**Honor Code Tutorial**

Introduction

All communities exist by virtue of some consensus on values. In a university, it is essential that there be not only consensus, but universal acceptance of certain enduring and specific standards of academic conduct. These standards of academic conduct are distinct from the other values and expectations of the community. Because of their unique importance, they are set forth as Wesleyan’s Honor Code.

The Honor Code was initiated in 1893 through the efforts of a group of students who had worked to gain acceptance for their idea among faculty and administration as well as their fellow students. Any student wishing to enroll at Wesleyan should understand and must accept the Honor Code as a condition of enrollment.

Violations against the code are violations against the community, the ultimate source of the principles articulated below. Accordingly, upon witnessing or otherwise becoming aware of an apparent violation, members of the community have an obligation to report the violation to the appropriate faculty member, a member of the Honor Board, or the Vice President for Student Affairs.

Violations of the Honor Code

1. The attempt to give or obtain assistance in a formal academic exercise without due acknowledgement. *This includes, but is not limited to: cheating during an exam; helping another student to cheat or to plagiarize; completing a project for someone and/or asking someone to complete a project for you.*
2. Plagiarism – the presentation of another person’s words, ideas, images, data or research as one’s own. Plagiarism is more than lifting a text word-for-word, even from sources in the public domain. Paraphrasing or using any content or terms coined by others without proper acknowledgement also constitutes plagiarism.
3. The submission of the same work for academic credit more than once without permission.
4. Willful falsification of data, information, or citations in any formal exercise.
5. Deception concerning adherence to the conditions set by the instructor for a formal academic exercise.

**Tutorial Questions**

The following scenarios are presented to help you better understand the Honor Code. Please read each hypothetical situation and choose the best answer:

* John and Jamilla work on their economics problem set together. They discuss each exercise, agree on an answer, and write down the same answer. Their instructor has noticed that their papers are identical. Is this academic dishonesty?

Yes

No, this is legitimate collaboration

Maybe

Maybe – Whether or not the situation described is a violation of Wesleyan’s Honor Code depends upon the instructions given by the instructor.  If the instructor allows (or encourages) student collaboration on problem sets, there is no violation.  However, the students should note on their problem set the others with whom they collaborated.

* Anne is writing a paper in a foreign language and knows that her grammar is far from perfect. She gets help from a native speaker, who checks the paper and makes corrections for her. Is this a violation of the Honor Code?

Yes

No

Yes – The type of assistance that Anne received is a violation of the Code. It would be fine for Anne to get help from a native speaker in terms of pointing out errors, but she should correct such errors herself. It would generally be a good idea to cite the native speaker’s assistance with the work. If in doubt, Anne should certainly ask the instructor for clarification.

* Antonio goes to his instructor’s office a week before his paper is due, because he is having difficulty organizing his ideas. He and the instructor talk and each of them adds some ideas to his outline. By the time Antonio goes home to write the paper, he has forgotten which ideas were his and which were the instructor’s. He does not mention the instructor as a source in his paper. Is this academic dishonesty?

Yes

No, Antonio is getting legitimate help with writing his paper

Yes – Antonio should credit the instructor and also provide an explanation to the instructor when submitting the paper.

* Maria has been sick and, as a result, has fallen behind on assignments. The professor deducts points when students turn in assignments late. In desperation, Maria digs out a paper written for another course and turns it in so she can hand in her work on time. Is this a violation of the Honor Code?

Yes

No

Yes – Submitting the same work for credit more than once without permission of the instructor is a clear violation of the Honor Code.  She should have instead spoken with the instructor and asked for an extension based on her illness.

* Hakim is writing a paper for his statistics class. He is unsure how to format one of the sections, so he uses a friend’s paper who took the same class last year as a reference. In the process, he uses almost identical words and phrasing as in his friend’s paper. Is this a violation of the Honor Code?

Yes

No

Yes – Using his friend’s paper as a formatting template was probably acceptable, but copying his friend’s phrasing constitutes plagiarism.

* Elizabeth has a lab report due the following day that is worth 30% of her final grade. As she is rushing to put it together, she realizes that she does not have adequate time to complete the assignment and decides to use Wikipedia to gather information about a specific reaction to be described in the report. She copies and pastes portions of the Wikipedia description into her report without citation. Is this a violation of the Honor Code?

Yes

No

Yes – Copying any content from the internet or from other sources constitutes plagiarism. In addition, Elizabeth should be clear about the instructor’s expectations with respect to using Wikipedia or other on-line sources.

The final set of questions in this tutorial is intended to further your understanding of plagiarism and to help you avoid it. The source for this instructive analysis is Harold C. Martin, Richard M. Ohman, and James Wheatly, The Logic and Rhetoric of Expansion, 3rd ed. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969.

Consider the following source passage from *Charles L. Sherman, ed., Introduction to John Locke: "Treatise on Civil Government" and a "Letter Concerning Toleration." New York: Appleton-Century Crofts, 1937:*

The importance of the Second Treatise of Government printed in this volume is such that without it we should miss some of the familiar features of our own government. It is safe to assert that the much criticized branch known as the Supreme Court obtained its being as a result of Locke’s insistence upon the separation of powers; and that the combination of many powers in the hands of the executive under the New Deal has still to encounter opposition because it is contrary to the principles enunciated therein, the effect of which is not spent, though the relationship may not be consciously traced. Again we see the crystallizing force of Locke’s writing. It renders explicit and adapts to the British politics of his day the trend and aim of writers from Languet and Bodin through Hooker and Grotius, to say nothing of the distant ancients, Aristotle and the Stoic school of natural law. It sums up magisterially the arguments used through the ages to attack authority vested in a single individual, but it does so from the particular point of view engendered by the Revolution of 1688 and is in harmony with the British scene and mental climate of the growing bourgeoisie of that age. Montesquieu and Rousseau, the framers of our own Declaration of Independence, and the statesmen (or should we say merchants and spectators?) who drew up the Constitution have re-echoed its claims for human liberty, for the separation of powers, for the sanctity of private property. In the hands of these it has been the quarry of liberal doctrines; and that it has served the Socialist theory of property based on labor is its final proof of breadth of view.

* In her paper, Elise writes the following:

It is not hard to see the importance of the Second Treatise of Government to our own democracy. Without it we should miss some of the most familiar features of our own government. It is safe to assert that the much criticized branch known as the Supreme Court obtained its being as a result of Locke’s insistence upon the separation of powers; and that the combination of many powers in the hands of the executive under the New Deal has still to encounter opposition because it is contrary to the principles enunciated therein, the effect of which is not spent, though the relationship may not be consciously traced. The framers of our own Declaration of Independence and the statesmen who drew up the Constitution have re-echoed its claims for human liberty, for the separation of powers, for the sanctity of private property. All these are marks of the influence of Locke’s Second Treatise on our own way of life.

Did Elise plagiarize from the source?

Yes

No

Yes – In this example, after composing half of a first sentence, Elise copies exactly what is in the original text, leaving out the center section of the paragraph and omitting the names of Montesquieu and Rousseau where she takes up the text again. The last sentence is also Elise’s own.

If Elise had enclosed all the copied text in quotation marks and had identified the source in a footnote, she would not have been liable to the charge of plagiarism; a reader might justifiably have felt, however, that Elise’s personal contribution to the discussion was not very significant.

* In his paper, Jacob writes the following:

The crystallizing force of Locke’s writing may be seen in the effect his Second Treatise of Government had in shaping some of the familiar features of our own government. That much criticized branch known as the Supreme Court and the combination of many powers in the hands of the executive under the New Deal are modern examples. But even the foundations of our state—the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution—have re-echoed its claims for human liberty, for the separation of powers, for the sanctity of private property. True, the influence of others is also marked in our Constitution—from the trend and aim of writers like Languet and Bodin, Hooker and Grotius, to say nothing of Aristotle and the Stoic school of natural law; but the fundamental influence is Locke’s Treatise, the very quarry of liberal doctrines.

Did Jacob plagiarize from the source?

Yes

No

Yes – Note how the following phrases have been lifted out of the original text and moved into new patterns:

* crystallizing force of Locke’s writing
* some of the familiar features of our own government
* much criticized branch known as the Supreme Court
* combination of many powers in the hands of the executive under the New Deal
* have re-echoed its claims for human liberty . . . property
* from the trend and aim . . . Grotius
* to say nothing of Aristotle and . . . natural law
* quarry of liberal doctrines

As in the first example, there is really no way of legitimizing such a procedure. To put every stolen phrase within quotation marks would produce an almost unreadable, and quite worthless, text.

* In her paper, Siri writes the following:

Many fundamental aspects of our own government are apparent in the Second Treatise of Government. One can safely say that the oft-censured Supreme Court really owes its existence to the Lockeian demand that powers in government be kept separate; equally one can say that the allocation of varied and widespread authority to the president during the era of the New Deal has still to encounter opposition because it is contrary to the principles enunciated therein . . . Once more it is possible to note the way in which Locke’s writing clarified existing opinion…

Did Siri plagiarize from the source?

Yes

No

Yes – Siri has simply traveled along with the original text, substituting approximately equivalent terms except where her understanding fails her, as it does with "crystallizing," or where the ambiguity of the original is too great a tax on her ingenuity for her to proceed, as it is with "to encounter opposition... consciously traced" in the original.

Such a procedure as the one shown in this example has its uses; for one thing, it is valuable for the student’s own understanding of the passage; and it may be valuable for the reader as well. How, then, may it be properly used? The procedure is simple. The writer might begin the second sentence with: "As Sherman notes in the introduction to his edition of the Treatise, one can safely say . . ." and conclude the paraphrased passage with a footnote giving the additional identification necessary. Or she might indicate directly the exact nature of what she is doing, in this fashion: "To paraphrase Sherman’s comment . . ." and conclude that also with a footnote indicator.

* In his paper, Hyunjin writes the following:

The Second Treatise of Government is a veritable quarry of liberal doctrines. In it the crystallizing force of Locke’s writing is markedly apparent. The cause of human liberty, the principle of separation of powers, and the inviolability of private property—all three, major dogmas of American constitutionalism—owe their presence in our Constitution in large part to the remarkable Treatise, which first appeared around 1685 and was destined to spark, within three years, a revolution in the land of its author’s birth and, ninety years later, another revolution against that land.

Did Hyunjin plagiarize from the source?

Yes

No

Yes – Hyunjin has not been able to resist the appropriation of two striking terms—"quarry of liberal doctrines" and "crystallizing force"; a perfectly proper use of the terms would have required only the addition of a phrase; The Second Treatise of Government is, to use Sherman’s suggestive expression, a "quarry of liberal doctrines." In it the "crystallizing force"—the term again is Sherman’s—of Locke’s writing is markedly apparent. Other phrases in the text above—"the cause of human liberty," "the principle of the separation of powers," "the inviolability of private property"—are clearly drawn directly from the original source but are so much matters in the public domain, so to speak, that no one could reasonably object to their re-use in this fashion.