



Academic Integrity Handbook

Skidmore College

Table of Contents

Honor Code.....	2
The Ethics of Scholarship: A Note to Skidmore Students.....	3
Academic Integrity Checklist	5
Academic Integrity: Definitions and Guidelines for Penalties	6
The Academic Honor Code: Further Impacts of Academic Integrity Violations.....	12
Relevant Excerpts from the “Skidmore Guide to Writing”	15
Documentation and Plagiarism	15
Citing Sources within Your Paper	15
Preparing a Works Cited List	20
Advice about Quoting and Citing.....	21

Honor Code

Established at the request of the student body in 1921, the Skidmore Honor Code defines the guiding principles of honesty, respect, and integrity that should inform all choices and behavior patterns in the Skidmore academic and social communities. Each student, in matriculating at Skidmore College (or engaging in any Skidmore-sponsored activity or program as a non-matriculated student), agrees to the following code:

I hereby accept membership in the Skidmore College community and, with full realization of the responsibilities inherent in membership, do agree to adhere to honesty and integrity in all relationships, to be considerate of the rights of others, and to abide by the College regulations.

It is the responsibility of every student and every member of the faculty and staff, both by example and by instruction, to encourage students to embrace the standards of the Honor Code.

If a student is aware of a violation, he or she is honor-bound to speak to the student, and if necessary, to report the student to the Dean of Students & Vice President for Student Affairs or other appropriate member of the staff or faculty. If a member of the faculty is aware that someone has committed an academic violation, faculty legislation requires that the faculty member report the violation to the Associate Dean of Faculty with responsibility for student academic affairs. It is only through a combination of ethical commitment, guidance, and sanctions that the Honor Code can become a living set of principles for our community.

The Ethics of Scholarship: A Note to Skidmore Students

Dear Students:

These notes and reflections explore the ethics and protocols of academic endeavors at Skidmore. We hope that most of the observations seem commonplace, because they are the common fabric of personal and intellectual integrity.

Trust: At the heart of a college education is a fundamental trust between students and their teachers and among the students themselves. An unwavering commitment to doing the best we can with our own intellectual resources, and to respecting the academic help we receive from other students and scholars, are the central tenets of our educational experience.

Ethics and Uncertainty: An unflinching commitment to honest struggle is inherent in the process of discovery. In pushing the frontiers of their knowledge and expanding their acquired skills, college students must expect to find many academic tasks as intellectually uncomfortable as they are interesting and rewarding. We need to embrace the challenges of serious inquiry in order to grow intellectually, not rush the process and avoid intellectual discomfort through easy, expedient, **and** sometimes dishonest, strategies. Often the better work that creative thinkers produce not only presents hard-won conclusions but also explores and clarifies major questions still to be addressed.

The Learning Community: Another sign of student-scholars' intellectual strength is their ability to engage in a critical and appreciative dialogue with the findings of other students and scholars. The process of discovery is often inter-dependent and interdisciplinary. It often demands that we incorporate in our work, or challenge and modify, the information gathered and ideas propounded by other people. At what stage in your education you enter into this larger, exciting intellectual dialogue with the work of other scholars will depend in part on your own initiative and in part on the guidance supplied by individual instructors as they define the expectations of a particular assignment.

My Work, Their Work: Whenever our inquiries take us into the larger world of what others have thought and said, we must distinguish carefully between our own information and perspectives and the help we have received from other sources. The ability to perceive the precise dividing lines between our own ideas and words and the contributions of other people is not only an academic skill that students must exercise and refine but also the fundamental expectation of academic integrity. It is a sign of academic maturity and strength, not of weakness, to reveal exactly what you have contributed to a field of inquiry and what you have gained as a member of a larger community of scholars.

Collaborative Learning: With growing frequency, you will encounter academic work that is to be done collaboratively, and a cooperative approach to tasks is also becoming a significant aspect of many jobs and careers. Collaborative endeavors in the classroom, laboratory, and studio constitute an important part of a Skidmore education. But it is imperative in every such activity for you to recognize just where collaborative effort ends and when your own individual work must stand on its own merits. College instructors, and your fellow students, assume that everything you present as though it were your own—whether in spoken, written, digital, or visual form, whether for a grade or not—is truly and solely the result of your own efforts. If your work has benefited from the ideas, information, or words of other people and sources, it is your most serious responsibility as a student, colleague, and friend to acknowledge all partnerships in the learning process.

The Challenge of Interdisciplinary Learning: Much of your work in the contemporary liberal arts setting requires you to move from one academic discipline to another, often to work in the same course with multiple disciplines and their likenesses and differences. This interplay among the disciplines raises the stakes further for the ethics of scholarship. Working among the various disciplines demands even more intellectual vigilance and agility, for you must find out about each discipline's distinctive discovery processes and protocols for handling resource materials. This challenge raises the most fundamental questions about how we explore an issue through the lens of particular disciplinary expectations and how we present what we have found.

When in Doubt, Ask: If you keep in mind that the intellectual processes and partnerships of the sort we are describing are complex and are mastered only through experience, you will not hesitate to ask a teacher or faculty advisor when you are uncertain about the nature of an assignment, the limits of collaborative work, when to use primary and secondary sources, when to rely solely on your own analytic abilities, and when and how to document the influences upon your thinking. The asking is another part of your responsibility as a college student and is important to your educational growth. Most academic integrity problems can be avoided if you simply ask your teachers for clarification before submitting your work.

Some Practical Integrity Reminders

Be Informed: Remember that it is your responsibility to be fully informed about the requirements of the Honor Code. Claims of ignorance provide no defense when one is facing charges of violating Skidmore's academic code of conduct. Naïveté and good intentions cannot substitute for responsibility. Do not operate in a state of confusion and pay the price later.

Paraphrasing: It is not okay to paraphrase material without fully acknowledging your source; putting someone else's thoughts, observations, or information into your own words does not make the material your own.

Plagiarism: When in doubt, document every source that has influenced your work. Seek your instructor's advice before turning in material that might need further citation of sources. Plagiarism includes copying, paraphrasing, or imitating another person's ideas, information, data, words, descriptions, choice of evidence, structure of argument, and so on. Material gleaned from web sites or AI chatbots is no more your own than material printed in a book or journal.

Unauthorized Collaboration: The most common faculty expectation is that everything you submit to an instructor with your name on it is entirely the result of your own labors, not the result of collaboration. If an instructor has allowed or even encouraged you to collaborate on some work for the course, be certain to check his or her expectations when you are preparing to turn in your work.

Exams Re-examined: While it is obvious that one cannot use notes, books, or other sources during an exam (unless given express permission from the instructor), you may not realize that any talking during an exam, or other mode of communicating (including cell phones), constitutes a violation of the Honor Code and should result in immediate failure on the exam. The content of the conversation does not matter; the act of communicating violates the Honor Code.

For Further Information on the Ethics of Scholarship

- Consult with your teachers and faculty advisors
- Read appropriate sections of the Student Handbook
- Peruse the Skidmore Guide to Writing published by the Skidmore Expository Writing Program
- Consult with the Associate Dean of Faculty for Student Academic Affairs

Academic Integrity Checklist

This checklist offers a very simplified set of reminders about a complex and exciting process that involves students in the advancement of knowledge through research. The most basic reminder is to document every source that has had any significant influence on the work you present to your professor for review. Further, whenever you are in doubt about academic expectations or documentation processes, ask your professor before you submit the work. For detailed help on documentation protocols, you can consult the Skidmore Guide to Writing, other published guides, and staff in the Writing Center (Lucy Scribner Library, Room 440).

In composing this paper, I have done the following:

- ☐ Checked carefully any written or verbal instructions my professor provided for this paper/assignment, including finding out the required citation format (MLA, APA, Chicago, etc.) and whether or to what extent generative AI may be used to produce ideas, outlines, or text.
- ☐ Kept careful notes regarding all of my sources of information and ideas, including accurate bibliographic information on each source.
- ☐ Put quotation marks around every word, phrase, or larger section of prose that is quoted from a published source (whether print or electronic), and including unpublished lectures, media presentations, and peer collaboration. I have also provided an accurate citation of the source, both in the footnotes or endnotes and in the bibliography.
- ☐ Paraphrased sources entirely in my own words and provided a citation for each paraphrase.
- ☐ Employed a clear and consistent method of documenting all of my sources (print, oral, electronic, web-based) and used the footnote or endnote style appropriate to the discipline of the course (for example, MLA or APA style). I have documented my use of generative AI (if allowed) as instructed by my professor.
- ☐ Provided accurate citation for sources of reproduced data summaries, tables, graphs, and illustrations.
- ☐ Provided a full bibliography of my sources, according to the documentation style required for the discipline in question.
- ☐ Checked once again to be sure that the difference between my own contributions to the paper and the contributions of others is unmistakably clear.

Academic Integrity: Definitions and Guidelines for Penalties

The following guidelines define for the Skidmore community a context of values within which individual and institutional decisions on academic integrity can be made. The guidelines, developed by the Integrity Board and reviewed by the Honor Code Commission, Appeals Board, the faculty at large, and the President's Office, reflect Skidmore's serious commitment to academic honesty. No set of guidelines can, of course, define all possible types or degrees of academic dishonesty; thus, the following descriptions should be understood as examples of infractions rather than an exhaustive list, and the recommended penalties are presented as guiding examples, as well. The guidelines are intended as touchstones for complainants and for the judicial boards of the College, and as a deterrent to potential offenders. Individual faculty members and the judicial boards will continue to judge each case according to its particular merits and demerits. **It is every student's responsibility to become familiar with the standards of academic integrity at the College. Violations of the academic Honor Code will be reported on law school applications, transfer applications, etc., and are likely to render the student ineligible for membership in Skidmore-sponsored academic honor societies, for participation in the First Year Experience as a Peer Mentor, and for academic and some leadership prizes awarded by the College.**

Plagiarism

Presenting as one's own, the work of another person (for example, the words, ideas, information, data, evidence, organizing principles, or style of presentation of someone else). Plagiarism includes paraphrasing or summarizing without acknowledgment, submission of another student's work as one's own, the purchase of prepared research or completed papers or projects, and the unacknowledged use of research sources gathered by someone else. Failure to indicate accurately the extent and precise nature of one's reliance on other sources is also a form of plagiarism. Thus, the use of AI to generate ideas, arguments, or language without instructor authorization constitutes plagiarism. The student is responsible for understanding the legitimate use of sources, the appropriate ways of acknowledging his or her academic, scholarly, or creative indebtedness, and the consequences for violating the Skidmore Honor Code. The judicial boards of the College will not regard claims of ignorance, of unintentional error, and of academic or personal pressure as an adequate defense for violations of the Honor Code.

Minor offenses: e.g., failure to acknowledge the source(s) of a few phrases, sentences, or an idea (though not an idea of importance to the thesis or central purpose of the paper or project).

More serious offenses: e.g., failure to acknowledge the quotation or paraphrase of a few longer, paragraph-length sections of a paper, failure to acknowledge the source(s) of a major idea or the source(s) of important pieces of evidence or information, or the source(s) for an ordering principle central to the paper's or project's structure.

Major offenses: e.g., failure to acknowledge the source (quoted, paraphrased, or summarized) of major sections or passages in the paper or project, the unacknowledged use of several major ideas or extensive reliance on another person's data, evidence, or critical method; submitting as one's own, work borrowed, stolen, or purchased from someone else.

Penalties for Plagiarism

All offenses observed by faculty or students must be reported to the Associate Dean of the Faculty (ADOF) with responsibility for student academic affairs or to the Student Conduct Officer (SCO) who oversees academic integrity cases. The ADOF will keep a confidential record of

the offense, the evidence, and the penalty. The ADOF or SCO will also make certain that the student understands their rights, the nature and importance of academic integrity, and the probable consequences of a second violation.

In the case of minor offenses (as defined above), the instructor might make any one or a combination of the following responses:

- warning without further penalty
- required rewriting of the paper, but without grade credit
- lowering of the paper or project grade by one full grade

In the case of more serious offenses and major offenses (defined above), the instructor might impose one or more of the following:

- failure on the plagiarized essay, report, or project (no revision or supplemental work accepted)
- failure in the course (more appropriate to a major offense)

Be aware that some faculty maintain a zero-tolerance policy on plagiarism and will fail a student for the course regardless of the level of offense.

Cheating on Examinations

Giving or receiving unauthorized help before, during, or after an examination. Examples of unauthorized help include collaboration of any sort during an examination (unless specifically approved by the instructor), collaboration before an examination (when such collaboration is specifically forbidden by the instructor), the use of notes, books, or other aids or technologies during an exam (unless permitted by the instructor), looking upon someone else's exam during the examination period, intentionally allowing another student to look upon one's exam, and the passing of any exam information to students who have not yet taken the examination. While the exam is ongoing, students may not discuss test items with any student, including those not enrolled in the course. Any talking during an exam, or other mode of communication (including use of cell phones), constitutes a violation of the Honor Code. The content of the conversation does not matter; the act of communicating violates the Honor Code.

Penalties for Cheating on Examinations

The great variety of exam situations and procedures makes it difficult to outline different degrees of severity. However, in determining an appropriate sanction, instructors and judicial boards might take the following into account:

- the degree to which the cheating was premeditated or the student(s) collaborated in receiving or giving unauthorized help on the exam
- the percentage of the student's exam which was affected by the incident
- the degree to which the examination procedures in general were jeopardized or other students affected by the cheating incident

Penalties will generally include one or more of the following:

- failure on the examination
- lowering of the course grade by one full grade or more
- failure in the course
- academic disciplinary probation, another type of academic sanction, suspension, or dismissal

Other Forms of Academic Dishonesty

Multiple Submission

The submission of substantial portions of the same work for credit more than once **(including high school work)**, without the prior explicit consent of the instructor(s) to whom the material is being (or has in the past been) submitted.

Penalties Recommended

- failure on the work submitted
- failure in the course(s)
- academic disciplinary probation or other academic sanction

Forgery

Forging another person's signature on academic or other official documents (e.g., the signing of a faculty advisor approval, or the misuse of attendance sign-in sheets).

Penalties Recommended

- cancellation of the privilege or service gained by the forged signature
- academic disciplinary probation or other academic sanction

Sabotage

The deliberate destruction, damaging, or theft of another's work or working materials (including art works, lab experiments, computer programs, term papers, or projects).

Penalties Recommended

- failure in the course
- academic disciplinary probation, another type of academic sanction, or a recommendation for suspension
- monetary fines

Theft, Damage, or Displacement of Library Materials

The effort to remove uncharged library materials from the library, defacing or damaging library materials, intentional displacement and hoarding of materials within the library for one's unauthorized private use, the abuse of reserve-book privileges. These and related offenses constitute an abuse of the college community's central resource for the advancement of learning. In certain cases, the failure to return materials to the Library in a timely way when these materials are needed by other members of the Skidmore community may be treated as an academic integrity infraction.

Penalties Recommended

- monetary fines
- limitation or revocation of library privileges
- academic disciplinary probation, another type of academic sanction, or a recommendation for suspension

Computer Abuse and Fraud

Includes the abuses defined in these guidelines under “plagiarism,” “multiple submission,” “sabotage,” “unauthorized collaboration,” “falsification,” and “alteration.” Members of the Skidmore community are expected to observe the highest standards of academic and social integrity as they use computers for class, office, and individual projects. Such offenses as computer plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, entry of another person’s computing directory, data theft or unauthorized alteration, inappropriate use of the electronic mail, and other malicious or dishonest computer activities will be treated as serious infringements of integrity. The official statement on the “Acceptable Use of Technology” at Skidmore is available at: www.skidmore.edu/it/policies/acceptable-use.php

The College recognizes the following EDUCOM policy statement:

Respect for intellectual labor and creativity is vital to academic discourse and enterprise. This principle applies to works of all authors and publishers in all media. It encompasses respect for the right to acknowledgment, right to privacy, and right to determine the form, manner, and terms of publication and distribution. Because electronic information is volatile and easily reproduced, respect for the work and personal expression of others is especially critical in computer environments. Violations of authorial integrity, including plagiarism, invasion of privacy, unauthorized access, and trade secret and copyright violations, may be grounds for sanctions against members of the academic community.

Software Piracy: The College forbids the unauthorized duplication of copyrighted software. Even if a program does not contain copy protection to prevent unauthorized duplication, it is illegal to copy commercial software for your own use or by others. Likewise, knowingly accepting or using copies of “pirated” software violates the Skidmore College Honor Code.

Penalties Recommended

- failure on the material in question when academic credit is at issue
- failure in the course
- limitation or revocation of computer privileges
- academic disciplinary probation, another type of academic sanction, or a recommendation of suspension

Unauthorized Collaboration

(Closely related to plagiarism or cheating): student collaboration on projects, papers, or other academic exercises which is regarded as inappropriate by the instructor(s). The most common faculty assumption is that work submitted for credit is entirely one’s own; however, standards on appropriate and inappropriate collaboration vary widely among individual faculty and the different disciplines. Students who want to confer or collaborate with one another on work receiving academic credit (e.g., homework assignments, lab reports, exam preparations, research projects, essays, etc.) *should make certain of the instructor’s expectations and standards.*

Penalties Recommended

- failure on the work submitted
- failure in the course
- academic disciplinary probation or other academic sanction

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- Read appropriate sections of the Student Handbook
- Peruse the Skidmore Guide to Writing published by the Skidmore Expository Writing Program
- Consult with the Associate Dean of Faculty for Student Academic Affairs

Falsification

The misrepresentation or purposeful mishandling of material or fabrication of information in an academic exercise, academic process, or academic assignment (e.g., the falsification of experimental or computer data, the construction of false documents or the misleading alteration of documents, the false or misleading citation of sources, the purposeful mishandling or misappropriation of registration materials, etc.).

Penalties Recommended

- failure on the exercise or material submitted for credit
- failure in the course
- cancellation of the privilege obtained through falsification
- academic disciplinary probation or other academic sanction

Alteration

Altering material without the instructor's knowledge or consent in negotiation for a higher grade.

Penalties Recommended

- failure on the material altered
- failure in the course
- academic disciplinary probation or other academic sanction

Multiple or Subsequent Violations of Academic Integrity

When a student violates the Honor Code on more than one academic exercise (whether those infractions occurred during the same or different periods of time, or in the same or different courses), Skidmore regards the offenses as an especially serious subversion of our educational mission. The issue becomes even more egregious when the student has been confronted with the first infraction before the second is committed or discovered.

Whenever the ADOF or SCO receive information on a multiple offense, the ADOF or SCO may request a hearing before a judicial board or initiate an Administrative Conference. The ADOF or SCO may also request a hearing for a single but especially serious academic offense. The student's social integrity record may be considered at the hearing along with the academic integrity record. Generally, in cases of multiple infractions, or an especially serious single offense, the ADOF, SCO, or judicial board will consider recommending to the Dean of the Faculty & Vice President for Academic Affairs a one-semester suspension or dismissal from the College, depending on the severity of the violation(s) and other aspects of the individual case.

Other Consequences

Violations of the academic Honor Code will be reported on law school, transfer, study abroad, and similar applications when requested by external organizations. Further, academic integrity violations make the student ineligible for the Dean's List (for the period of the sanction), membership in Skidmore and national academic honor societies, Skidmore academic prizes (including those awarded at Honors Convocation and at graduation), College Honors, Department and Program Honors, some leadership awards, and participation in the First Year Experience as a Peer Mentor. For details of this and other academic integrity policies, please consult with the ADOF or SCO.

The Academic Honor Code: Sanctions & Further Impact

This document, summarizing legislation passed by the Skidmore faculty in October 1995 and revised by the faculty in March 2000, describes the record-keeping and reporting implications for students who have violated the Academic Honor Code. The decision of the faculty applies to all current and future Skidmore students. The sanctions described here are in addition to those presented in the *Student Handbook* and the *New Student Advising and Registration Guide*; they are also in addition to any sanctions imposed by the Student Conduct process and officers of the College. Members of the Skidmore community may seek clarification of any Academic Honor Code issue from the Associate Dean of Faculty (ADOF) with responsibility for student academic affairs or from the Student Conduct Officer (SCO) who adjudicates academic cases.

This document differs from older print versions of the *New Student Advising and Registration Guide* in that it clarifies the following points: (1) students admitting to or found responsible for an academic integrity violation may be withdrawn from national and Skidmore honor societies at the discretion of the honor society, (2) the reporting and eligibility implications of an infraction cannot be set aside or modified by Student or Administrative Conduct Boards, except in the special case of first-year students where the level of offense determines the eligibility implications, (3) the Committee on Academic Standing considers academic integrity violations during its review of students who do not meet minimum standards for continuation, and (4) academic integrity is a factor influencing a student's eligibility to study away and to participate as a Peer Mentor in the First Year Experience.

STUDENT RECORDS IN GENERAL: every effort is made to keep records of Academic Honor Code violations confidential so that the student found responsible for an infraction can move on successfully with his or her academic, co-curricular, and personal life at Skidmore. An Honor Code conviction can become a temporary or permanent part of the student's official file (that is maintained in the Office of the Registrar) only through action taken by a judicial board or by the Dean of Students & Vice President for Student Affairs, the Dean of the Faculty & Vice President for Academic Affairs, the President of Skidmore, or their designees. The Student Conduct process of the College and its procedures are described in *The Student Handbook*. Important exceptions to the general principle of confidentiality are described below.

THE IMPACT OF INFRACTIONS ON ELIGIBILITY AND REPORTING:

1) Effects on honors and prizes: violations of the Academic Honor Code will, with few exceptions, make a student ineligible for the following prizes, distinctions, and honors:

a) The Dean's List for the period of the sanction (which will generally mean the semester in which the infraction occurred, unless a longer period of "probation" or "warning" has been imposed)

b) Honors at graduation (*cum laude* distinctions, departmental honors, etc.); academic prizes awarded at Honors Convocation or at Commencement; Periclean Scholar Awards; some leadership awards; membership in the Periclean Honors Forum and in national academic honor societies; membership in Phi Beta Kappa (in the case of Phi Beta Kappa, the Skidmore chapter will determine eligibility after a report has been made by the Associate Dean of Faculty). Students already inducted in Skidmore or national honor societies at the time of the infraction may have their membership revoked at the discretion of the society or chapter.

Exceptions: at the discretion of the ADOF or SCO, the eligibility consequences described in the paragraphs above will not affect the first-year student who has committed one minor or moderate offense. This policy is in keeping with Skidmore's educational mission and recognizes that some students may take longer than others to develop an academic and ethical understanding commensurate with the standards of higher education. Although this limited forgiveness policy will be in effect for first-year students, all multiple or subsequent violations and all more serious offenses committed by first-year students will result in the sanctions described above. (Note that Phi Beta Kappa requires the reporting of all infractions without exception, including minor offenses committed by first-year students.) All academic Honor Code violations committed by sophomores, juniors, and seniors will incur the eligibility consequences described in the paragraphs above.

2) Effect on letters of reference and recommendation: violations of the Skidmore Honor Code will be reported to law schools and to bar examiners, to other graduate schools as requested, on recommendations for transfer to another college, and to other organizations or agencies authorized to check a student's record of integrity. In the reporting process, the ADOF (or his or her designee) will provide an appropriate context so as not to unduly jeopardize the student's academic opportunities before and after graduation.

3) Effect on academic standing: the Committee on Academic Standing (CAS) considers academic integrity violations when reviewing the profiles of students who do not meet minimum standards for continuation at Skidmore. Academic integrity infractions may influence whether the CAS disqualifies a student from further study or grants a one-semester waiver so that the student can improve their academic record.

4) Effect on study away: the CAS, along with the Office of Off-Campus Study & Exchanges, considers a student's academic integrity record when determining eligibility to study away.

5) Other effects: academic integrity violations make a student ineligible to participate in the First Year Experience (FYE) program as a Peer Mentor.

PROCEDURES AND APPEALS:

1) In conformity with the faculty legislation of October 1995 and March 2000, and within the framework and spirit of the Honor Code, the ADOF or SCO will decide whether the further impacts described in this document will be enforced. The ADOF or SCO's decision will be communicated to the student. Their determination of further impact may be appealed within five working days of notification to the Dean of the Faculty & Vice President for Academic Affairs. The student must make clear in writing the grounds for the appeal. The Dean of the Faculty & Vice President for Academic Affairs may not consider the guilt or innocence of the student or similarly broad integrity issues (this is the role of judicial boards), but only whether the ADOF or SCO's decision regarding the further impact of the Honor Code violation is in line with the policies adopted by the faculty. This process will offer the student, and the academic community in general, protection against any arbitrary or misinformed judgment made by the ADOF or SCO.

2) If a student wants to challenge the Honor Code charge itself, the student must request an Administrative Hearing Board. Skidmore's Student Conduct process is described in *The Student Handbook*. Note that a hearing board may impose or recommend additional sanctions beyond those described in this document. A hearing board may not, however, set aside any of the eligibility and

reporting consequences described above unless the hearing board finds the student not responsible for an Honor Code infraction. (In the case of infractions committed during the first year, a hearing board might modify the internal eligibility implications for a first-year student by determining that the infraction was of a “minor or moderate” nature, in keeping with the faculty legislation.)

3) Further appeal process for first-year students: students who have committed violations of the academic Honor Code during their first year of college will have an additional opportunity to appeal the violation's impact on their eligibility for Skidmore prizes, honors, and memberships (except for membership in Phi Beta Kappa, which is determined solely by the Skidmore chapter of Phi Beta Kappa). Such students may appeal the early infraction directly to the Dean of the Faculty/Vice President for Academic Affairs and the ADOF, who will decide together whether to forgive the early violation of the Honor Code. This consideration will take into account the severity of the original offense and the student's subsequent academic and integrity record at Skidmore. The ADOF and the Dean of the Faculty/Vice President for Academic Affairs may decide to sustain the original decision and its impact, or to reduce or eliminate the impact on the student's eligibility for prizes and honors. The appeal cannot be initiated before the first semester of the student's junior year. The student is responsible for initiating this further appeal, in writing, within the designated time frame. The appeal process does not pertain to letters of reference and recommendation, the effect on academic standing, the effect on eligibility to study away, or the effect on eligibility to participate as a Peer Mentor in the FYE as described in #2-5 above.

Reviewed by CAS, Fall 2026

Excerpts from the Skidmore Guide to Writing

Documentation and Plagiarism

Documenting your sources provides essential information for your reader. By citing sources, you show your indebtedness to the work of others, and you give your reader the chance to seek further information from the sources themselves. Citing sources also supports your own credibility as a writer and researcher. Careful documentation shows that you are not thinking in a vacuum; rather, it shows you have studied what others have written on the subject and that you have considered their work. This kind of academic "dependency" is really a sign of scholarly strength, not weakness, because it shows that you are participating critically in a scholarly conversation with others. At the same time, documentation demonstrates your own academic integrity by showing that you are carefully giving credit where credit is due.

Through careful documentation, you indicate where the information or ideas in your paper come from. In a sense, you provide references to the "documents" upon which your work is based. You must document quotations, summaries, and paraphrases.

- **Quotation.** Taking from another source the exact words of the author and using them in your own written work. These words need to begin and conclude with a quotation mark.
- **Summary.** Taking lengthy passages from a source, reformulating or outlining them in your own words, and using them in your own written work. Summarized material is not enclosed in quotation marks.
- **Paraphrase.** Taking short passages from a source, restating the content of the passage, reconstructing the passage phrase by phrase, and rephrasing the author's words in your own. Paraphrased material is not enclosed in quotation marks.

You must indicate in your text which words, ideas, or information you have derived from sources. Your Bibliography or Works Cited should include complete bibliographical entries so that a reader could easily find the sources in the library.

Since documentation is frequently taught only for research papers or term papers, students wonder if they should bother with it at other times - for instance, when they make brief references to one or two sources in a short essay. Some teachers may even tell you not to bother with bibliographical information for a source if it is well known to both you and the teacher. Technically, however, failure to document ideas or information from any source constitutes plagiarism.

So how do you know when to cite sources and when not to bother? This is the best advice:

Whenever your writing is based on or influenced by sources, you must cite those sources and provide full bibliographical material.

When in my paper do I cite sources?

When writing from sources, you constantly must make judgments, deciding when you need to cite a source and when you do not. Many professors find that students tend to under-document their essays; however, you should not get so nervous about citing sources that you put a citation in every sentence. You do not have to attribute everything you write to some other source, but you do need to distinguish clearly between your own words and ideas and those of others. These judgments can

sometimes be tricky, but the principles that follow in the next pages should help you to decide when to cite sources.

Remember: You need to cite sources for material that is quoted, paraphrased, or summarized. You need to tell your reader what documents you used to write your essay or report.

As you write your papers, you'll decide when to use your own words and when to take words directly from your sources. Most often, you should put what you read into your own words, paraphrasing or summarizing what comes from other sources. By paraphrasing or summarizing, you show how you are processing the ideas or information that you found in your sources. Sometimes, however, it may be best to quote, taking phrases, sentences, and even whole paragraphs directly from a source. When you do take words from a source, even a single phrase, you must place quotation marks around those words or indent to set off a longer quotation.

Your Skidmore professors expect you to know when to cite sources as well as how to cite them according to the documentation style appropriate to the academic discipline in which you are working. Although many professors do not take time out of their classes to teach you this skill, most welcome questions about citation. We encourage you to ask your instructors if you are in doubt about research expectations. You will not be criticized for documenting your sources; however, if you fail to document, you may suffer severe penalties and be guilty of plagiarism.

Quoting

Remember that your purpose in writing is to build and construct your own pattern of meaning, even when assignments require working with a number of secondary sources. Of course, your professors expect you to use sources intelligently and cite them correctly, but they don't want you just to parrot back what those sources tell you. They expect papers to represent your work, your thinking, and your writing. You must develop your own ideas, build your own organization, and reach your own conclusions. References and quotations serve to strengthen your text by providing necessary support or evidence.

Choose quotations carefully

Seldom, if ever, will your instructors ask you to include a certain number of quotations per page or even per paper. In a typical research paper, you may consult ten sources, but in the actual paper you may quote a few lines from two of the ten sources, while including more detailed information from three others. Most often, you should paraphrase or summarize source material. Quote only when you want the exact words of a source for some important reason. And keep all quotations as brief as possible.

Here are some reasons you may want to quote from your sources:

- **For support** - as an appeal to authority, to bring the voices of experts into your paper.
- **For vivid language** - because the wording of the original source is clearer and more effective than any paraphrase you could write.
- **To represent the source fairly** - when you quote accurately and directly, no one can claim that you have misrepresented the source.
- **To enrich an argument** - to interject controversy, for example, and show what's at stake in taking a position.

A good quotation must be more than a random selection from a source. It should say something significant or important enough to be quoted. Even if the idea is important, though, avoid quoting poor or unclear writing; you would be served better by paraphrasing such a passage. The best passages to quote, then, should be "quotable": both well-written and enlightening.

Use quotations sparingly; don't over-quote. If you write a five-page paper, for instance, and two entire pages are quotations, you have relied too much on your sources to convey ideas - there are only three pages of your own writing. Don't let other voices dominate your paper. Never build your paper by stringing together other people's words.

Remember: Quotations should serve as evidence or support, not as a substitute for your own ideas, arguments, or assertions.

Integrate quotations into your own writing

Make sure that you introduce all quotations so that the reader knows who is being quoted. Don't rely only on citations (parenthetical, endnotes, or footnotes) to convey this information. Don't present a quotation without commenting or elaborating on it. Your reader must understand why you have chosen a particular passage to quote, what it says that is significant, and what you want the reader to take from it. Don't assume that your reader will see the same significance you see in a quotation; point out what is important for the reader. Do not "quote and run." A valuable guideline is to give at least as much commentary on the quotation as the space the quotation takes up on the page; so, if a quotation takes up five lines or forty words, your commentary on this quotation should be roughly that long. In short, quoted material must be clearly integrated with your own text, and you should make clear its importance in your paper.

What is plagiarism?

Presenting as one's own the work of another person (for example, the words, ideas, information, data, evidence, organizing principles, or style of presentation of someone else). Plagiarism includes paraphrasing or summarizing without acknowledgment, submission of another student's work as one's own, the purchase of prepared research or completed papers or projects, and the unacknowledged use of research sources gathered by someone else. Failure to indicate accurately the extent and precise nature of one's reliance on other sources is also a form of plagiarism. Thus, the use of AI to generate ideas, arguments, or language without instructor authorization constitutes plagiarism. The student is responsible for understanding the legitimate use of sources, the appropriate ways of acknowledging his or her academic, scholarly, or creative indebtedness, and the consequences for violating the Skidmore Honor Code. The Academic Integrity Board and the Board of Review will not regard claims of ignorance, of unintentional error, and of academic or personal pressures as an adequate defense for violations of the Honor Code

As you can see, the Skidmore community regards plagiarism as academic misconduct. Stealing someone else's ideas, words, data, information, or method of argument is the literary equivalent of theft. Some kinds of plagiarism are obvious. Putting your name on your roommate's paper and submitting it for a grade is obvious and intentional plagiarism; you have stolen work and claimed it as your own. If you copy from a library source or an encyclopedia entry, you are equally guilty of stealing someone else's ideas and words. Such serious instances of intentional plagiarism are not treated lightly at Skidmore and in the academic world; like cheating on examinations, plagiarism can be punished by suspension from the College. An honest and responsible member of the academic community never plagiarizes.

However, you need not be blatantly dishonest to be guilty of plagiarism in a paper composed mostly of your own words and ideas. Imagine, for example, that you write a paper about the problems of the homeless, and in the paper you mention approximate numbers of homeless people in three major cities, New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles. Since you are a Skidmore student, your teacher knows you are not conducting census surveys or counting homeless people. If you don't indicate where these statistics come from, your teacher must reach one of two conclusions. First, you might have such contempt for the honest use of evidence that you have made up the numbers. Second, and more likely, your numbers may come from some other source - a book, a magazine, a lecture or perhaps a television broadcast - that you have failed to acknowledge through documentation.

Let's imagine one more case. Again, the words and ideas in your paper are mostly your own, but you have taken some ideas from a magazine article you recently read on the subject. Let us say you have even cited the source by giving a complete bibliographical entry at the end of your paper, although no references within your text indicate exactly where you have borrowed ideas. Your paper sparks your professor's interest, so she finds the article and reads it for herself. In reading, she finds that two paragraphs in your paper do nothing but summarize the material in this article, and you have quoted two sentences word for word without enclosing them in quotation marks. In this case, you may have tried to be honest about your source, but you are still guilty of plagiarism. First, you have summarized someone else's work without indicating it; your professor might think that these are your own ideas. Second, you have stolen words by lifting text word-for-word without quoting. Despite your best intentions, you have plagiarized - and this example also represents a serious offense.

One last example: Students sometimes discuss their work with classmates, friends, or roommates. These discussions can help you to generate ideas and to think of ways to convey those ideas clearly in your paper. In an academic community, these discussions are important and exciting. But your friend might suggest some ideas, tell you about a lecture or reading, or summarize a source that he or she has read. In that case, you should document the conversation with your friend as one of your reference sources. Otherwise, this "collaboration" may be a form of plagiarism.

Avoiding unintentional plagiarism

Unintentional plagiarism occurs for two reasons. Please keep in mind that neither is an adequate excuse for or defense against an accusation of plagiarism.

1. Ignorance. Some students claim they don't know that they have to cite sources and/or they don't know how to cite sources. At times, however, it is hard for professors to believe their students' claims of ignorance, especially when they have emphasized to their classes how important it is to document sources. Some students mistakenly believe that no internal citations are necessary as long as a source is listed at the end of a paper.

2. Carelessness. Most students know that they must document sources, and, with a little effort, they could easily do so. Nevertheless, documentation looks like a lot of extra work, so some students oversimplify or even avoid it. They may assume that "documentation doesn't matter" because a professor has not specifically demanded it or is too busy to check sources.

As we've stressed, you must take documentation seriously. Even such "unintentional" examples as these constitute not just the inadequate work of a lazy writer but actual plagiarism, and the College regards them as violations of academic integrity.

Poor note-taking skills and plagiarism

Some students plagiarize, despite the best of intentions, because their own system of taking notes, or lack of a system, fails them. How might this happen? When a student begins his research, he may take notes from a couple of sources. Not worrying about the later step of documentation, he may just note the title and author without copying the publishing information that is also essential in documentation. He may take notes indiscriminately, jotting down whatever seems interesting or useful. He may summarize a three-page argument, quote a few lines of text, paraphrase a writer's conclusions, and make a few comments indicating his own reactions to a text. Once finished with this source, he may return it to the library and pack his notes away for a time. You can see how our hypothetical student may get into trouble when he comes back to these notes a week or two later. His notes include direct quotations, paraphrases and summaries in his own words, and his own comments on the source, but he can't tell one from the other.

By taking notes more carefully, you can avoid these pitfalls and write effectively from your own notes. Just remember, while you are taking notes, what you will need later on. Whether you take notes on cards, on legal pads, or even on cocktail napkins, you will need the full publishing information for any written source, and the date, place, and affiliation for any lecture or broadcast source. When you look back at your notes, you will need to distinguish your own comments from your paraphrasing and quotation. And, for accurate reference citations in your text, you will need to know page numbers for specific items you refer to when you write.

Effective note-taking strategies

- WRITE a complete bibliography entry for each source.
- PARAPHRASE carefully, and in your own words, any material that you do not put in quotation marks.
 - i. mark with PAR
 - ii. note page number (p. 18).
- SUMMARY
 - i. mark with SUM.
 - ii. note page numbers (pp. 25-26).
- QUOTATIONS
 - i. copy anything you plan to quote word-for-word from the text exactly as it appears.
 - ii. mark all quotations with QUOTATION MARKS.
 - iii. note page numbers (pp. 236-245).
- YOUR COMMENTS
 - i. when you write down your own comments and reactions to a source, clearly indicate that these are not from the source itself.
 - ii. your comments with [brackets].

If you take notes on a laptop computer, you can easily use a notation system like this one. If you use a Windows program, you might place each source in a separate window. Whatever method you use, even if you return to your notes after two or three weeks, you will have no trouble distinguishing your own comments from summaries, paraphrases, and quotations from your sources. You will be able to write effectively about a source using your notes without fear of accidentally plagiarizing. And even if someone else has pulled your source from the library shelves, you will have everything you need to document your use of that source.

Even though internal citations appear in a text before the list of works cited, we will consider the list of cited works first because this is where you should begin in your notetaking. Your Works Cited will contain all the bibliographic information you need for references to quotations, paraphrases, and summaries.

Preparing a Works Cited List

One purpose of documentation is to allow your reader to check your sources. Perhaps he has become so interested in your subject that he wants to learn more; perhaps he mistrusts your interpretations and wants to compare them with the original source. In either case, the reader should easily be able to find your sources using the bibliographical information you provide in your list of works cited.

Bibliographies list sources related to the topic of your paper. A bibliography provides your reader with a general listing of the sources that you have used or that a reader may wish to consult in researching your topic. There are essentially two types of bibliographies:

1. Works Consulted
2. Cited (sometimes called References or Sources).

Works Consulted is essentially a bibliography; it is a list of all the sources you looked at in the course of researching your topic. Like the bibliography, Works Consulted lists all the works you consulted, whether you mentioned the sources in the text or not.

If you were writing an essay on homeless people in Chicago, all the works you consulted (articles, studies, books, statistics, charts, graphs, and interviews) would be listed in your Bibliography or Works Consulted. Let's say that a reader was interested in homelessness in Chicago; that person would consult your Bibliography or Works Consulted to find out where to find information on this issue. In contrast, Works Cited, References, or Sources at the end of your paper would tell the reader just the sources you specifically cited.

Entries must include three parts:

1. Author: last name, first name.
2. Title, appropriately punctuated.
3. Publishing information
 - Place of publication
 - Publisher
 - Date of publication
 - Page numbers for articles and short pieces from collections

The three parts are separated by periods. Note how a sample entry is arranged and punctuated:

Author. Title. Place of publication: Publisher, date.

These are the basics. It gets a little more complicated when there are editors, translators, multiple authors, anthologies, magazines, newspapers, lectures, broadcasts, and sources from the Internet to be cited. Nevertheless, the principles remain the same. On the following pages you'll find a number of examples that should serve you well for most of your work. However, if you come up with a tricky problem that is not covered in these examples, we suggest that you consult the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, 5th edition, by Joseph Gibaldi for works in American studies and English. Consult the sections in this guide on American Psychological Association format for works in

psychology, economics, and government and the section on American Chemical Society format for citing papers in chemistry. If you are uncertain as to the documentation format your professor expects, ask him or her.

Advice about Quoting and Citing

How often should you cite?

You must clearly document the source of the ideas and the words in your writing, but you don't want to clutter your papers with endless interruptions. Some students mistakenly believe that a citation must follow every sentence that refers to material from a source. In the footnote/endnote citation format, many students dutifully note each sentence in a paragraph and write page after page of *ibid.*'s. Clearly, such repetition is not needed to indicate your debt to a particular source. If a long paragraph is devoted to summarizing source material, one citation is sufficient as long as you show clearly that the material comes from the source and not from you.

When only one sentence cites a source, place the citation at the end of that sentence. By writing carefully, you can distinguish your own ideas from those that come from sources:

According to Alvin Toffler, in order to save the "nuclear family" in America, we would have to "forcibly drive women back into the kitchen" and prohibit the use of contraception (Wave 210-11). Needless to say, most women in our society - not to mention a good many men - would oppose such reactionary measures.

Our current energy supply, still mainly based as it is on fossil fuels and nuclear power, is consumable and centralized; it's a profitable commodity to sell and control. Investors don't want to promote energy sources like wind and solar power; they can't make huge profits or maintain control with such decentralized and renewable resources (Toffler, Wave 132-38).

When you clearly indicate indebtedness to a source, one citation can suffice for an entire paragraph of summary:

According to Toffler, a great many influences in the United States during the late seventies encouraged the development of various family configurations other than the nuclear family. An increasing number of women became more interested in working outside the home at the same time that economic circumstances were making a second paycheck a necessity rather than a luxury. Since the invention of the birth-control pill, women were now as sexually liberated as men, which put pressure on traditional family relationships. Many adults openly chose not to have children at all. Indeed, given these changing attitudes toward the family, if we wanted to "save" the nuclear family, Toffler argues, we would now have to turn back the clock in a number of ways: forcing women to return to being housewives and mothers, banning contraception, cutting the wages available to young families and even cutting the entire standard of living to discourage single people from trying to get by on their own (Wave 208-25).

Short quotations

Use quotation marks and incorporate quoted material within your own sentence. Short quotations, up to four typed lines of text, should be worked into the fabric of your own language. Make sure a sentence containing a quotation reads fluently and is correct grammatically. Use quotation marks to

indicate which words, phrases or passages come directly from a source, as in the following two examples:

Ernest Becker writes, "The process of socialization is characterized by one fundamental and recurring fact: the child's natural urge to move freely forward, to manipulate, experiment, and exercise his own assimilative powers is continually blocked" (58).

Note: Use a comma after an introductory phrase such as "Ernest Becker writes." Notice, also, that the parenthetical citation comes after the end quotation mark.

Ernest Becker writes that "the process of socialization is characterized by one fundamental and recurring fact: the child's natural urge to move freely forward, to manipulate, experiment, and exercise his own assimilative powers is continually blocked" (58).

Note: When the introductory phrase ends in "that" you do not use a comma before the quotation.

Often, you do not need to include a whole sentence from a source if all you want to quote is a word or phrase. Select quoted material carefully so that you control the sentence.

Socialization involves continually blocking and frustrating "the child's natural urge to move freely forward, manipulate, experiment, and exercise his own assimilative powers" (Becker 58).

Ellipses

When you alter the quoted material in any way, you need to indicate to your reader that you have done so. Use an ellipsis of three dots (...) to eliminate parts of a source you do not wish to quote. For material omitted at the end of the sentence, add a period to the three ellipsis dots. That means you'll have four dots at the end of a sentence. Ellipses should be used only in the middle and at the end of a quotation; they are not used at the beginning. Note that there is a space typed after each dot. You should take care not to distort the meaning of the original source when you use ellipses.

Because socialization involves blocking "the child's natural urge to ... exercise his own assimilative powers," Becker argues that all people grow up neurotic (58).

Square brackets

Square brackets [] indicate words that you, as writer and editor, insert into a quote to clarify it or make it grammatically correct.

The school board candidate then concluded: "Our efforts in this direction [improving graduation rates] have never appeared more promising."

sic

Place the Latin term sic ("thus") in brackets to indicate an obvious error in the original quoted source. You want your reader to know that the error came from the source and not from your own carelessness. Alternatively, you may include the correction inside the brackets:

The early edition of the Rocky Mountain Post declared Harry Truman the winner of the 1948 presidential election and declared: "Harry's buick [sic] stops again in Washington!"

or

The early edition of the Rocky Mountain Post declared Harry Truman the winner of the 1948 presidential election and declared: "Harry's buick [buck] stops again in Washington!"

Quotation within a quotation

Use single quotation marks when the source you are quoting contains a quotation within it.

According to psychiatrist Arthur Kleinman, agreement about treatment and prognosis for mental illness leads to "the view that depression, schizophrenia, and phobias are 'things' in the real world" (11).

Exception: In a block quotation, use double quotation marks if the source contains a quotation within it.

Italicizing for emphasis

Sometimes when you quote a passage, you want your reader to pay attention to a particular word or phrase. You can italicize that word or phrase when you quote, but you must indicate to your reader that you have added the italics. Here's how to do it:

As late as 1929, Pierre Janet, lecturing on mental illness, connected madness to supernatural superhuman abilities. "In the development of every great religion, both in ancient and in modern times," Janet said, "there have always been strange persons who raised the admiration of the crowd because their nature seemed to be different from *human nature*" (Janet 8, italics added). This distinction made madness both feared and envied.

Besides the addition of italics, notice how the writer broke the quotation into two parts by interrupting the quoted passage with "Janet said." These interruptions serve well to help you integrate the quoted material into your own writing. Notice, also, that the writer commented upon the italicized terms in the sentence that follows the quotation.

Longer or block quotations

Earlier in this guide, we recommended that you double-space your papers. Continue to use double-spacing when you quote a long passage but indent ten spaces from the left margin to clearly distinguish blocked quotations from your own text. (Prior editions of the MLA Style Sheet used single-spacing for blocked quotations.) The right margin does not need any adjustment. Longer or block quotations, (four or more lines of prose; three or more lines of poetry) usually follow an introductory sentence ending with a colon. This placement on the page identifies the passage as a quotation; therefore, you do not need quotation marks at the beginning and end of the quotation. Since block quotations usually are not part of your own sentence, place the parenthetical citation at the end of the passage, two spaces after the final period. However, when a block quotation is part of your own sentence, place the period after the parenthetical reference, as with a short quotation.

Since block quotations usually are not part of your own sentence, place the parenthetical citation at the end of the passage, two spaces after the final period. However, when a block quotation is part of your own sentence, place the period after the parenthetical reference, as with a short quotation.

Brown cites China as the one country that has tried to deal directly with its own staggering population problem:

While most countries now officially encourage family planning, China is the first to undertake national birth planning. Each year, Beijing establishes a national birth quota as an integral part of overall economic planning.... These quotas are then translated into birth permits, made on the basis of the couple's age and their current number of children. A newly married couple in their late twenties would be high on the eligibility list while a couple in their mid-twenties with a newborn infant might be encouraged to wait a few years before having another child. (158)

Using long quotations effectively

All quotations must be integrated into your paper, whether they are a few words or many lines. A good rule is that you should have at least as much of your own explanation or analysis of a quotation as there is quotation. If a quotation occupies ten lines, you should have at least ten lines of commentary about the quotation. Don't quote and run. In the following example, notice how the sentences surrounding the quotation prepare for it and comment upon it, leading the reader to see its significance. In this example, the quoted passage begins as a new paragraph, so paragraphing is indicated by indenting within the blocked quotation.

Becker sees evolution as progressing toward a human mind with greater freedom than is found in the lower orders:

The development of mind, then, involves a progressive freedom from reactivity. The reactive process which is inherent in the organism not only gradually arrives at freedom from the intrinsic properties of things but also proceeds from there to assign its own stimulus meanings. Mind culminates in the organism's ability to choose what it will react to. White calls this a "traffic in nonsensory meanings." Nature provided all of life with water, but only man could create the symbol H₂O which gave him some command over water, and the word "holy" which gave water special powers that even nature could not give. (7)

As Becker implies, then, only humans are symbol-bearing. Symbols represent humans' ability to react selectively to those elements in the environment that connect humans communally. Our communities manipulate such symbols and take command of them.

-LS 1 Student (Class of 1992, name withheld by request.)

Remember: Quotations do not speak for themselves. You need to comment upon them and interpret them for your reader.

Dialogue

Direct discourse or dialogue should always be enclosed in quotation marks. In dialogue, a change in speaker is usually indicated by a new paragraph.

"And suppose his enterprise went wrong?" her husband suggested.

"It won't go wrong. Hasn't he made a success of his syndicate?"

"He says so - yes."

"Very well; then it stands to reason that he'll succeed in this too. He wouldn't undertake it if he didn't know it would succeed; he must have capital." (Howells, 18)

Poetry

If you are quoting more than three lines of poetry, quote them line by line as they appear in the poem, indenting as you would a block quotation. Indicate the line numbers in parentheses after the final punctuation mark.

In "Snake," Emily Dickinson describes her subject by the effect of its movement:

The grass divides as with a comb,
A spotted shaft is seen;
And then it closes at your feet
And opens further on. (5-8)

If you are quoting three lines or fewer, integrate the quotations into your own sentence, using a slash (/) to indicate line breaks. Indicate line numbers at the end of the quotation.

In "Snake," Emily Dickinson describes her subject by the effect of its movement: "The grass divides as with a comb,/ A spotted shaft is seen" (5-6).