

Group Work and Plagiarism

Many of our Community Health Sciences (CHS) classes require group work often resulting in a paper or presentation. Our students come from a wide variety of backgrounds and may not all have the same understanding of plagiarism. As a group, you must work together to create a finished product. Part of your graduate education is learning group processes to solve problems that may arise. If you are unable to solve problems as a group, ask for help from your professor as a last step.

How to be a good group member:

1. **Do not plagiarize!** Plagiarizing means copying, stealing ideas, or not citing where you found information.
2. **If your group members ask you to cite something, do it!** If you did the research and found the original article, you are responsible for providing the citation in APA format. Do not send a paper to your group members hoping they will fix your citations.
3. **Meet deadlines.** Most groups pick one or two people who will do the final compiling of the paper or presentation. Be considerate and get your section of the paper or project to the designated person on time. You may be able to wait until midnight the night before to start an individual paper, but you shouldn't do that with a group.
4. **Try not to take criticism or questions personally.** In a group, your work will directly effect the product and grade of your fellow group members. It is hard to accept criticism of your work, but thoughtful critiques can help create a better finished product.
5. **If you have criticism of others work, be professional and clear.** It's hard to stay professional when it's 10:30PM the night before the paper is due, but you will face tight deadlines in your professional career and must be prepared to stay calm and continue to produce excellent work.

What should I do if I suspect that my group member is plagiarizing?

1. **Talk to your group member.**
The plagiarism may be accidental ("Oops, I forgot to cite that.") or may be due to an unclear understanding of plagiarism ("I changed some of the words...."). Direct your group member to the CHS website and the Writing and Citing Power Point and Handouts. Highlight a few examples of plagiarism in the paper that need to be changed.
2. **If your group member is unwilling to make changes or continues to submit plagiarized work, talk to your professor.**
3. **Under no circumstances should you submit work that you know to be plagiarized.**
You will be held responsible for submitting plagiarized work. Keep in close contact with your professor about the situation.

That's great. But it's 11:00PM on the night before the paper is due. What should I do?

1. As a group, **you are responsible to and for one another.** Again, do not submit work that you know or suspect to be plagiarized.
2. Talk to the student and ask them to resubmit the work to you.
3. **As soon as you realize the issue, contact your professor.**