

# Plagiarism: A How-NOT-to Guide

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, to **plagiarize** is “to take and use as one’s own (the thoughts, writings, or inventions of another person).”<sup>1</sup>

The *UNB Undergraduate Calendar* defines **plagiarism** as including the following:

1. Quoting verbatim or almost verbatim from a source (such as copyrighted material, notes, letters, business entries, computer materials, etc.) without acknowledgment;
2. Adopting someone else’s line of thought, argument, arrangement, or supporting evidence (such as, for example, statistics, bibliographies, etc.) without indicating such dependence;
3. Submitting someone else’s work, in whatever form (film, workbook, artwork, computer materials, etc.) without acknowledgment;
4. Knowingly representing as one’s own work any idea of another.<sup>2</sup>

The *St. Thomas University Calendar* provides the following examples of **plagiarism**:

1. Presenting another person’s ideas, words, or other intellectual property, including material found on the Internet, as one’s own.
2. Writing an essay, report or assignment, or a portion thereof, for someone else to submit as their own work.
3. Submitting an essay, report, or assignment when a major portion has been previously submitted or is being submitted for another course at St. Thomas or any other university without the express permission of both instructors.<sup>3</sup>

In academic writing, if you **copy or paraphrase another person’s words, or adopt their ideas or data, without giving credit by citing the source**, you are plagiarizing—whether you had intended to cheat or not.

## Top 3 Tips for Avoiding Plagiarism

1. **Start your research early.** Expect the library research process for most research papers to take much longer than the writing process. Consult UNB Libraries’ *Guide to Research Success* for general research help (see [media.lib.unb.ca/research/success.pdf](http://media.lib.unb.ca/research/success.pdf)).
2. **Get full citations.** Be sure you have all the bibliographic details (title, author(s), journal title, volume, issue, pages, etc.) when printing or emailing source documents, or when taking notes during your research. In your paper, you will need to fully identify sources of direct quotes, paraphrases, and ideas.
3. **Use a standard citation style.** Each discipline typically uses its own accepted standard citation method and has a detailed style manual which explains how to format citations. All the manuals are available at the library. Ask your course instructor whether one of these standard styles should be used:

*Social Sciences:* **APA** (*Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*)  
*Humanities:* **MLA** (*MLA Style Manual*) or **Chicago** (*Chicago Manual of Style*)  
*Sciences:* **CSE** (*Scientific Style and Format*)

Citation style examples can be found under the link “Writing Answers” on the UNB Writing Centre’s website ([go.unb.ca/wss](http://go.unb.ca/wss)) and on the STU Writing Centre website at [moodle.stu.ca](http://moodle.stu.ca) >> **Courses** >> **Writing Centre**. Standard style manuals are available at the help desks at all UNB Libraries.

Also consider using **Cite** or **RefWorks** to automatically format citations in any standard style (see reverse).

# More Research & Writing Tips

**Use a library database's Cite option to automatically format citations.** Most library databases have a *Cite* option, which can save you time by automatically formatting references, letting you copy and paste them into your paper. Be sure to double-check your references against a Writing Centre website or a style manual at the library.

**Use RefWorks to save and automatically format citations.** As you conduct your online research, you can export citations to your own RefWorks database and later use RefWorks to automatically format your bibliography using any of the standard citation styles. See [lib.unb.ca/RefWorks](http://lib.unb.ca/RefWorks) for details.

**Paraphrase properly.** If you summarize a passage of text, use your own words, and cite the source.

**Use direct quotes sparingly.** While the amount of quotation you should use depends upon your topic and your instructor's directions, avoid quoting secondary sources that do not add weight to your argument.

**Make your own argument.** While you need to cite all the sources you use in your paper, if most of the paper is made up of quotes, paraphrases, and ideas that need to be cited, you may not be doing enough of your own thinking. Learn to find your own voice in your academic writing.

**Keep in mind that facts that are "common knowledge" do not need to be cited.** For example, if you read an encyclopedia article that states that Newfoundland joined confederation in 1949, you need not cite that article in your paper. It is considered common knowledge and can be found in many other sources.

**Know where to go for help.** In addition to talking to your course instructor, help is available at the Writing Centre.

UNB students can visit the *UNB Writing Centre* (basement of CC Jones Student Services Centre). Book an appointment online ([go.unb.ca/wss](http://go.unb.ca/wss)), by email ([wss@unb.ca](mailto:wss@unb.ca)), or by phone (452-6346). During regular terms, the *UNB Writing Centre* offers "drop-in hours" in the Learning Commons at the Harriet Irving Library (Room 116).

STU students can visit the *STU Writing Centre* (Edmund Casey Hall, Room 102). Book an appointment online ([writingcentre.stu.ca](http://writingcentre.stu.ca)). For more information, contact the STU Writing Centre Coordinator ([writingcentre@stu.ca](mailto:writingcentre@stu.ca); 506-452-0480).

Plus, check out these websites:

*UNB Libraries' Guide to Citation and Plagiarism*  
[go.lib.unb.ca/plagiarism](http://go.lib.unb.ca/plagiarism)

*You Quote It, You Note It!* - from Acadia University  
[library.acadiau.ca/tutorials/plagiarism](http://library.acadiau.ca/tutorials/plagiarism)

If you don't already have one, also consider purchasing your own style manual or general academic writing and research handbook—you'll likely need to consult it often. See [media.lib.unb.ca/research/handbooks.pdf](http://media.lib.unb.ca/research/handbooks.pdf) for examples of general handbooks.

---

## Notes

1. The Oxford English Dictionary, 3rd ed., June 2006; online version September 2011. <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/144941>
2. UNB Undergraduate Calendar (Fredericton: UNB, 2014), sec. B.VIII.A, <http://www.unb.ca/academics/calendar/undergraduate/2013/regulations/universitywideacademicregulations/viii-academicoffences/index.html>
3. St. Thomas University Calendar (Fredericton: STU, 2014), sec. 5.E, <http://w3.stu.ca/stu/administrative/registrar/services/pdfs/regulations.pdf>