Plagiarism Detection Software and Academic Integrity:

The Canadian Perspective

Lorie Kloda & Karen Nicholson
McGill University Libraries
LILAC 2005

Canadian Students & Plagiarism

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># of Canadian students who admit to plagiarizing at least once before graduating</td>
<td>1 / 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of Canadian students who admit to submitting a paper they had purchased online as their own</td>
<td>1 / 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of Canadian universities and colleges that subscribe to Turnitin™</td>
<td>28</td>
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Sniffing, war-chalking and more: A wireless vocabulary evolves

By ROB BROWN
SEPTEMBER 17, 2002

War-driving

Wireless LAN war drivers routinely cruise their immediate area equipped with laptops loaded with a wireless LAN card, an RF high-gain antenna and a GPS receiver. The wireless LAN and GPS receiver feed signals into frequency spectrum analyzers, which detect APs and their identifiers along with their geographic locations. WebTuneminer also automatically detects

G10

- McGill University
- McMaster University
- Queen’s University
- Université Laval
- Université de Montréal
- University of Alberta
- University of British Columbia
- University of Toronto
- University of Waterloo
- University of Western Ontario

Research Findings

Policy
Collaboration
Promotion
Instruction
Academic Integrity Policy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Don’t Know</th>
<th>No</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
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- **Truth*In*Education**
- Academic Integrity Subcommittee of the Committee on Student Affairs
- Office of Academic Integrity

Truth in Education

Welcome to the Academic Integrity page for the University of Alberta. Without Academic Integrity, an educational institution would suffer complete failure. At the University of Alberta, our top priority is to maintain the integrity of the degrees we offer. To that end, we have created the Truth*in*Education program. It is designed to promote integrity in all educational activities, including learning, teaching, research and community events.

The University of Alberta is proud to be an institutional member of the Truth*in*Education project.

Policy for use of text-matching software at McGill

Following a trial use of one text-matching software during the winter and fall terms of 2003, and numerous consultations, the Academic Integrity Subcommittee, a Subcommittee of the Committee on Student Affairs (CSA), advised (a) that McGill adopt a formal policy affirming that it may take all reasonable means to verify the originality of students' submitted work and (b) that McGill permit the use of text-matching software under certain conditions. Moreover, the Subcommittee recommended a clear distinction between the possible use of text-matching software as a means of investigating suspected plagiarism and its routine use in courses.

On December 13, 2004, the Board of Governors of McGill University approved a policy on the use of text-matching software as well as two accompanying policies regarding implementation.*


McMaster University has purchased an institutional membership with Turnitin.com, a web-based service that detects internet plagiarism. Turnitin is a technological response to a plagiarism problem that is getting worse because of the technology of the web. Turnitin has three advantages over other services:

1. The students submit their own work to Turnitin, saving the instructor and/or TA the time of doing a Google search.
2. As students are submitting their own work, they are aware a detection service is in use and may decide not to plagiarize; and
3. Turnitin searches the entire assignment for plagiarism rather than selected passages.

How does Turnitin work?

The instructor通知s students that Turnitin will be used in the course outline (see section Language for Course Outlines). Students submit their assignments electronically to Turnitin.com where it is checked against the Internet, published works and Turnitin's database for similar or identical work. If Turnitin finds similar or identical work, a report is sent to the instructor showing the student's work and the original source. The instructor reviews what Turnitin has found and then determines if it represents a problem with the work.

### Academic Integrity Promotion

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Don’t Know</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussion of AI included into</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>librarian training</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Regular announcements about</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>AI from the library (e.g. press,</td>
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<td>handouts, website)</td>
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### AI Instruction Offered by the Library

- **In face-to-face credit-course classes**: 2 Yes, 2 Don’t Know, 2 No
- **In face-to-face library workshops**: 3 Yes, 2 Don’t Know, 1 No
- **Online**: 1 Yes, 1 Don’t Know, 2 No
- **Elsewhere**: 1 Yes, 1 Don’t Know, 1 No
Instruction Related to AI

Comments re: Instruction

- “When there is a requirement in a specific course that plagiarism detecting software is used, Information Literacy sessions facilitated for the course will include information about using it. Responsible use of information is typically always included in IL sessions.”

- “U of A offers an annual Academic Integrity Week, with relevant instruction and workshops open to faculty, staff, and students.”

- “Library maintains a comprehensive website on plagiarism, cyberplagiarism, and academic integrity.”

- “Librarians teach sessions in whole or in part on cyberplagiarism, citation guides, how to structure assignments (for faculty), how to research papers (for students), and bibliographic management software.”
Guide to Plagiarism and Cyber-Plagiarism

Although plagiarism has been around as long as students have, the Internet has dramatically increased the ease of and opportunities for plagiarism. “Cyber-plagiarism” is the term used to describe the process by which students either copy ideas found on the Web without giving proper attribution, or the process by which students download research papers from the Web, in whole or in part, and submit the paper as original work. The phenomenon of cyber-plagiarism is affecting universities around the globe.

- In a 1999 survey of American students conducted by the Center for Academic Integrity at Duke University, 69% of the 2,030 students polled said that they had committed at least one academic offense such as plagiarizing (Quan P1).  
- Larry Noll, the Associate Dean of Arts, Student Programs at the University of Alberta, estimates about 70 people were proven to have plagiarized during the academic year 2000 in the Faculty of Arts (Gold P1).  
- During the same year, at the University of Ottawa, 13 students in the faculty of arts and sciences were disciplined for plagiarism; Carleton University reported 30 cases of plagiarism; and at the University of Toronto over 200 cases of plagiarism are reported each year (Quan P1).  
- Most university administrators believe that the number of unreported cases of plagiarism far exceeds reported numbers (Quan P1).

The purpose of this Web site is to examine the issues of plagiarism and cyber-plagiarism and what faculty can do to prevent, detect, and report plagiarism.

Please email any comments or questions to: anna.bombki@ualberta.ca

Why Students Plagiarize >>

Disciplinary committees
Verifying suspected cases of plagiarism
Academic skills training for offenders
Assisting in the design of assignments to deter plagiarism
Collaboration with campus teaching and learning services

Don't Know
No
Yes
Comments re: Collaboration

- “We present a workshop for the Teaching Assistant Training Programme on supporting undergraduate research. In this workshop, one of the topics we touch on is plagiarism, why students do it, and strategies to prevent it. We also present a workshop for the Office of Teaching Advancement for Faculty on similar themes.”

- “Disciplinary committee members are members of the academic staff so librarians could be members (in fact, there is one right now). A position for a librarian is not ‘reserved’, however.”

- “I think librarians would be happy to help professors design better assignments but I don’t know if any are actually doing this at the moment.”

- “We hope to work collaboratively in the future.”

Some would say that it’s the sign of a mature technology to generate as many problems as it solves.

Theodore Roszak, 2004