Addressing Plagiarism Series
PART 3: Designing Writing Assignments that Discourage Opportunities for Plagiarism

In their book, Glenn & Goldthwaite (2014) argue that "the best policy for dealing with plagiarism is to avoid inviting it in the first place" (p. 92). In fact, Heckler, Forde, & Bryan (2013) found that assignments designed to discourage plagiarism were statistically associated with lower instances of it. Below, Glenn & Goldthwaite (2014) and the Council of Writing Program Administrators [CWPA] (2003) offer a number of suggestions for designing assignments that discourage or avoid opportunities for plagiarism.

Strategies	Teaching Suggestions
Avoid assigning common projects	Avoid assigning standard writing projects on common or popular topics, as it may be easy for students to find papers on these topics for sale online. Also try to avoid assigning the exact same prompt year after year, as students may find it easy to submit a friend's copy from the year before.
Multiple drafts	Ask students to submit multiple drafts of their project at various stages of development. A variation on this is to ask students to complete research portfolios that include previous drafts, outlines, annotated bibliographies, and other process work.
Design active writing assignments	Design assignments that ask students to do more than just regurgitate information they found from sources. For example, Heckler, Forde, & Bryan (2013) advocate for assignments designed to have students "*operate* on the information [they find from sources], not just regurgitate it" [emphasis original] (p. 96).
Sequence your writing assignments	If possible, design a sequence of writing assignments that build on each other, using the same topic. For example, you could have students complete an annotated bibliography, followed by a compare/contrast analysis of two sources holding differing positions on the topic, and then a research argument paper synthesizing their own perspective with that of their sources.
Create "authentic" writing projects	Consider grounding your writing assignment in a local context. For example, you could ask students to research and present a solution to a campus or Davis-specific problem. A variation on this is the "Authentic Writing Assignment": Anderson, Hoffman, & Little (2014) define "authentic" writing assignments as asking students to practice the types writing and thinking professionals in their discipline actually engage in. These types of assignment are less likely to show up on paper mill sites, and are unique enough to be memorable should a student attempt to submit a copy from a peer.
Allot plenty of time for the assignment	Give your students plenty of time to delve deep into the research on their topic, and provide specific deadlines for drafts so that they can manage their time well. Many students may "panic plagiarize" because they have not developed adequate time management skills, or because they do not feel they have enough time to complete a quality writing project.

Additional Resources
- See PART 1 of this resource for a list of additional resources related to plagiarism.
- Be sure to direct students to the Academic Code of Conduct on your syllabus as required by the Academic Senate Regulation 537.
- For additional suggestions on incorporating writing assignments into your classroom, please see our "Designing Effective Writing Assignments Series."

Citation
Center for Educational Effectiveness [CEE]. (2018). Addressing Plagiarism Series. *Just-in-Time Teaching Resources.* Retrieved from https://cee.ucdavis.edu/JITT

References
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