WRITING: PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else’s ideas as your own.

You have plagiarized when:

- You copy sentences, phrases, or key words without citing the source, and without placing the copied material in quotations.
- You have summarized the main points and supporting details of someone else’s argument in your own words, but have not cited the source for your ideas.
- You have paraphrased someone else’s sentences or sentence patterns, and have not cited the source.
- You have altered someone else’s material by eliminating some of their words, or by adding some of your words.
- You have not used ellipses (…) to show elimination of words, nor used brackets [ ] for additions you have made to the text.
- You have borrowed someone else’s ideas, evaluations, or arguments without acknowledging the source.
- You have failed to acknowledge all your sources, either in the body of your paper or in your bibliography.

You can avoid plagiarism by:

- Citing the source for your ideas, your quotations, your summaries and your paraphrasing.
- Remembering that research is a method for documenting available materials. Your research is evaluated on your ability to choose “appropriate sources.”
- Recalling that information is not considered “common knowledge” unless the information can be found in at least fifteen sources.
- Knowing that you don’t need to quote or cite well-known events, dates, and information that can be found in reference books, but that information that analyzes those same events or that offers an opinion does need a quote or citation.
- Citing or quoting when you’re unsure if it’s necessary. It’s always better to give credit than to run the risk of plagiarism.