Recycling Policy and Resource Document

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Recycling Policy

As part of the University’s policy on academic integrity, it is expected that students will not submit an assignment that is an exact copy of work previously submitted in another course at any institution. The University understands that work within a discipline is interconnected and expects students, when writing about similar topics, to enhance and refine the content of an assignment as they progress through their program of study. It is not acceptable to resubmit the exact same copy of work previously submitted without enhancing or refining the concepts contained in the assignment. Submitting an exact copy of work or any portion of work previously submitted in another course may adversely affect one’s grade and/or be considered a violation of the Student Community Standard of Integrity.

Acts of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- Copying text from printed materials, which include books, magazines, encyclopedias, newspapers, online sources, etc., without proper citation;
- The modification of text with the intent of changing phrases, changing words, or interspacing the student's work into the plagiarized work;
- "Copy and paste" plagiarism, which involves copying and pasting materials from Internet sources and presenting them as one's original work;
- The use of another student's work, even if the student has the permission of the other student. The use of another's work constitutes an act of collusion, which constitutes an act of plagiarism;
- The use of materials purchased from the Internet or elsewhere;
- Recycling a previously-submitted assignment for a current course, but representing the assignment as original work; or
- Paraphrasing or summarizing another's work without giving appropriate credit.

The following exceptions to variations on recycling are allowed by Ashford:

- If a student wishes to repurpose work from a past course for a current course (for example, using work from PSY 202 in PSY 301), that student may do so only if all of the following criteria are satisfied:
  - Instructor permission is granted. Not all instructors grant this permission.
  - The student emails the current instructor a copy of the originally submitted student work that they wish to repurpose prior to submitting an assignment that contains the recycled material. This submission includes the start date of the course where the material was originally used. The instructor may then provide written approval of the re-submission.
The reused material is properly attributed in terms of “self-citing” in the submitted document.

The student substantially enhances and refines what was submitted previously.

- A student may resubmit, without penalty, classwork from a previous unsuccessful attempt at a course in a second or subsequent attempt at the same course if University credit has not previously been earned in the course. An unsuccessful attempt is defined as failing the course, earning a grade of W or N/A, failing to meet the grade necessary to satisfy a general education competency, or failing to meet the grade for the course required by your degree program. However:

The student must inform the current course instructor of this reuse of content prior to submission of the reused material.
Recycling FAQ

Q: What is recycling?
A: Recycling occurs when writers present previously written work as new work.

Q: Can I reuse previously-written papers at Ashford University if I am retaking the same class?
A: Students are allowed to resubmit work under certain conditions of the Ashford Recycling Policy. This process starts by communicating with the current course instructor. See the Recycling Policy definition on Page 2 of this resource for more detailed information.

Q: Do I need permission to reuse a paper or portions of a paper?
A: Yes. A student must obtain permission from his/her current instructor if that student intends to resubmit work previously submitted in a different course. Permission is not automatically granted. If a student is retaking a course due to a previous unsuccessful attempt, the student must inform the current instructor of this prior to reusing any work. (Please see examples on Page 5.)

Q: How does a student obtain permission to resubmit work in a current class?
A: A student must communicate with his/her current instructor prior to resubmitting any previously-submitted work. (Please see the sample emails on Page 8.)

Q: What if I am retaking a class I failed or did not complete? Can I resubmit the work from that course in my new course?
A: A student may resubmit work from a previously unsuccessful attempt at a course in a subsequent retake of the course. A student must inform their current instructor of this intent prior to resubmitting work and is encouraged to use this communication to develop a plan for success in the current course.

Q: If a student obtains permission to repurpose or revise work, how does he/she self-cite?
A: Follow this model for proper self-citing practices in repurposed or revised work.
Examples of Recycling

The following guidance is meant to support the successful implementation of Ashford’s policy on academic dishonesty with regard to the recycling of previously submitted assignments by students.

Scenario #1: Student is taking a course for the first time, and wishes to recycle work from a different course.

Example: Student is taking PSY 301 and wishes to resubmit work from their PSY 202 course.

Student Responsibility—Student must satisfy all of the following criteria:

- Must obtain written permission from the current instructor before submitting any repurposed or revised work. (See sample email on Page 8.)
- Must email the current instructor a copy of the originally submitted work prior to submission in current class.
- Repurposed or revised work must be properly attributed to the student in the body of the submitted document. (See citation information on Page 10.)
- Student must then substantially enhance and refine what was written previously.

Instructor Responsibility—Instructor decides whether or not to grant permission.

If permission is granted:

- Reply to student stating that he/she is allowed to use previous work if substantial revision enhancements are evident. It is recommended that the response is specific on what information can be reused, which assignment in the current course can include this repurposed material, and expectations for substantial enhancement and refinement. (See sample email on Page 8.)
- If the student does not follow the instructor’s expectations, the instructor can grade the assignment at their discretion, up to and including a zero for the assignment. The instructor may also file an Incident Report of Academic Dishonesty (IROAD) with the University, citing the student for recycling.

If permission is not granted:

- Reply to student stating that he/she is not allowed to reuse previously-submitted material on a specific assignment. (See sample email on Page 8.)
• If the student recycles material without permission, the instructor can grade the assignment at their discretion, up to and including a zero for the assignment. The instructor may also file an Incident Report of Academic Dishonesty (IROAD) with the University, citing the student for recycling.

**Scenario #2:** Student is retaking a course due to a previous unsuccessful attempt in the same course.

An unsuccessful attempt is defined as failing the course, earning a grade of W or N/A, failing to meet the grade necessary to satisfy a general education competency, or failing to meet the grade for the course required by the degree program.

*Example #1:* Student is retaking BUS 300 and would like to reuse work after earning a grade of F in the first attempt at BUS 300.

*Example #2:* Student is retaking ENG 121 and would like to reuse work after earning a grade of D- in the first attempt at ENG 121. The student needs a final grade of C- to be considered “successful”.

*Example #3:* A student earns a B+ in a course but is not satisfied with the grade. The student wishes to retake the course. The student must present new and original work. The student is not allowed to reuse work from the first attempt at the course as the student was successful in that attempt.

**Student Responsibility**—Student must satisfy the following criteria:

Must inform the current instructor via email before recycling the assignment. (See sample email on Page 9.) (Through this communication, the student is encouraged to develop a plan for success with the current course instructor.)

**Instructor Responsibility**—Instructor should take the following steps:

If the student informs the instructor in writing of the previous attempt at the course:

• Reply to the student’s email acknowledging the acceptable reuse of work from a previous attempt at the same course. (See sample email on Page 9.)
• Instructor can contact his or her Faculty Support and Development Associate to confirm the details of the student’s email.
• Grade the assignment based on its merit, as if it was being graded for the first time.
If the student fails to inform the instructor in writing of the previous attempt of the course prior to submission:

- The instructor can grade the assignment at their discretion, up to and including a zero for the assignment. An IROAD would not be appropriate in this case.
Sample Emails

Scenario #1: Student is taking ENG 121 and would like to recycle material from PHI 103:

Student email to Course B instructor:

(Instructor name),

My name is _____________ and I am a student in your _____ (example: ENG 121) class which started on _______ (example: 10/13/15). I am writing to ask your permission to reuse material in my ________ (example: Week 2 Written Assignment) from my _____________ (example: Week 5 Assignment in the 11/11/14 start of PHI 103). I have attached a copy of the previously submitted assignment and I understand that I must substantially enhance and refine the content. I have highlighted the portion of the assignment I wish to repurpose in my completion of this current assignment. I recognize that I cannot use this information without formal written approval by you prior to submission.

My purpose in recycling this material is ___________________ (explain why you feel this previously-submitted material is needed to complete the assignment).

Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to your response.

Instructor response to student--approves:

(Student name),

Thank you for contacting me with your request. I have reviewed the assignment you previously submitted and I see the similarity between the requirements for that assignment and ________ (current assignment name). I will grant you permission to reuse some of your previously submitted paper, but be advised that _________ (state specific expectations regarding what will be allowed).

Please keep in mind that you must properly attribute the previous work according to APA standards. Further information related to citing recycled work can be found in the Ashford Writing Center. Also be aware that this permission applies only to _________ (assignment name).

If you have further questions related to recycling in this specific assignment, please do ask. I appreciate the proactive communication.

Instructor response to student—does not approve:
Thank you for contacting me with your request. However, I would like for you to write original work for _________ (example: Week 2 Assignment).

(Give further explanation as necessary)

Scenario #2: Student retaking ENG 121 because of an unsuccessful previous attempt at the same course:

Student email to instructor:

(Instructor name),

My name is _____________ and I am a student in your ______ (example: ENG 121) class which started on ____________ (example: 10/13/15). I am writing to let you know that I am retaking this course because I did not successfully complete the previous attempt which started on ____________ (example: 09/08/15). I will be reusing some of the same work I submitted previously, which is permitted under the Ashford Recycling Policy.

Thank you for taking this into account.

Instructor response to student:

(Student name),

Thank you for informing me of your intent to reuse material from a previous unsuccessful attempt at the same course. There will be no penalties associated with recycling and your work will be graded on its merits. Let me know if there is anything I can do to assist you in being successful this time.
Self-Citation of Reused Material

Students are expected to properly attribute their previous work when submitting a document containing recycled material*.

- When referring to previously-submitted course papers, essays, discussion posts, or journal logs, introduce this information in your text and include an in-text citation.

**Model:** In my previous work in COURSE NAME, I concluded that “quoted material” [or paraphrased material] (assignment type, Month Day, Year).

**Example:** In my previous paper for English 122, I wrote that “obesity rates among children are higher in the American South than the Pacific Northwest” (final paper, April 3, 2014).

*Do not include an entry in your References list, as this work is non-archived and unpublished. Referencing your previous work would not count as one of the references required in the assignment description.

Students retaking a course are not required to cite work from their previous attempt at the same course.