refer to them within the context of the seminar. The student will be given explanations of the different types of plagiarism; they will also be presented with strategies and resources that are available to them as they research, write, and revise.

The second part of the seminar will include a written examination that can be administered in the Testing Center. Students must score an 80 or above on the exam to successfully complete the seminar. Retesting will be available for those who need it.

Both instructors and students should be assured that this process will be conducted with a high regard to student privacy and dignity.

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