Academic Integrity, APA Writing Style, and Plagiarism
“Honor code” and “Code of Ethics” are common words in today's world. At times, it is difficult, at times, to see if these words and the behaviors they represent are actually practiced in today’s world. Yet the ethical behavior represented in the code serves as a compass to follow. Higher education's code of honor is broadly known as academic integrity. At CSU, the code of honor states:

“Ethical conduct is a foundation upon which a successful academic career at Columbia Southern University rests. The students, faculty, and staff must commit themselves to the highest standards of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility (CSU Student Handbook, 2013. p. 22). These five principles define the standards of responsible action expected at CSU. In addition, to written assignments, projects, and interactions in courses, academic integrity permeates all forms of behavior at CSU. Review the CSU Academic Integrity Policy Statement as we work together to uphold the highest ethical standards of conduct at CSU.
Academic Integrity Policy

Statement of Policy. Ethical conduct is a foundation upon which a successful academic career at Columbia Southern University rests. The students, faculty, and staff must commit themselves to the highest standards of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Therefore, any deviation of these standards is a breach of the ethics that are the basis of Columbia Southern University’s academic programs, and thus a violation of the university’s Academic Integrity Policy.
A violation of the Academic Integrity Policy includes, but is not limited to:

Cheating: using unauthorized materials or receiving unauthorized assistance during an examination or in connection with any work done for academic credit.

Plagiarism: taking the work of another and offering it as one’s own without proper acknowledgment of the true source, whether that material is paraphrased or copied in verbatim or near-verbatim form.

Unauthorized collaboration on a project, homework, or other assignment unless otherwise allowed by a course instructor.

Sharing, selling, or buying information related to any graded learning activities.

Using professor feedback for another student as the basis for an essay response.

Resubmitting a paper or portion of an assignment that has already been submitted for another course.

Falsifying information.

Accessing or using unauthorized materials (electronic or print) and/or websites.

Use of an alternate, stand-in, or proxy during an examination.
New learners to the college environment often dread the task of writing an essay or research paper. This is not surprising given the effort required to establish a topic, select and evaluate resources, write the paper, and cite reference sources. Consider the following advice as you start the writing process. Academic writing “should be a personal process of discovering new information” (Sebranek, Meyer, & Kemper, 1997, p. 294). To accomplish this goal the authors highlight steps you can take to make writing your own:

- believe in the subject
- give yourself enough time to learn about it
- involve yourself in active, thorough research, and
- make your own voice the primary voice in your writing (p. 294).
It is a balancing act to become the primary “voice” while incorporating and melding another author's ideas in your own words to support your thoughts, assertions, and argument. This is a complicated process, at times, for new students or those who do not use the academic writing process regularly. Four key writing skills allow you to appropriately incorporate the ideas of other authors into your essays or papers: quoting, paraphrasing, summarizing, and using citations. Parenthetical referencing is more commonly known as citing. In addition, practicing these four writing skills demonstrate effort to maintain academic integrity at CSU.

CSU requires the use of APA style to format papers and for citing resources in essays and research papers. We will start in this unit with an overview of APA. A discussion on ways to quote, paraphrase, and summarize are discussed later in the course. In addition, APA formatting, in-text citation and reference citation formats, and constructing a reference page are covered in subsequent units. A thorough review of APA style writing will assist you in meeting the requirements to utilize APA as set forth by CSU.
What is the APA Format?

The American Psychological Association (APA). During the Reconstruction era of the 1890s, 26 men met and determined the fledgling discipline of psychology should have an organization (Fernberger, 1932). Together these men founded the American Psychological Association (APA) at Clark University in Massachusetts, and during their inaugural convention, one of their first endeavors was the establishment of a standardized format for articles submitted to their publication, Psychological Bulletin (Fernberger, 1932). The impact of the APA is a long standing one; not only has it increased the recognition to the field of psychology, but it has also developed the standard to which all papers in the social science domains are written. The first edition, published in 1929, customized the structure of papers, and *The Sixth Edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* evolved to include the rules for writing in this modern age (APA, 2009).
APA format is a set of rules developed to assist with writing and the citing of sources, a format which helps to prevent plagiarism and to acknowledge the original author of the information used. It is meant to provide a concise and standardized citation format for written assignments (e.g., essays, research papers, article critiques, etc.) and is used for ALL Columbia Southern University courses.

In educational institutions, plagiarism is a problem of great concern. According to Aaron (2007) in the *The Little, Brown Compact Handbook*, the word “plagiarism” is derived from a Latin word meaning to kidnap or to abduct (p. 424). Plagiarism is stealing someone else’s work and passing it off as one’s own. In many other cultures, plagiarizing is encouraged because it demonstrates familiarity and respect for the work of noted writers. However, in the United States and at Columbia Southern University, plagiarism is considered fraud and can have serious consequences.
What is the APA Format?

Plagiarism usually comes in two forms: intentional and unintentional. Intentional/deliberate plagiarism includes directly copying, summarizing, or paraphrasing a source without giving credit to the author or putting it in quotation marks. This type of plagiarism also includes turning in a paper that has been bought, written by another student, or copied from another source. Unintentional plagiarism is when a writer uses another author’s thoughts or ideas without realizing credit must be provided. This includes working in groups and submitting the same answers as other students, forgetting to place quotation marks around a direct quotation, omitting a text citation for a summary or a paraphrase, and omitting a text citation for the ideas of another writer. Unintentional plagiarism also includes submitting an assignment that has already been previously submitted in another course. Unfortunately, both types of plagiarism can result in a failing grade, suspension from the university, or even expulsion.

There are ways students can avoid plagiarism. The primary, and perhaps the easiest, way to avoid plagiarism is to simply cite any ideas that are not one’s own. Citations help readers to locate the sources used in a paper. Citations also demonstrate your review of literature relevant to the topic.

This course introduces you to the basic purpose of and importance of APA style formatting. Take the time to thoroughly review unit materials on APA and to explore additional resources on APA at the CSU Online Library or the Success Center.
Help with APA Style

If any questions or concerns arise about APA format, please feel free to contact the CSU Success Center by email at teamsucceed@columbiasouthern.edu or by phone at 1-800-977-8449 ext. 6538.
References
