

Cheating 101: Detecting Plagiarized Papers

1. Writing style, language, vocabulary, tone, grammar, etc. is above or below what the student usually produces. It doesn't sound like the student.
2. Spelling or idioms used are not found in the students' native language, using English spellings or phrasing in an American paper and vice versa.
3. Sections or sentences do not relate to the overall content of the paper. Students may "personalize" a paper by adding a paragraph that ties the paper to the class assignment.
4. Pronouns do not agree with the gender of the writer.
5. Look for strange text at the top or bottom of printed pages.
6. Look for gray letters in the text, often an indication that the page was downloaded from the web, since color letters on a screen show up gray in a printout.
7. Essays are printed out from the student's web browser.
8. Web addresses left at the top or bottom of the page. Many free essays have a tag line at the end of the essay that students often miss.
9. Strange or poor layout. Papers that have been downloaded and re-printed often have page numbers, headings, or spacing that just don't look right.
10. References to graphs, charts, or accompanying material that isn't there.
11. References to professors, classes or class numbers that are not taught at Coastal Carolina University.
12. Quotes in the paper do not have citations.
13. Citations are to materials not owned by Kimbel Library or are all from another country.
14. Citations in the bibliography or works cited cannot be verified.
15. Citations in the paper are not included in the works cited.
16. Web sites listed in citations are inactive.
17. All citations are to materials that are older than five years.
18. References are made to historical persons or events in the current sense.
19. Students cannot identify citations or provide copies of the cited material.
20. Students cannot summarize the main points of the paper or answer questions about specific sections of the paper.

21. When provided with a page from their paper that has words or passages removed, students cannot fill in the blanks with the missing words or with reasonable synonyms.

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