

## SCHOOL OF BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES: NOTICE ON PLAGIARISM

### IMPORTANT NOTICE: READ THIS NOW.

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is the inclusion of any material that is not your own, without adequate reference to its author. Other than the fraudulent manufacture of data, it is the most serious professional breach of ethics that a scientist can commit. In its simplest form, plagiarism is the direct copying or duplication of another person's words without quotation marks or citation (or both). In effect, without setting off such statements in quotes, you are stating in print that you are the author of the wording contained therein. Including ideas in your paper that are not your own, without adequate citation is plagiarism. *In laboratory courses, make sure that you do not use the same text as a lab partner or other student. You may NOT collectively use the same figures and tables even if you collected the data together.*

Paraphrasing can also be a form of plagiarism, if the paraphrased text is too similar to the original. A common form of such plagiarism occurs when someone follows the same order of ideas or thoughts from one sentence to the next from a source text. That is, they paraphrase each sentence one by one, without distilling the information in a different order. The TA or the course instructor is prepared to make these interpretations as to when the paraphrasing is too similar.

Including figures that are from another source without giving credit to that source is also plagiarism. Note that unlike the case in many other disciplines, in science it is generally not appropriate to quote other people's work at length. Quotations in science are reserved for those special cases in which the author(s) made a prediction, observation or conclusion that proved far-reaching or if their word choice was particularly noteworthy. It is unlikely you will be called upon to quote the author of a scientific article under those circumstances. You should strive to distill and recast in your own words the ideas, conclusions, results or observations of others, when you are required to support a position you are taking in a scientific paper. The original wording is usually less important than the idea that can be effectively incorporated into your own paper in your own words.

Access to papers and other texts on the internet has opened new opportunities for those who would lower themselves to plagiarize, and the School of Biological Sciences (SBS) has in the past year encountered such cases in its courses. As a result, SBS now has access to sophisticated algorithms that can detect text plagiarized from the internet and the faculty and the TAs have been instructed to employ these tools.

So serious is plagiarism viewed that it is grounds for the dismissal of even tenured Professors from a university. In the School of Biological Sciences, a confirmed case of plagiarism can result in immediate expulsion from the course. The particulars of the offense will also be immediately forwarded to the Office of Student Conduct, which will likely take further more serious action.

If you have any doubt at all about what constitutes plagiarism, you need to discuss immediately this matter with your instructor or T.A.

**In short, make sure all elements of your paper, including text and figures, are your own work.**