CMSC 601
Plagiarism

Adapted from material by
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February 2011
Crap! My paper's due tomorrow! Crap!

PLAGIARISM APLENTY: A CAUTIONARY TALE

Write me 1000 words on Macbeth by tomorrow or I crush this house!

Noooo! My people-house! I'll do it!

I wasn't really going to crush your house; I was just bluffing--

Mr. Utahraptor! U...uh...

Don't even bother! I know you downloaded that paper off the Internet! F for the course!

Aw, man. I'm the worst plagiarizer ever!

But it wasn't even me!

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http://www.qwantz.com/fanart/plagiarism.jpg
Plagiarism from Wikipedia

• Plagiarism is
  "the wrongful appropriation, close imitation, or purloining and publication, of another author's language, thoughts, ideas, or expressions, and the representation of them as one's own original work."

• The concept of “plagiarism as immoral and originality as an ideal emerged in Europe only in the 18th century.”

• Earlier “authors and artists were encouraged to copy the masters as closely as possible and avoid unnecessary invention.”

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plagiarism
Plagiarism is antithetical to research

• Research is about discovering new knowledge
  – You can’t do that by plagiarizing
• To a first approximation, writing = thinking
• The simple act of paraphrasing an idea may give rise to a novel thought about it
  – A “wait a minute” moment
• Plagiarism also prevents you from becoming confident as an independent thinker
  – Which is essential to doing research
On Paraphrases

• Heuristic: If >2 words in a row are identical to the text, you are copying, not summarizing

• Better grammatically incorrect insights into the paper than a cut-and-paste “summary"

• Three options: (1) complete paraphrase, (2) complete quote (marked) with citation or (3) mixture

• Read the paper and then sit down to write the summary without looking at it

• Then check to ensure you’re not simply echoing what the paper said, but summarizing in your own words
## Examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original</th>
<th>Paraphrase</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GPS (1) deals with a task environment consisting of objects that can be transformed by various operators; it detects differences between objects; and (3) it organizes the information about the task environment into goal.</td>
<td>GPS has three key components: a task environment (objects and operators to transform them), a mechanism for identifying differences between objects, and goals that represent desirable states within the task environment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>There are three types of goals: Transform object A into object B, Reduce difference D between object A and object B, Apply operator Q to object.</td>
<td>GPS has three goal types: transformation, difference reduction, and operator application.</td>
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<td>Basically the GPS program is a way of achieving a goal by setting up subgoals whose attainment leads to the attainment of the initial goal.</td>
<td>GPS achieves goals by creating a series of subgoals.</td>
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In-Class Exercise on Plagiarism