

Plagiarism - Repeat Offence

My story begins in the summer of 2007 when I plagiarized a paragraph of my final exam. I do not know why I did it and still do not understand my actions to this day. From this experience I learned a lot and have been able to grow from my mistakes and hope that others will learn from it.

At this time in my university career I had not written a paper in MLA format before. Although this is not a valid excuse to plagiarize work, I do feel that, after this happened, I was proactive and learned a valuable lesson from this time in my life. After receiving an email from my professor explaining that he had caught me plagiarizing my paper, I went to get help from the Academic Writing Centre. I also went to the drop-in clinic at Leddy Library several times for information about MLA formatting and APA formatting. I purchased an MLA book for future referencing. I used the internet to find more information about referencing and for examples of MLA style. I do realize that I should have looked and found MLA information *prior* to handing in my exam to Turnitin. I feel really ashamed and embarrassed for my stupidity in this particular situation because I wrote many papers before this and used Turnitin to hand in all papers to the University. I feel that I did learn a lot from this experience about the University, its bylaws, plagiarism, proper and what to do when I am unsure about a particular subject. I feel that I did do the best that I possible could in getting help and ensuring that it would never happen again.

In summer 2008 I was once again notified that I plagiarized - this time on a discussion posting. That summer I had to attend several funerals within a month's time, which meant I was out of town a lot to be with my family and friends. . At one point I was out of town for a two weeks, so I emailed a friend with my discussion posting in a Word file and asked her to post it for me. When I got home I received an email from my professor about that discussion posting. I was absolutely dumbfounded about the email and called my friend immediately to ask what had happened. At this time my friend was unsure of what had happened and could not believe it. I never intended for this to arise again, especially after receiving emails about the same situation the previous summer. I did use the appropriate formatting for the discussion posting, but somehow my reference got lost during the uploading of the posting. From this particular experience I learned to have clear open communication with professors and not to rely on others to submit University work on my behalf. This was a very hard yet **valuable lesson about honesty**, trusting others, and most important, communication in all areas.

I do realize that the events that have happened are serious and there are always consequences when it comes to breaking a university bylaw. What happened was neither appropriate nor **responsible behaviour on the part of a university student**. Since then, I have tried to learn from my mistakes to the best of my ability. Since I do feel like I have learned many valuable lessons since the summer 2007 about the university, plagiarism, referencing, and asking for assistance when needed.

I am currently a fourth year nursing student who is very involved in campus life. I am a member of the Nursing Society, I volunteer for a number of on-campus activities, and I help organize many events. I really wanted to be able to graduate with my class and it was **devastating for me** to think that I was going to be suspended for a semester from the University of Windsor.

On the whole, I feel that I have learned many valuable life lessons throughout this whole experience. I have regrets about past actions and I have thought of how I might be able to help other students in the future. I ask you in reading this to please think about your future. Do not put yourself through what I did. It is **not worth the hassle or the stress**. I hope that someone is able to **learn from my mistakes** and take it forward and pass it on to other students. One last thing that I would like to mention is that I took the class two different times and both times I failed because plagiarism was a factor. This just goes to show that **plagiarism does not work and will not benefit you in the end**, not to mention you do not gain the satisfaction of earning your degree honestly and being proud of what you accomplish in your university career.

- Fourth-year Nursing Student
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