

Top 10 Tips & Best Practices for Faculty

from the Lakehead Academic Integri-TEA Community of Practice



1. Talk About It

- At the beginning of your course, talk about academic writing & plagiarism with your students
- Do not assume students understand how to cite sources or paraphrase
- Explore different analogies to help students understand the concept of knowledge-sharing and giving credit to sources (e.g. parent or Elder teaching)
- Show students specific examples of plagiarism from your course
- Provide discipline-specific tips & pointers
- Explain what will happen to students who plagiarize (investigation process and potential penalties)
- Encourage students to talk to you. Some students are afraid to approach their professors with questions

2. Promote Support Tools

- Ensure students understand that they have access to many supports
- Direct students to the [Student Success Centre](#), [Academic Support Zone](#) or our [Library Liasons](#)
- Inform students about external supports like [Purdue's OWL](#) or citation software like [Zotero](#)
- For students who need extra help, encourage them to book an appointment with a writing coach on [MySuccess](#)

3. Clearly Define *Your* Rules

- Clarify the specific rules *you* have established in your course
- Document these rules within the course syllabus
- Be sure to include specifics such as how many direct quotes you allow in a paper and what will happen if they go over that amount
- Consider getting students to sign a “plagiarism agreement” or “honour pledge” when they submit their assignments

4. Utilize the AIM Course

- Make it mandatory for students to complete the Academic Integrity matters (AIM) course
- Consider assigning a small grade for students who complete AIM or require that AIM be completed before you will accept and mark their first assignment

5. Try Progressive Assignments

- Develop assignments that build progressively to a larger project
- Start with a small paraphrasing or writing assignment that allows students to make mistakes and get feedback on these smaller assignments



Top 10 Tips & Best Practices for Faculty

from the Lakehead Academic Integri-TEA Community of Practice



6. Clarify Expectations for Online Assessments

- If you utilize open-book style, online tests or examinations, be sure to clearly explain that students must put answers in their own words when they use information from their lecture notes or textbook and that failure to paraphrase on the exam will be considered plagiarism
- Explain that students need to demonstrate an understanding of the course material and that copying & pasting from their textbook does not demonstrate knowledge or comprehension

7. Draw A Line

- Make up your own mind as to what behaviour constitutes plagiarism and what does not. Where is that line?
- If a student makes an attempt to paraphrase and cite their sources, but you feel they did a poor job, consider deducting marks rather than deeming it plagiarism
- However, if a student failed to provide proper acknowledgement of their source, then consider categorizing it as plagiarism and a breach of the Academic Integrity Code

8. Expect It

- Expect that despite all of your preventative efforts, some students will still plagiarize, both unintentionally and intentionally
- The skills needed to become a good academic writer take time to develop. Students are still learning and it's inevitable that they are going to make mistakes
- If you expect to see plagiarism, you will be less shocked or offended by it
- Realize students come with different cultural understandings of knowledge sharing & citations
- Do not assume that high school has adequately prepare students for university-level writing

9. Detect It

- Plagiarism can be difficult to detect sometimes, so here are a few pointers for detecting it:
 - Look for sections of writing that seem odd or out of place
 - Look for terms, definitions and language that were not used in class
 - Look for phrases that do not make sense
 - Look for a change in the writing voice
 - Look for assignments that do not quite match the instructions given

10. Report It

- While we want to give students an opportunity to learn from their mistakes, if a student has plagiarized, you should formally document the offence so we have a record of it on file
- Follow the process outlined in the [Student Code of Conduct – Academic Integrity](#)
- Contact the [Manager, Student Conduct & Case Management](#) should you have any questions