



Photo Credit: Michael Connors

Author Certification of Academic Integrity

It is relatively commonplace for students to be required to sign declarations of ‘academic honesty’ on submitting assignments, confirming that all sources consulted have been acknowledged.

--Peter Ashworth and Philip Banister

McCabe and Drinan (1999) found that at the colleges “where students pledge not to cheat” there are “significantly fewer incidents of cheating.” (B7) Like the vast majority of colleges and universities, Schoolcraft College does not have a formal honor code that students are required to sign. However, it does have a student code of conduct that does hold students accountable for their actions.

The author’s certification is designed to protect the majority of students who do act with integrity. Student who sign the certificate indicate that they know the rules of proper citation and the penalty incurred if they are found guilty of plagiarism. Therefore, it makes it easier for the instructor to defend the failing grade the dishonest student earns is awarded in the course.

Malouff and Sims (1996) developed the following Author’s Certificate:

I certify that I am the author of this paper and that any assistance I received in its preparation is fully disclosed in the paper. I have cited any sources from which I used data, ideas, or words, either quoted or paraphrased. I have added quotes whenever I used the exact words of another writer. I also certify that I wrote the entire paper specifically for this course.

Some instructors may require that you sign an author’s certificate when you submit your paper for evaluation. And some instructors will not grade papers that do not include such a certification.

Avoiding Plagiarism

In “Got Plagiarism? Try the Guillotine,” Robert Lee Mahon (2002) explains that “In more old-fashioned terms, plagiarism is a mortal sin, and the wages of sin are death.” In many classes, a student guilty of plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty will fail the course.

In my classes, I forward the name of any student guilty of plagiarism and the evidence of cheating to the Dean of Student Services so that she can determine whether further actions are warranted.

If you are not clear about what constitutes plagiarism, you should schedule a conference with me before submitting your paper.

References and Resources

Ashworth, Peter and Philip Bannister. "Guilty in Whose Eyes? University Student's Perceptions of Cheating and Plagiarism in Academic Work and Assessment." Studies in Higher Education 22.2 (1997): 187+.

Gibaldi, Joseph. MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. 6th ed. New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2003.

Mahon, Robert Lee. "Got Plagiarism? Try the Guillotine." Community College Week 15 (2002): 4-6.

Malouff, John M. and Randi L. Sims. "Applying an Employee-Motivation Model to Prevent Student Plagiarism." Journal of Education for Business 72.1 (1996) 58+.

"Student Code of Conduct and Judicial Procedures." n.d. Schoolcraft College. 3 June 2008
<<http://www.schoolcraft.edu/academics/policies/conduct.asp> >.



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