

## **Academic Honesty and Citations**

Students taking Criminology courses should read the School of Criminology's "Statement of Intellectual Honesty." This document is available at: <http://www.sfu.ca/criminology/ugrad/current/index.html>

or from the Criminology general office. The document contains a summary of the University's "Code of Academic Honesty" which is accessible at <http://www.sfu.ca/policies/files/Students/S10.01.pdf> on the SFU Web site.

In the context of essay writing, students must be particularly careful not to engage in plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty. Students should understand what constitutes plagiarism and appreciate the importance of academic integrity. For example, there is an online, interactive tutorial concerning plagiarism as well as other online information on academic integrity (<http://learningcommons.sfu.ca/strategies/academic-integrity>).

The following points are meant to help you avoid plagiarism in your assignments.

- When direct quotations are used, these should be enclosed in quotation marks and kept in the body of the text of your paper if they are less than 40 words long.
- The author, year and page number must clearly attribute the source of the quote.
- Longer quotes are indented from the body of the text and single-spaced. These too must be clearly attributed to the source by proper referencing.
- Failure to use quotation marks or indent longer direct quotes is a form of plagiarism, even if the source of the material is identified in your paper.
- You must include a specific reference to directly quoted material and paraphrased material.
- Paraphrasing the work of others does not make it your own. The passage must be referenced to the original author(s), year of publication and page number. Check with your instructor to clarify what he or she expects in terms of paraphrasing.
- Changing only a few words or the order of words is a form of plagiarism commonly referred to as patch writing. This is unacceptable and is considered a form of academic dishonesty.
- Submitting the same or similar assignments in two different courses without the permission of your instructors is a form of academic dishonesty, even if you wrote the paper.

If a source you are using makes reference to another source that you want to incorporate into your essay, you should not cite directly to that original source if you have not read the work cited yourself. For example, if Glanville Williams' *The Mental Element in Crime* is cited in Simon Verdun-Jones' text on criminal law, and you did not read the work cited, list the Verdun-Jones reference in your reference list.

In the text, your citation may look as follows:

Glanville Williams considers recklessness to involve subjective foresight of risk and an unjustified assumption of that risk (as cited in Verdun-Jones, 2002, p. 123).

The citation in your reference list would be:

Verdun-Jones, S. (2002). *Criminal law in Canada: Cases, questions, and the Code* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Toronto: Harcourt Canada.

## WRITING RESOURCES

Students seeking to improve their writing might consider the Student Learning Commons (SLC) which provides "a wide range of academic writing, learning, and study strategies. Our goal is to provide you with resources and tools for academic success. The SLC encourages collaboration, discussion, and peer learning" on all three SFU campuses (taken from <http://learningcommons.sfu.ca/> ). The SLC also assists with study skills and other aspects of learning. See <http://learningcommons.sfu.ca/> for more information.

Along with the SLC, there are other ways to improve your writing. We strongly encourage students to carefully review feedback on their assignments and to incorporate such feedback in future assignments. We also encourage students to contact their instructors, TAs, or TMs during office hours to clarify feedback and, if needed, receive additional guidance on ways of improving their work. Students can also access various books and online resources devoted to writing tips and strategies for strengthening writing. Finally, using a dictionary and a thesaurus can be valuable aids when revising drafts of your work.

### Suggested Handbooks

Becker, Howard (1986) *Writing for Social Scientists: How to start and finish your thesis, book, or article* [with a chapter by Pamela Richards]. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

O'Connor, Patricia T. (1999) *Words Fail Me: What everyone who writes should know about writing*. New York: Harcourt Brace.

Strunk, William and E.B. White (2007) *The Elements of Style (Illustrated)*.  
Illustrated by Maira Kalman. New York: Penguin Books.

Venola, Jan (2001) *Write Right: A Desktop Digest of Punctuation, Grammar, and Style*. Berkeley, CA: Ten Speed Press.

## WRITING TIPS

This is a sample of suggestions for essay writing listed in a Criminology professor's syllabus.

*"All things being equal, you plump for the direct, the familiar, the short. The result is that you can see what's happening with absolute clarity (if the writing is handled well enough). Ideally, you're not even aware of the writing. Such writing might be compared to plate glass in a window. You can see exactly what's going on in the street and you're not aware of the glass.*

...[I]t took two thousand years to progress from colored glass that made marvellous mosaics to something as simple and 'nothing' as clear glass without streaks, wobbles, or bubbles. Strange that something so 'simple' should be so much more technically difficult to manufacture than something 'artistic.'

(Isaac Asimov, "The Mosaic and the Plate Glass", in I. Asimov & J. Asimov, *How To Enjoy Writing: A Book of Aid and Comfort*, New York: Walker & Co., 1987, pp. 21-22. Italics in original).

### ***Suggestions for essay-writing:***

- write to the point. Delete unnecessary words.
- express your **own voice** and point-of-view, but back up your argument with appropriate evidence.
- **proofread** carefully for typos, repetition, misspellings, poor syntax. It is better to make handwritten corrections over a coffee ½ hour before class than to leave the essay looking untouched.
- read parts of your essay aloud, if this helps to sort through the best way of expressing your point.
- check quotations for accuracy.
- avoid run-on paragraphs and sentences.
- check for **personification** ("The research shows" should be "The researcher shows", etc.)
- avoid "etc." (except for above bullet!)

- use a strong introduction and strong conclusion. Identify any thesis statements early in your work.
- give specific information where needed. Avoid generalities.
- use headings to organize your material. Sub-headings may be needed for detailed discussions.
- consider my feedback carefully. I will try to respect your wording, and will keep “literary backseat driving” to a minimum.
- emphasize original thought and criticism/appreciation of the work you are discussing
- use **singular** and **plural** wording consistently
- ensure that references are complete and presented consistently
- paraphrase carefully; watch for plagiarism. See Criminology statement on academic dishonesty and SFU’s policy on Academic Integrity.