

**SCHOOL OF ENGLISH, DRAMA AND FILM,
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE DUBLIN
POLICY ON PLAGIARISM:
Information for Students**

(Updated June 2013)

Plagiarism is academic theft and is taken very seriously. It is a breach of UCD college discipline as outlined in Section 6.2 of the Student Code and the penalties for it are severe. Penalty marks will be deducted from essay grades for plagiarism and penalties may range as far as exclusion from the programme. If you are ever unsure about what plagiarism is, please ask a member of the teaching staff to clarify it before you submit your work.

General Definition of Plagiarism:

“The action or practice of taking someone else’s work, idea, etc., and passing it off as one’s own; literary theft.” (*Oxford English Dictionary*)

Details:

- Plagiarism refers to the unacknowledged use of someone else’s ideas. By not acknowledging your source(s), you pass it off as your own.
- Sources of material include all printed and electronic publications or unpublished materials, including theses and essays, written by others—this, of course, includes essays written by a fellow student(s).
- There are no doubts about plagiarism: if you take an idea from someone or somewhere else, you must acknowledge it by giving an accurate and full account of your source(s); otherwise you have plagiarized your source(s).
- When you submit an essay or thesis to the School of English, Drama, and Film, you are required to sign a coversheet which declares the work to be your own (coversheets are available from the School’s office).
- The School may at any time conduct an oral examination to verify the sources of written work submitted.
- A School committee will interview students whose work contains evidence of plagiarism.

AVOIDING PLAGIARISM

Listing sources is a simple exercise and for directions on how to do this, you should consult the School’s “MLA Style Sheet – A Brief Introduction”, along with the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 7th ed. The *MLA Handbook* offers an efficient and accurate way of presenting material evidence in a scholarly essay. It is an essential book for students of English and you should own a copy.

SPECIFIC EXAMPLES OF PLAGIARISM

In preparing an essay on Irish Drama, you might note the following quotation and publication information:

Even before the political violence erupted in Northern Ireland in 1969, Friel's plays centered on an attachment to the local, to the small community, to the marginalized and border regions as opposed to the metropolitan center; it is one of the important ways in which he has come to be recognized as a postcolonial writer. His plays dramatise the poetics of the tribe, and they do so most often through an obsessive focus on its microcosm, the family. (Anthony Roche, *The Cambridge Companion to Brian Friel*, Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2006, 2)

Plagiarism is evident if you argue as follows:

EXAMPLE 1:

My point is that Friel's plays centered on an attachment to the local.

NO SOURCE LISTED—THIS IS PLAGIARIZED BECAUSE YOU HAVE QUOTED FROM PROFESSOR ROCHE'S ESSAY, BUT HAVE NOT ACKNOWLEDGED IT.

EXAMPLE 2:

It is fair to say that even before the political violence erupted in Northern Ireland, Friel's plays centred on an attachment to the local and to the marginalized and border regions more than the cities. In many ways Friel is interested in tribes and families.

THIS IS PLAGIARIZED EVEN THOUGH YOU HAVE DELETED SOME OF THE QUOTATION AND ADDED SOME OF YOUR OWN WORDS. YOU HAVE NOT ACKNOWLEDGED YOUR USE OF PROFESSOR ROCHE'S WORK.

EXAMPLE 3:

Anthony Roche argues: "It is fair to say that even before the political violence erupted in Northern Ireland in 1969, Friel's plays centered on an attachment to the local" (2).

In this context, it is evident that Friel was a writer committed to issues of family and tribe, to the rural more than the urban, to borders more than centres.

IN THIS EXAMPLE, SOME OF THE QUOTATION IS CITED. HOWEVER, IN THE SECOND SENTENCE, IDEAS ARE CLEARLY DRAWN FROM PROFESSOR ROCHE'S ESSAY AND, WITHOUT LISTING THE SOURCE, THIS IS PLAGIARIZED.

EXAMPLE 4:

Anthony Roche argues: "It is fair to say that even before the political violence erupted in Northern Ireland in 1969, Friel's plays centered on an attachment to the local" (2).

This is an important point in reading Friel. His plays consistently address small-town Ireland. Roche extends this reading by emphasising the importance of the "tribe" and the "family" (2). Representations of the family will be the focus of my study.

THIS IS NOT PLAGIARIZED BECAUSE YOU HAVE GIVEN CLEAR EVIDENCE OF YOUR USE OF PROFESSOR ROCHE'S ESSAY (THE NUMBER 2, LISTED TWICE, INDICATES THE RELEVANT PAGE FROM HIS BOOK). YOUR WORK IS COMPLETED IN THIS CASE WHEN YOU ADD THE PUBLICATION DETAILS IN YOUR "WORKS CITED" SECTION. THE EXAMPLE HERE REQUIRES:

Roche, Anthony. "Introduction." *The Cambridge Companion to Brian Friel*, Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2006: 1-17.

EXAMPLE 5:

As my essay examines the role of women in Brian Friel's work, Anthony Roche's analysis of the plays is an important one for my argument. In general terms, he emphasises that the local and the family are obsessively featured in Friel's work (2). I seek to investigate that obsessive interest, but with a focus on the women in the families.

THIS IS NOT PLAGIARIZED BECAUSE YOU HAVE GIVEN CLEAR EVIDENCE OF YOUR USE OF PROFESSOR ROCHE'S ESSAY EVEN THOUGH YOU HAVE NOT USED QUOTATION MARKS (THE NUMBER 2 INDICATES THE RELEVANT PAGE FROM HIS BOOK). YOUR WORK IS COMPLETED IN THIS CASE WHEN YOU ADD THE PUBLICATION DETAILS IN YOUR "WORKS CITED" SECTION. THE EXAMPLE HERE REQUIRES:

Roche, Anthony. "Introduction." *The Cambridge Companion to Brian Friel*, Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2006: 1-17.

SEE ALSO: "PLAGIARISM" ON THE UCD LIBRARY WEBSITE:

http://www.ucd.ie/library/students/information_skills/plagiari.html;

"PLAGIARISM." *MLA ONLINE*. 28 MARCH 2009

<http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/plagiarism.html>.

POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES:

- ESSAYS IN WHICH ALL OR SOME MATERIAL HAS BEEN PLAGIARIZED WILL BE SENT BY THE MODULE CO-ORDINATOR TO A COMMITTEE WHICH OVERSEES SUCH CASES
- THE COMMITTEE WILL REQUEST A MEETING WITH THE STUDENT
- THE COMMITTEE WILL CONFIRM THE JUDGEMENT IF PLAGIARISM IS EVIDENT. ESSAYS IN WHICH ALL OR SOME MATERIAL HAS BEEN PLAGIARIZED MAY BE GIVEN A FAIL GRADE
- THE COMMITTEE WILL ALSO DECIDE IF FURTHER ACTION IS NECESSARY

Directive against Self-Plagiarism

July 2012

Warning to students that they must avoid copying substantial elements of their own work by repeating material from one piece of assessment to another

In all major individual pieces of written assessment presented for a module in English, Drama or Film, a candidate may not repeat material that he or she has already submitted for assessment as a substantial component of that or any other module. Plagiarizing any work which has been submitted for assessment at undergraduate level for the BA is not permissible.

(By 'substantial', the School means a single piece of written work that is worth more than 10% of the final module grade; this does not usually include short writing exercises, texts of in-class presentations, etc, which count towards a Continuous Assessment grade)

This directive is against clear duplication in individual exam answers, essays or other major pieces of coursework, of material that has been already presented elsewhere for assessment. In other words, a student cannot re-present what is effectively the same argument on the same material, such that it is obvious that two sets of marks are being sought for the same substantial piece of work.

As a general principle, students are encouraged to avoid working within the same area twice, as doing so may lead to the type of repetition here prohibited.

The nature of this problematic repetition needs to be understood: this directive does not preclude students from addressing the same genre, background information, critical perspective or even primary material which s/he may have treated in a substantial piece of assessment completed earlier for the same or another course. Rather, it indicates that the student should take this material in a clearly different direction, the second time s/he addresses it for assessment purposes. For example, a feminist theoretical perspective, or a certain piece of historical background, or information on genre conventions, may be pertinent to a wide range of potential exam and essay questions: overlap between two of these answers by the same student, is perfectly acceptable as long as this overlap relates to how s/he sets up the terms of their answer, or contextualizes aspects of it, etc; overlap is not acceptable, however, where the same argument on the same material is replicated in a substantive section of the answer in both pieces of assessment.

The key advice for students is as follows: it is best if the student engages with a fresh topic in each piece of major assessment. However, if the student does treat the same material which s/he has already handled on a previous occasion, s/he must take this material in a different direction than they did in that earlier assessment.

