

# **Plagiarism Policy**

## **Rationale**

The faculty of West Lutheran High School is committed to teaching students how to become ethical users of information and ideas. It is our responsibility not only to educate students in the research process and mechanics of writing and proper documentation, but also to hold these students accountable for honest work. Whether an assigned project is in a visual, written or spoken format, students are expected to accurately reference all sources of information consulted for the project. Plagiarism is regarded as a serious offense and will not be tolerated by West Lutheran High School or any other institution of higher learning. It is an expectation that all departments and students adhere to and enforce this policy.

## **Definition of Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is defined as:

- Copying of another person's ideas and /or works, whether intentional or not, in whole or in part, from a print or non-print source, and using those ideas or works as one's own.
- Deliberate and/or consistent lack of proper documentation and citation in the project or paper.
- In-text documentation that is not reflected in the Works Cited page.

## **Teacher Responsibilities**

West Lutheran High School teachers are to provide the following at the beginning of the paper or project:

- An assignment sheet with detailed instructions;
- A rubric outlining assessment at all points of the process and for the final product;
- Clear guidelines regarding acceptable amounts of help from peers or other adults.

In addition, teachers are responsible for:

- Assisting students who are having difficulty in the location and evaluation of information;
- Assisting students in how to manage time and deadlines throughout the research process;
- Conferencing with students on formatting and composing the project or paper.

## **Student Responsibilities**

- Submit authentic work;
- Follow the project instructions and deadlines assigned by the teacher;
- Ask questions and seek help from appropriate persons;
- Cite in-text or in-project sources correctly and accurately;
- Format Works Cited pages correctly and accurately.

## Plagiarism Violations

If a teacher has sufficient reason to believe that a student has plagiarized, the teacher must determine the level of plagiarism according to the criteria below.

### Degrees of Plagiarism

- I. A first-degree violation may occur due to ignorance or inexperience on the part of the student. An example of plagiarism at this level may involve a student's using a paragraph or a few lines of text without citing the material properly; however, most of the paper is the student's own work.

Recommended procedures for first-degree violations are outlined below; any one or more procedures may be chosen:

1. A make-up assignment at a more difficult level.
2. A grade reduction on the original assignment.
3. A letter will be sent notifying the parents of the violation.

- II. A second-degree violation is considered a more serious plagiarism offense. Examples of this violation include use of one or more paragraphs of another's ideas and/or works without correct citation. Incorrect citation may often take the form of improper paraphrasing. Although some of the work is the student's, it is evident that much of the work has been taken from other sources and not referenced.

Recommended procedures for second-degree violations are outlined below; any one or more procedures may be chosen:

1. A grade reduction of the original assignment.
2. A letter in the student's academic files detailing the offense.
3. A comment on the student's report card noting the offense.
4. A letter will be sent notifying the parents of the violation.

- III. A third degree violation is a severe case of plagiarism and indicates the majority of a student's work has been taken from another source or sources and not referenced. An example may be the use of a purchased term paper or other materials as one's own. Also, this violation may involve improperly acquiring information and/or intentionally altering it, i.e. citing sources that are not actually sources. In addition, a third degree violation occurs when a student has been found guilty of plagiarism in a prior instance.

Recommended procedures for third-degree violations are outlined below; any one or more procedures may be chosen:

1. A recommendation that no credit be given for the original assignment.
2. A letter in the student's academic files detailing the offense.
3. A reduction in overall course grade for the term.
4. Disciplinary action taken by administration, including parent notification.