

## Law, Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility MBA Program – Spring 2012

BGS 381 – Unique #02776 M/W 2:00-3:30 pm; UTC 1.116

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Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays (noon-2:00pm) and anytime

by appointment (e-mail for appointment time)

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**Phone:** 512-354-5589

**Text:** Spence & Prentice, Law, Ethics and Corporate Social

Responsibility: Theory and Practice (draft), available via course

Blackboard.

### **Course Description:**

This course introduces the concepts of law, ethics and corporate social responsibility to MBA students. This course will provide tools and understanding of these indices and measures to provide knowledge and principles for decision making. The recent crises in the ethical downfall of many companies have increased the spotlight on these matters and the devastating effect they may have on business – both the entity and the people involved. In addition, there also are other increasing pressures on incorporating these metrics into business culture. For instance, corporate social responsibility is becoming more and more expected by business, which translates into prospective customers and potential employee concerns. More employees are concerned with working for and in an ethical environment and the notion that the measures of these indices changes with the times and among cultures and laws are changing and responding to the growing concerns in this area. These areas are becoming more and more important in navigating in the business field and are ever changing.

#### **Course Objective:**

This course will focus on giving students tools that assist in managing legal, ethical and corporate responsible issues involved in today's business world and in understanding the role that corporations play with regard to these areas. The course materials will provide MBA students with a basic understanding of the legal and ethical standards in today's business as well as the differences around the world. In addition, we will explore

government and political environments involved in the business world and focus on stakeholders and dilemmas posed by outside pressure with the differences in thoughts among groups. Most importantly, this class is an interactive class in which the students will practice the knowledge they learn as well as communication and leadership skills in group projects. The students will practice constructive dialog that will directly translate into practice in their business endeavors.

The goal of the class is to understand and apply the concepts and theories of responsibility decision-making. The overall objective is to understand the science, business, community and personal influences on decision-making and learning to navigate among them to create effective decision making.

The four main areas of focus for this class will be:

Ethics – Analytical and Applied Legal Environment – Government Application and the Political Process Corporate Social Responsibility – Theoretical and Applied Culture Aspects and Influences on the Above

#### **Leadership and this Course:**

The Texas MBA Program is designed to develop influential and effective business leaders. One of the four fundamental and broad pillars of leadership identified by the MBA Program is responsibility and integrity – which is the core of this class. The other pillars (knowledge and understanding, communication and collaboration and a worldview of business and society) also will be touched on in this class as we seek to understand these areas and use communication and understanding of culture in navigating the issues.

#### **Grading:**

Grades will be determined by the percentages listed below.

Class Contribution 25% Team Presentation on Mini-case 15%

Memos on Mini-cases 30% (10% each)

Final Group Paper 30%

#### **Class Contribution:**

It is extremely important that students attend class and come prepared to participate every day. This class is very interactive and is designed to evoke discussion among the students on current issues related to ethics, law and corporate responsibility especially in the grey areas surrounding these subjects. The students will learn to apply the theories learned in class in new hypotheticals in applied learning. Such discussion will create deeper understanding and thinking as well as process delineation for situational dilemmas, which will prepare the students for such matters in business endeavors.

The students will be expected to deeply analyze the **Discussion Boxes** [yellow boxes in text] for each class. The students also must complete the **Homework Assignments** [green boxes in text] assigned in the syllabus for each class and come prepared to participate in any **Exercises** [blue boxes in text] assigned in the syllabus. Students also will be expected to question others and participate in discussions during student presentations and commentary. Students should be prepared to be called upon during any class to present their view on any matter in the homework readings. Also, the students should be prepared to question other students with regard to their case presentations and will be expected to provide commentary on any Mini-case to which the student either presented or prepared a written memorandum.

Class attendance will be recorded and will directly affect a student's class contribution grade. A student may miss up to three class sessions without penalty and without explanation. After that, I will subtract 5% from a student's participation grade for each absence after the three absences granted. Two tardy attendances will count as one missed class. I will circulate an attendance sheet for each class (if you are tardy, you may sign in but you must note that you were tardy on the attendance sheet).

In summary, the participation grade will be based on engagement, response and respect as well as attendance. I will observe answers to all questions and participation in general discussion. Please note that I reserve the right to add quizzes to class if I believe that the class is not preparing for class.

Note: As delineated above, the Discussion Questions and Homework Assignments delineated in each reading will be discussed in class. **All Discussion Boxes** will be covered in class. **Only** the **Homework Assignments** and **Exercises** that are delineated in the syllabus will be discussed in class. You will not need to submit written responses to either of these. Participation on these items will be determined by the student's response and discussion of these matters in class and will be reflected in the class contribution grade. Active engagement is expected on these matters for adequate class contribution.

#### Mini-case Projects:

**Mini-cases** delineated in the textbook [pink boxes in the text] will be used in two ways. First, each student will be assigned to a team to make one presentation on one of the Mini-cases in the book. The presentation should last approximately 20 minutes and the group should be ready for questions from the class and discussion thereafter. Assignment of the teams and which case they will present will be done the first week of class. One grade will be assigned for each group unless evidence is given that a student did not significantly contribute. Please try to resolve work allocation problems among the group before bringing issues to the Professor.

In addition to the one presentation, each student will select three other Mini-cases **delineated below** in the syllabus (from different chapters of the book and from a chapter different than the one the student has been assigned a Mini-case to present) to submit a written response to the problem. The written document shall be created by a student individually (not within a group). Such written response shall be approximately 2-4 pages

in length (double spaced) and must be submitted before class period ends on the day such Mini-case is being presented. Students must select the three Mini-cases that they would like to submit a written response on during the second week of class.

Grades for the group Mini-case will be based on: analysis and presentation and response to questions (defense of position). Grades for the written Mini-cases will be based on analysis and any participation in class the day such case is presented. Late papers will be penalized 10% per day late.

#### Final Group Paper:

Students will be placed in working groups of 3-4 people for the Final Paper. For the final paper, each group will assess the legal, ethical, corporate responsibility and political risks and opportunities addressing one company. The final project will consist of a paper that is a maximum of 20 pages (double spaced). Each team can pick the company it would like to analyze and should be a company that has had a current (within the past two years) real world dilemma. Each group must select a different company. The paper must address the risks and also suggest solutions (as well as analyze how the situation arose). The students should write the paper as if they are making suggestions to the chief operating officer of the company. I suggest that the students begin this research during the semester and continue to work on the paper as the semester progresses. The companies will be allocated on a first come basis. One grade will be assigned for the entire team for the paper unless evidence is given that a student did not contribute substantially. Please try to resolve work allocation problems among the group before bringing issues to the Professor.

The grades in this class will be on a +/- system. The MBA Programs Committee approved the following target grade distribution for all Core and Flex Core courses: A (4.0) 25%, A- (3.67) 20%, B+ (3.33) 15%, B (3.0) 35%, B- or below (2.67 or below) 5%. This course uses that target distribution as a guideline for establishing final grades.

#### **McCombs Classroom Professionalism Policy:**

The highest professional standards are expected of all McCombs members. You should treat the classroom as you would a corporate boardroom. You are expected to be professional at all times. Also, classroom experience is enhanced by the following guidelines.

- Arrive on time out of respect for fellow students and the professor.
- Display your name card to build community and foster discussion (as well as allow for better in-class contribution evaluation)
- Minimize unscheduled breaks and minimize any snacks to avoid disrupting the class.
- Come to class fully prepared to add to the value of your and your fellow students deep discussion and understanding of the subject matter.

- Respect the views and opinions of others. Disagreement and debate are encouraged, but intolerance or disrespect of views of others is unacceptable.
- Laptops are closed and put away to minimize distractions and encourage class discussions. If laptops are needed, professor approval must be sought.
- Phones and wireless devices must be turned off (no texting during class). The distraction is too great for you and your fellow students.
- Enjoy the class and contribute your thoughts the gathering of great minds is what makes education the most valuable.

#### **Accommodations/Equipment:**

The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate accommodations for qualified students with disabilities upon request. For more information, contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259, 471-4641.

Password-protected class sites will be available for all accredited courses taught at The University. Syllabi, handouts, assignments and other resources are types of information that may be available within these sites. Site activities could include exchanging e-mail, engaging in class discussions and chats, and exchanging files. In addition, class e-mail rosters will be a component of the sites. Students who do not want their names included in these electronic class rosters must restrict their directory information in the Office of the Registrar, Main Building, Room 1. For information on restricting directory information see: <a href="http://www.utexas.edu/student/registrar/catalogs/gi02-03/app/appc09.html">http://www.utexas.edu/student/registrar/catalogs/gi02-03/app/appc09.html</a>.

No electronic devices (laptops, cell phones etc.) may be on or used during class unless medically necessary and approved.

#### **Academic Integrity:**

I and the McCombs School of Business have no tolerance for acts of scholastic dishonesty. Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. You should refer to the Student Judicial Services website at <a href="http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/">http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/</a> or the General Information Catalog to access the official University policies and procedures on scholastic dishonesty as well as further elaboration on what constitutes scholastic dishonesty.

The responsibilities of both students and faculty with regard to scholastic dishonesty are described in detail in the **Policy Statement on Scholastic Dishonesty for the McCombs School of Business** (which is attached to this syllabus).

By teaching this course, I have agreed to observe all faculty responsibilities described in that document. By enrolling in this class, you have agreed to observe all student responsibilities described in that document. If the application of that Policy Statement to

this class and its assignments is unclear in any way, it is your responsibility to ask me for clarification. Unless the work is assigned to a group, all work done in this class must be the student's individual and original work. Group work must be the original work of the group.

#### **Intellectual Property:**

All materials presented in class lectures including PowerPoint presentations and those materials on the website are intellectual property of the instructor unless otherwise copyrighted. Any reproduction or publication of this material without prior written permission is strictly forbidden.

Schedule of Classes <sup>1</sup>					
DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNED READINGS	OTHER PREPARATION		
Wed Jan 18	INTRODUCTION TO COURSE	Ch. 1	Exercise 9 Dots Puzzle (p. 1-10)		
Mon Jan 23	LAW – Legal Systems, Role of Law in the Economy (Property Rights)	Ch. 2, pp. 2-1 through 2-11	Homework: Statutory Interpretation (p. 2-2)		
Wed Jan 25	Role of Law in the Economy (Enforcing Contracts)	Ch. 2, pp. 2-11 through 2-17	Homework: Property Rights Cases (p. 2-11)		
Mon Jan 30	<u>Mini-case</u> False Advertising (p. 2-10)				
Wed Feb 1	Role of Law in the Economy (Market Failure and Externalities)	Ch. 2, pp. 2-17 through 2-24	Exercise: Tradable Permits (p. 2-19)		
Mon Feb 6	<u>Mini-case</u> Insider Trading (p. 2-21)				
Wed Feb 8	Enforcing the Law; Managing Legal Risk	Ch. 2, pp. 2-24 through 2-34	<u>Listen</u> : "When Patents Attack"		
Mon Feb 13	ETHICS - Moral Philosophy	Ch. 3, pp. 3-1 through 3-11			
Wed Feb 15	<u>Mini-case</u> Disclosure of Medical Risks (p. 3-5)				

 $<sup>^{\</sup>rm 1}$  Subject to change. Changes will be posted on Blackboard

Mon Feb 20	<u>Mini-Case</u> Child Labor (Worldsport) (p. 3-7)		
Wed Feb 22	Impediments to Ethical Decision Making	Ch. 3, pp. 3-11 through 3-21	<u>Listen</u> : "Giant Pool of Money" (p. 3-16)
Mon Feb 27	<u>Mini-Case</u> Age Discrimination (p. 3-19)		
Wed Feb 29	Managing Ethical Risks	Ch. 3, pp. 3-22 through 3-36	Homework: Company Ethical Codes (p. 3-29)
Mon Mar 5	Global Connection Dates		
Wed Mar 7	Global Connection Dates		
	SPRING BREAK		
Mon Mar 19	CSR - Moral Philosophy: How Should Companies Behave	Ch. 4, pp. 4-1 through 4-15	Homework: GRI and Wall Street (p. 4-5)
Wed Mar 21	Stakeholder Engagement	Ch. 4, pp. 4-15 through 4-29	<u>Listen</u> : Mr. Daisey and the Apple Factory
Mon Mar 26	<u>Mini-Case</u> A Living Wage (p. 4-7)		
Wed Mar 28	The Political Context Government Relations	Ch. 5, pp. 5-1 through 5-9	Homework: Putting the Model to Work (p. 5-4)
Mon Apr 2	Mini-Case Opposition Research (p. 5-3)		
Wed Apr 4	Legislative Systems, Tools	Ch. 5, pp. 5-9 through 5-18	<u>Homework</u> : Influencing Legislators (p. 5-11)

Mon Apr 9	<u>Mini-Case</u> Campaign Contributions (p. 5-16)				
Wed Apr 11	Executive Functions	Ch. 5, pp. 5-18 through 5-26	Exercise: The Public Hearing (p. 5-21)		
Mon Apr 16	Emotion in Politics	Ch. 5, pp. 5-26 though 5-30	Homework: "Spin" and Misleading Voters II (p. 5-26)		
Wed Apr 18	The Cultural Context Culture Dimensions	Ch.6, pp. 6-1 through 6-20	Homework: Identifying Your Own Cultural Biases (p. 6-2)		
Mon Apr 23	Mini-Case Southland Development Nos. 1-3 (p. 6-3)				
Wed Apr 25	Cultural Conflict and Business	Ch. 6, pp. 6-20 through 6-42	Homework: Scandinavian Solar (p. 6-23)		
Mon Apr 30	GUEST SPEAKER/WORK ON PAPER				
Wed May 2	Business & Society Revisited	Ch. 7.			
	FINAL DADEDS	FINAL DAY	DOSTED		
	FINAL PAPERS – FINAL DAY POSTED				

#### **Honor Code**

#### **Purpose**

Academic honor, trust and integrity are fundamental to The University of Texas at Austin McCombs School of Business community. They contribute directly to the quality of your education and reach far beyond the campus to your overall standing within the business community. The University of Texas at Austin McCombs School of Business Honor System promotes academic honor, trust and integrity throughout the Graduate School of Business. The Honor System relies upon The University of Texas Student Standards of Conduct (Chapter 11 of the Institutional Rules on Student Service and Activities) for enforcement, but promotes ideals that are higher than merely enforceable standards. Every student is responsible for understanding and abiding by the provisions of the Honor System and the University of Texas Student Standards of Conduct. The University expects all students to obey the law, show respect for other members of the university community, perform contractual obligations, maintain absolute integrity and the highest standard of individual honor in scholastic work, and observe the highest standards of conduct. Ignorance of the Honor System or The University of Texas Student Standards of Conduct is not an acceptable excuse for violations under any circumstances.

The effectiveness of the Honor System results solely from the wholehearted and uncompromising support of each member of the McCombs School of Business community. Each member must abide by the Honor System and must be intolerant of any violations. The system is only as effective as you make it.

#### **Faculty Involvement in the Honor System**

The University of Texas at Austin McCombs School of Business Faculty's commitment to the Honor System is critical to its success. It is imperative that faculty make their expectations clear to all students. They must also respond to accusations of cheating or other misconduct by students in a timely, discrete and fair manner. We urge faculty members to promote awareness of the importance of integrity through in-class discussions and assignments throughout the semester.

#### **Expectations Under the Honor System**

#### **Standards**

If a student is uncertain about the standards of conduct in a particular setting, he or she should ask the relevant faculty member for clarification to ensure his or her conduct falls within the expected scope of honor, trust and integrity as promoted by the Honor System. This applies to all tests, papers and group and individual work. Questions about appropriate behavior during the job search should be addressed to a professional member of the Career Management Office. Below are some of the specific examples of violations of the Honor System.

#### Lying

Lying is any deliberate attempt to deceive another by stating an untruth, or by any direct form of communication to include the telling of a partial truth. Lying includes the use or omission of

any information with the intent to deceive or mislead. Examples of lying include, but are not limited to, providing a false excuse for why a test was missed or presenting false information to a recruiter.

#### **Stealing**

Stealing is wrongfully taking, obtaining, withholding, defacing or destroying any person's money, personal property, article or service, under any circumstances. Examples of stealing include, but are not limited to, removing course material from the library or hiding it from others, removing material from another person's mail folder, securing for one's self unattended items such as calculators, books, book bags or other personal property. Another form of stealing is the duplication of copyrighted material beyond the reasonable bounds of "fair use." Defacing (e.g., "marking up" or highlighting) library books is also considered stealing, because, through a willful act, the value of another's property is decreased. (See the appendix for a detailed explanation of "fair use.")

#### Cheating

Cheating is wrongfully and unfairly acting out of self-interest for personal gain by seeking or accepting an unauthorized advantage over one's peers. Examples include, but are not limited to, obtaining questions or answers to tests or quizzes, and getting assistance on case write-ups or other projects beyond what is authorized by the assigning instructor. It is also cheating to accept the benefit(s) of another person's theft(s) even if not actively sought. For instance, if one continues to be attentive to an overhead conversation about a test or case write-up even if initial exposure to such information was accidental and beyond the control of the student in question, one is also cheating. If a student overhears a conversation or any information that any faculty member might reasonably wish to withhold from the student, the student should inform the faculty member(s) of the information and circumstance under which it was overheard.

#### **Actions Required for Responding to Suspected and Known Violations**

As stated, everyone must abide by the Honor System and be intolerant of violations. If you suspect a violation has occurred, you should first speak to the suspected violator in an attempt to determine if an infraction has taken place. If, after doing so, you still believe that a violation has occurred, you must tell the suspected violator that he or she must report himself or herself to the course professor or Associate Dean of the McCombs School of Business. If the individual fails to report himself or herself within 48 hours, it then becomes your obligation to report the infraction to the course professor or the Associate Dean of the McCombs School of Business. Remember that although you are not required by regulation to take any action, our Honor System is only as effective as you make it. If you remain silent when you suspect or know of a violation, you are approving of such dishonorable conduct as the community standard. You are thereby precipitating a repetition of such violations.

#### The Honor Pledge

The University of Texas at Austin McCombs School of Business requires each enrolled student to adopt the Honor System. The Honor Pledge best describes the conduct promoted by the Honor System. It is as follows:

"I affirm that I belong to the honorable community of The University of Texas at Austin Graduate School of Business. I will not lie, cheat or steal, nor will I tolerate those who do."

"I pledge my full support to the Honor System. I agree to be bound at all times by the Honor System and understand that any violation may result in my dismissal from the McCombs School of Business."

The following pages provide specific guidance about the Standard of Academic Integrity at the University of Texas at Austin. Please read it carefully and feel free to ask me any questions you might have.

Excerpts from the University of Texas at Austin Office of the Dean of Students website (http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acint\_student.php)

#### The Standard of Academic Integrity

A fundamental principle for any educational institution, academic integrity is highly valued and seriously regarded at The University of Texas at Austin, as emphasized in the standards of conduct. More specifically, you and other students are expected to "maintain absolute integrity and a high standard of individual honor in scholastic work" undertaken at the University (Sec. 11-801, Institutional Rules on Student Services and Activities). This is a very basic expectation that is further reinforced by the University's Honor Code. At a minimum, you should complete any assignments, exams, and other scholastic endeavors with the utmost honesty, which requires you to:

- acknowledge the contributions of other sources to your scholastic efforts;
- complete your assignments independently unless expressly authorized to seek or obtain assistance in preparing them;
- follow instructions for assignments and exams, and observe the standards of your academic discipline; and
- avoid engaging in any form of academic dishonesty on behalf of yourself or another student.

For the official policies on academic integrity and scholastic dishonesty, please refer to Chapter 11 of the *Institutional Rules on Student Services and Activities*.

What is Scholastic Dishonesty?

In promoting a high standard of academic integrity, the University broadly defines scholastic dishonesty—basically, all conduct that violates this standard, including *any act designed to give an unfair or undeserved academic advantage*, such as:

- Cheating
- Plagiarism
- Unauthorized Collaboration
- Collusion
- Falsifying Academic Records
- Misrepresenting Facts (e.g., providing false information to postpone an exam, obtain an extended deadline for an assignment, or even gain an unearned financial benefit)
- Any other acts (or attempted acts) that violate the basic standard of academic integrity (e.g., multiple submissions—submitting essentially the same written assignment for two courses without authorization to do so)

Several types of scholastic dishonesty—<u>unauthorized collaboration</u>, <u>plagiarism</u>, and <u>multiple submissions</u>—are discussed in more detail on this Web site to correct common misperceptions about these particular offenses and suggest ways to avoid committing them.

For the University's official definition of scholastic dishonesty, see <u>Section 11-802</u>, *Institutional Rules on Student Services and Activities*.

**Unauthorized Collaboration** 

If you work with another person on an assignment for credit without the instructor's permission to do so, you are engaging in unauthorized collaboration.

- This common form of academic dishonesty can occur with all types of scholastic work—papers, homework, tests (take-home or in-class), lab reports, computer programming projects, or any other assignments to be submitted for credit.
- For the University's official definitions of unauthorized collaboration and the related offense of collusion, see Sections <a href="https://doi.org/10.2016/j.gov/10.201

Some students mistakenly assume that they can work together on an assignment as long as the instructor has not expressly prohibited collaborative efforts.

 Actually, students are expected to complete assignments independently unless the course instructor indicates otherwise. So working together on assignments is *not* permitted unless the instructor specifically approves of any such collaboration.

Unfortunately, students who engage in unauthorized collaboration tend to justify doing so through various rationalizations. For example, some argue that they contributed to the work, and others maintain that working together on an assignment "helped them learn better."

- The instructor—not the student—determines the purpose of a particular assignment and the acceptable method for completing it. Unless working together on an assignment has been specifically authorized, always assume it is not allowed.
- Many educators do value group assignments and other collaborative efforts, recognizing their potential for developing and enhancing specific learning skills. And course requirements in some classes do consist primarily of group assignments. But the expectation of individual work is the prevailing norm in many classes, consistent with the presumption of original work that remains a fundamental tenet of scholarship in the American educational system.

Some students incorrectly assume that the degree of any permissible collaboration is basically the same for all classes.

- The extent of any permissible collaboration can vary widely from one class to the next, even from one project to the next within the same class.
- Be sure to distinguish between collaboration that is authorized for a particular assignment and unauthorized collaboration that is undertaken for the sake of expedience or convenience to benefit you and/or another student. By failing to make this key distinction, you are much more likely to engage in unauthorized collaboration. To avoid any such outcome, always seek clarification from the instructor.

#### Unauthorized collaboration can also occur in conjunction with group projects.

How so? If the degree or type of collaboration exceeds the parameters expressly
approved by the instructor. An instructor may allow (or even expect) students to work
together on one stage of a group project but require independent work on other
phases. Any such distinctions should be strictly observed.

## Providing another student unauthorized assistance on an assignment is also a violation, even without the prospect of benefiting yourself.

- If an instructor did not authorize students to work together on a particular assignment and you help a student complete that assignment, you are providing unauthorized assistance and, in effect, facilitating an act of academic dishonesty. Equally important, you can be held accountable for doing so.
- For similar reasons, you should not allow another student access to your drafted or completed assignments unless the instructor has permitted those materials to be shared in that manner.

#### Plagiarism

Plagiarism is another serious violation of academic integrity. In simplest terms, this occurs if you represent as your own work any material that was obtained from another source, regardless how or where you acquired it.

- Plagiarism can occur with all types of media—scholarly or non-academic, published or unpublished—written publications, Internet sources, oral presentations, illustrations, computer code, scientific data or analyses, music, art, and other forms of expression. (See <u>Section 11-802(d)</u> of the *Institutional Rules on Student Services and Activities* for the University's official definition of plagiarism.)
- Borrowed material from written works can include entire papers, one or more paragraphs, single phrases, or any other excerpts from a variety of sources such as books, journal articles, magazines, downloaded Internet documents, purchased papers from commercial writing services, papers obtained from other students (including homework assignments), etc.
- As a general rule, the use of any borrowed material results in plagiarism if the original source is not properly acknowledged. So you can be held accountable for plagiarizing material in either a final submission of an assignment or a draft that is being submitted to an instructor for review, comments, and/or approval.

Using *verbatim* material (e.g., exact words) without proper attribution (or credit) constitutes the most blatant form of plagiarism. However, other types of material can be plagiarized as well, such as *ideas* drawn from an original source or even its *structure* (e.g., sentence construction or line of argument).

• Improper or insufficient paraphrasing often accounts for this type of plagiarism. (See additional information on <u>paraphrasing</u>.)

Plagiarism can be committed intentionally or unintentionally.

- Strictly speaking, any use of material from another source without proper attribution constitutes plagiarism, regardless why that occurred, and any such conduct violates accepted standards of academic integrity.
- Some students deliberately plagiarize, often rationalizing this misconduct with a
  variety of excuses: falling behind and succumbing to the pressures of meeting
  deadlines; feeling overworked and wishing to reduce their workloads; compensating
  for actual (or perceived) academic or language deficiencies; and/or justifying
  plagiarism on other grounds.
- But some students commit plagiarism without intending to do so, often stumbling into
  negligent plagiarism as a result of sloppy notetaking, insufficient paraphrasing, and/or
  ineffective proofreading. Those problems, however, neither justify nor excuse this
  breach of academic standards. By misunderstanding the meaning of plagiarism and/or
  failing to cite sources accurately, you are much more likely to commit this violation.
  Avoiding that outcome requires, at a minimum, a clear understanding of plagiarism
  and the appropriate techniques for scholarly attribution. (See related information on
  paraphrasing; notetaking and proofreading; and acknowledging and citing sources.)

By merely changing a few words or rearranging several words or sentences, you are *not* paraphrasing. Making minor revisions to borrowed text amounts to plagiarism.

 Even if properly cited, a "paraphrase" that is too similar to the original source's wording and/or structure is, in fact, plagiarized. (See additional information on <u>paraphrasing</u>.)

Remember, your instructors should be able to clearly identify which materials (e.g., words and ideas) are your own *and* which originated with other sources.

That cannot be accomplished without proper attribution. You must give credit where it
is due, acknowledging the sources of any borrowed passages, ideas, or other types of
materials, and enclosing any verbatim excerpts with quotation marks (using block
indentation for longer passages).

Plagiarism & Unauthorized Collaboration

<u>Plagiarism</u> and <u>unauthorized collaboration</u> are often committed jointly.

By submitting as your own work any unattributed material that you obtained from other sources (including the contributions of another student who assisted you in preparing a homework assignment), you have committed plagiarism. And if the instructor did not authorize students to work together on the assignment, you have also engaged in unauthorized collaboration. Both violations contribute to the same fundamental deception—representing material obtained from another source as your own work.

Group efforts that extend beyond the limits approved by an instructor frequently involve plagiarism in addition to unauthorized collaboration. For example, an instructor may allow students to work together while researching a subject, but require each student to write a separate report. If the students collaborate while writing their reports *and* then submit the products of those joint efforts as individual works, they are guilty of unauthorized

collaboration as well as plagiarism. In other words, the students collaborated on the written assignment without authorization to do so, and also failed to acknowledge the other students' contributions to their own individual reports.

Multiple Submissions

## Submitting the same paper (or other type of assignment) for two courses without prior approval represents another form of academic dishonesty.

You may not submit a substantially similar paper or project for credit in two (or more) courses unless expressly authorized to do so by your instructor(s). (See Section 11-802(b) of the Institutional Rules on Student Services and Activities for the University's official definition of scholastic dishonesty.)

You may, however, re-work or supplement previous work on a topic with the instructor's approval.

# Some students mistakenly assume that they are entitled to submit the same paper (or other assignment) for two (or more) classes simply because they authored the original work.

Unfortunately, students with this viewpoint tend to overlook the relevant ethical and academic issues, focusing instead on their own "authorship" of the original material and personal interest in receiving essentially double credit for a single effort.

Unauthorized multiple submissions are inherently deceptive. After all, an instructor reasonably assumes that any completed assignments being submitted for credit were actually prepared for that course. Mindful of that assumption, students who "recycle" their own papers from one course to another make an effort to convey that impression. For instance, a student may revise the original title page or imply through some other means that he or she wrote the paper for that particular course, sometimes to the extent of discussing a "proposed" paper topic with the instructor or presenting a "draft" of the paper before submitting the "recycled" work for credit.

The issue of plagiarism is also relevant. If, for example, you previously prepared a paper for one course and then submit it for credit in another course without citing the initial work, you are committing plagiarism—essentially "self-plagiarism"—the term used by some institutions. Recall the broad scope of <u>plagiarism</u>: all types of materials can be plagiarized, including unpublished works, even papers you previously wrote.

Another problem concerns the resulting "unfair academic advantage" that is specifically referenced in the University's definition of scholastic dishonesty. If you submit a paper for one course that you prepared and submitted for another class, you are simply better situated to devote more time and energy toward fulfilling other requirements for the subsequent course than would be available to classmates who are completing all course requirements during that semester. In effect, you would be gaining an unfair academic advantage, which constitutes academic dishonesty as it is defined on this campus.

Some students, of course, do recognize one or more of these ethical issues, but still refrain from citing their authorship of prior papers to avoid earning reduced (or zero) credit for the

same works in other classes. That underlying motivation further illustrates the deceptive nature of unauthorized multiple submissions.

An additional issue concerns the problematic minimal efforts involved in "recycling" papers (or other prepared assignments). Exerting minimal effort basically undercuts the curricular objectives associated with a particular assignment and the course itself. Likewise, the practice of "recycling" papers subverts important learning goals for individual degree programs and higher education in general, such as the mastery of specific skills that students should acquire and develop in preparing written assignments. This demanding but necessary process is somewhat analogous to the required regimen of athletes, like the numerous laps and other repetitive training exercises that runners must successfully complete to prepare adequately for a marathon.