

Excerpt from the 2006-2007 Student Handbook

■ Academic Honesty Policy

St. John Fisher College has a firm policy concerning academic dishonesty that includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, or any other action that misrepresents academic work as being one's own. Students are expected to demonstrate academic honesty in all coursework, whether completed in-class or not, individually, or as part of a group project. Violations of academic honesty include, but are not limited to, cheating and plagiarism.

Definition of Terms

- **Cheating in a test situation:** use of resources other than those allowed by the instructor.
- **Plagiarism:** handing in academic work in any format which is not the original work of the student and which is not properly documented as the work of another (e.g., word-for-word copying; patching together various sections of others' work; or paraphrasing the work of another).
- **Academic Dishonesty:** when completing any assignment, the use of any resource by the student without proper acknowledgment, or the use of any assistance from another person without authorization by the instructor (the use of College-provided tutorial services, such as the Writing Center, without prior authorization from an instructor is acceptable unless an instructor specifically states that tutorial services are not to be used in completing the assignment).

Examples & Clarification of Terms

A wide range of activities may be categorized plagiarism. At one end, there is word-for-word copying of another's writing without enclosing the copied passage in quotation marks and identifying it in a footnote, both of which are necessary. (This includes, of course, the copying of all or any part of another student's paper.) At the other end, there is the almost casual slipping in of a particularly apt term that one has come across in reading. Between these poles there are degrees, but they may be roughly placed in two groups. Close to outright deceit is the patching together of random jottings made in the course of reading, generally without careful identification of their source. Here, the writer's sole contribution is to cement the pieces together. Indicative of more effort and, for that reason,

somewhat closer to honesty, though still dishonest, is the paraphrase, an abbreviated (and often skillfully prepared) restatement of someone else's analysis or conclusion, without the acknowledgement that another person's text has been the basis for the recapitulation.

The following examples should make clear the dishonest and the proper use of source material. If instances occur which these examples do not seem to cover, the course instructor should be consulted. The Writing Center is another source of assistance in such matters.

THE SOURCE

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 the age. Montesquieu and Rousseau, the framers of our own Declaration of Independence, and the statesmen (or should we say merchants and speculators?) 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 final proof of its breadth of view.

CHARLES L. SHERMAN, "Introduction" to John Locke, *Treatise of Civil Government and A Letter Concerning Toleration*.

1. WORD-FOR-WORD PLAGIARIZING

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 reechoed 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.

In this example, after composing half of a first sentence, the writer 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 he/she takes up the text again. The last sentence is also the writer's own.

If the writer had enclosed all the copied text in quotation marks and had identified the source in a footnote, he/she would not have been liable to the charge of plagiarism. However, a reader might have felt that the writer's personal contribution to the discussion was not very significant.

2. THE MOSAIC

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.

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 text.

3. THE PARAPHRASE

• **Paraphrase:** Many fundamental aspects of our own government are apparent in the Second

Original: Many familiar features of our own government are apparent in the Second

• **Paraphrase:** Treatise of Government. One can safely say that the oft-censured Supreme Court really

Original: Treatise of Government. It is safe to assert that the much criticized . . . Court obtained

• **Paraphrase:** owes its existence to the Lockean demand that powers in the government be kept separate;

Original: its being as a result of Locke’s insistence upon the separation of powers; and that the

• **Paraphrase:** equally one can say that the allocation of varied and widespread authority to the President

Original: combination of many powers in the hands of the executive under the New Deal has still

• **Paraphrase:** during the era of the New Deal has still to encounter opposition because it is contrary

Original: to encounter opposition because it is contrary to the principles enunciated therein

• **Paraphrase:** Once more it is possible to see the way in which Locke’s writing clarified existing opinion.

Original: Again we see the crystallizing force of Locke’s writing.

The presentation above shows how the writer has followed along with the original text, substituting approximately equivalent terms for those of the author.

In point of fact, this source does not particularly lend itself to honest paraphrase. The purpose of paraphrase should be to simplify or to throw a new and significant light on a text; it requires much skill if it is to be correctly used and should rarely be resorted to by the student.

4. THE “APT” TERM

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 the land.

Here the writer has not been able to resist the appropriation of two phrases—“quarry of liberal doctrines” and “crystallizing force.” The proper use of the terms would have required 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.

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Other phrases in the text in No. 4—“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, that their re-use in this fashion is not objectionable.

Since one of the principal aims of a college education is the development of intellectual honesty, plagiarism is a particularly serious offense, and the punishment for it is commensurately severe.

Procedures

1. When a faculty member suspects a violation of academic honesty by a student (whether undergraduate or graduate), the instructor should meet in a conference with the student suspected of academic dishonesty to address the suspicion. If a student or professional staff member suspects a violation of academic honesty, that person should report their suspicion to the instructor of the affected course. If the instructor believes that the information is credible, the instructor should meet with the suspected student in a conference. The conference is private and only the student(s) and faculty member(s) involved may participate in the meeting.

During this conference, the instructor should share with the student the information that forms the basis for the suspicion and provide the suspected student an opportunity to respond to the information. Should the conference result in a determination by the instructor that academic dishonesty has occurred, the faculty member will assign a sanction.

The faculty member may consult with his or her department chair; Dean of the School, if appropriate; or the Director of the Office of Academic Affairs for advice regarding the sanction.

2. The following sanctions may be assigned for violations of academic honesty:

- a. Warning
- b. Re-examination or re-writing the paper by the student
- c. Assigning an “F” for the examination, paper or project
- d. Withdrawal of the student from the course (with a recorded grade of “W” appearing on the student’s transcript. This “W” will be given by Registrar when College regulations require it), and/or
- e. Assigning an “F” for the course. If an “F” is assigned,

this will supersede all academic deadlines for dropping and/or withdrawal (e.g., a student will be unable to withdraw from/drop a course while a complaint of academic dishonesty is pending nor after a faculty member assigns a grade of “F” or “W”).

f. When it hears appeals and holds students responsible for academic dishonesty, the Academic Honesty Board may assign academic probation in addition to any of the above sanctions, or recommend to the Dean of Students the suspension or dismissal of the students.

3. The instructor must notify the student of the sanction in writing at the time this decision is reached. The student may receive the letter of notice either at the conclusion of the conference with the faculty member or via certified mail at the student’s local address of record. The student must sign a copy of the original letter of finding and sanctions, if applicable, indicating the student either: (a) accepts the finding and sanction; or (b) appeals the finding or sanction. The student must sign this letter within three business days of receipt of the letter. After the student signs the original letter, the faculty member will send a copy of the signed sanction letter to the Dean of the School, if appropriate, or the Director of the Office of Academic Affairs, K202, and Department Chair. Failure to sign the letter within the specified time period will constitute automatic acceptance of the faculty member’s decision by the student.

4. The Dean of the School or the Director of the Office of Academic Affairs will forward a copy of the letter to the Dean of Students. If the Dean of Students previously received copies of sanction letters for academic dishonesty for the student in question, the Provost or Provost designee will be notified. The student will be subject to further disciplinary action by the Provost or Provost designee, who will consult with the Department Chair. If a professional conduct code is affected by the violation, the Department Chair may initiate appropriate, independent action in response to the violation.

A ppeal Procedures

If the student chooses to appeal the sanction, he or she must notify the Provost or Provost designee of this intent within three (3) business days of receiving notice of the sanctions from the instructor. The Dean of the School or the Director of the Office of Academic Affairs will bring the appeal before the Academic Honesty Board.

1. Membership of the Board of Academic Honesty
a. Chair of the Committee on Academic Standing in matters involving undergraduates, or the chair of the Graduate Council in matters involving graduate students (votes only in the case of a tie).

b. Three faculty members from the Committee on Academic Standing if the suspected student is an undergraduate, or from the Graduate Council if the student is a graduate student, will be elected by their respective bodies.

c. At the option of the suspected student(s), the Dean of Students may appoint a maximum of three students who have been trained to participate in discipline hearings. These students will be selected from the undergraduate or graduate student body, depending on the status of the suspected student.

2. Appeal Hearing Procedures

a. The Board shall review the case and hear testimony from the individuals involved.

b. The appeal hearing is private and only those persons involved may participate. The student may not have legal counsel present during the Appeal Hearing.

c. Both the faculty member and the student have the right to submit evidence and to present witnesses on their behalf—witnesses are those persons with firsthand knowledge of the matter under consideration.

d. Pending the Board’s decision, the student may remain an active member of the class.

e. The Board will, after hearing all evidence, excuse all participants from the hearing room and deliberate in private prior to coming to a decision.

f. If the Board finds the student responsible for the violation, it may request from the Dean of Students a report of the student’s discipline history as part of the sanctioning process..

3. Decision of the Board of Academic Honesty

a. The Board may rescind, modify or support the original decision and sanction as it judges most appropriate.

b. In the case of a repeating offender, the Board may recommend to the Dean of Students suspension or expulsion from the College. If suspension or expulsion results, notice of the action taken will appear on the student’s academic record.

c. A report of all decisions of the Board will be sent to the Provost or Provost designee.

d. The Provost or Provost designee shall notify the Department Chair and the Dean of Students in writing if a student is sanctioned for academic dishonesty.

e. Decisions by the Board are final and are not subject to further appeal.