What Is Plagiarism?

- Plagiarism is the use of someone else’s work, words, or ideas without proper documentation (done either intentionally or unintentionally).
- Plagiarism can also be the deliberate misrepresentation of someone else’s work as your own.
- In the Western tradition, plagiarism is a serious offense, and is treated as an act of theft; much as you wouldn’t steal someone’s material property (we hope), nor would you steal their intellectual property (again, we hope)!
How Can I Avoid Plagiarism?

- You must cite (or document) those instances where you have used someone else’s work, words, or ideas.
- A citation is a way of identifying a particular work. There are many different citation styles, but each contains information about a work’s publication history, authorship, format, etc.
- It is not lazy, shameful, or in any way a threat to your grade to use someone else’s work -- in fact, good research ALWAYS takes account of other works, theories, and knowledge in the field.
Do I Have to Cite Everything?

- You **DO** have to cite when:
  - You use someone else’s idea.
  - You summarize someone else’s work.
  - You paraphrase or re-write someone else’s work.
  - You make a direct quote from someone else’s work.
- You **DO NOT** have to cite when:
  - You are referencing an unambiguous fact (ex. Mars has two moons) or a matter of public record (ex. WWII ran from 1939-1945).
  - You are referencing information which is considered to be “common knowledge” in your discipline (this can be tricky, so cite if unsure).
How Do I Cite?

- You must first select a citation style.
- The 3 most popular citation styles are:
  - American Psychological Association (APA) -- often used in science, social science, business, & education.
  - Modern Language Association (MLA) -- often used in English.
  - Chicago -- often used in classics and humanities.
- After having selected a style, you must then reference your work using an in-text citation (a condensed citation in the actual text of your paper) and a full citation at the end of your paper or in your bibliography.
Where Do I Get Citation Help?

- These Guides
- The Info Desk @ The MRU Library
- Librarians
- Student Learning Services @ MRU
- Writing & Learning Services @ MRU