Why does this matter?

• What you don’t know can hurt you
• Navy IG report
• New, tougher Honor Code
• Writing Center helps you maximize your gains
• I can help you minimize your losses
• Need to understand fog and friction of academic work
Academic integrity

• A broad category including fairness, honesty and civility
  – NPS Honor Code describes several types of dishonest behavior

• Examples:
  – Using unauthorized aids in exams
  – Copying from other students
  – Unauthorized cooperation on assignments
  – Using or passing on previous exams when prohibited
Other integrity issues

• Honest data selection and presentation
• Accurate portrayal of others’ ideas
• Don’t overstate your claims
  – Watch out for absolutes (always, never, “throughout history…”)
  – Do use qualifiers (usually, appears to, seems to)
• Note strengths and weaknesses of alternatives
  – Don’t claim yours is the only answer
Plagiarism

• Improper use of someone else’s work
• Failure to give credit for words or ideas that belong to someone else

• Is there a contradiction here?
  – On one hand, we want you to have your own ideas, make your own contribution
  – But you also need to refer to existing literature
  – And don’t just fill up your paper with quotes, and get your citations right!
Academic integrity

When does it become plagiarism?

• **Obvious**: using someone else’s words without attribution
  – This is the biggest problem
• **More subtle**: using another person’s idea or hypothesis without giving them credit
• **Really subtle**: paraphrasing too closely, so that it’s really a quote
  – Can be a gray area
Is this plagiarism?

- Doris Kearns Goodwin, *The Fitzgeralds and the Kennedys*
"Naval pilot training held coldly to the premise that it was best to remove those who couldn't conquer the tensions of flying early, before too much time and money had been wasted on them." (In Goodwin's book)

"Naval pilot training held coldly to the premise that it was better to remove the accident-prone early, before too much time and money had been wasted on him." (Original source, not cited)
When is it NOT plagiarism?

• You don’t have to document something that is:
  • A generally accepted fact (such as available in common reference sources)
    – Famous dates, birthday of a prominent person, etc.
  • Common knowledge in your field
    – This can be a gray area
    – Good to talk with your faculty
Turnitin

• Plagiarism detection software
• Compares your paper with content on the Internet, commercial web sites, newspapers, etc.
• Instructor receives a report highlighting matches
• Used by some faculty at NPS
How can you avoid plagiarism?

• Be careful taking notes—is it a quote?
  – If it’s your idea, make it clear (I use an arrow to show my own thinking)

• When paraphrasing, be sure to put it in your own words (don’t just change one or two words)

• Watch out as you make different drafts
  – Keep new versions (don’t just update the file)

• Be careful when copying from the web

• Practice citing correctly whenever you can
Common questions

• How much help is too much?
  – Can you get advice from a friend or spouse?
  – Of course! Another set of eyes always helps
  – Exception: take home exams or “closed book” work

• What about double submissions?
  – Can’t use same material for two classes
  – Unless approved by both professors
  – For a thesis, this is often approved

• How about op-eds or point papers?
Academic integrity

Rules of thumb

• Exams—take home as well as in class—are your own work, no collaboration, unless you’re told otherwise

• Don’t use same material for two courses without permission

• If you use more than three consecutive words from someone else’s work, quote it directly or put it in your own words
Help is available

• Writing Center website has resources, including videos
• Writing Center workshops
  – *Nailing your Citations*, early May
  – *How to Paraphrase and Use Quotes Effectively*, this summer
• Writing Center Coaches
• If in doubt?
  – Talk to your professor; ask for an extension
Questions? Comments?
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