

SOUTHWESTERN LAW SCHOOL

L O S A N G E L E S

Policy Statement on Student Academic Work-Product Originality

Administrative policy approved July 22, 2022. Effective immediately.

Revision history: N/A.

Related policies: Student Honor Code.

Scheduled Review Date: June 2023 (Director of Legal Analysis, Writing, and Skills; Dean of Students Office)

- A. Students in law school are expected to learn the law, to learn the tools of the practice of law, and to prepare for the demands of the legal profession. It is critical for students to establish habits that will carry them forward as professionals. As measures of learning and preparation, a law student's academic work-products must be their own.
 1. Plagiarism is the submission or presentation of any work, in any form, that is not a student's own, without acknowledgment of the source. A student must not appropriate ideas, facts or language from the work of another. All student work must be original. Any sources used must be fully cited. Plagiarism is a serious Honor Code violation that may result in expulsion; even lesser punishments may result in career-limiting consequences after graduation.
 2. LAWS Collaboration Policy

All LAWS assignments must be "original works of authorship." In order to clarify when a work is no longer "original," this policy sets forth specific examples of inappropriate conduct. It is impossible, however, to anticipate and list every possible example of inappropriate conduct. Therefore, the absence of a particular act from this document does not prevent appropriate discipline under the Honor Code.

A violation of this policy may result in an "F" on the affected LAWS assignment, and an "F" in the course. Faculty may refer violations of this policy to the Honor Code Committee as misconduct under Southwestern's Student Honor Code.

This policy does not override or revise in any way the school's plagiarism policy as set forth above and as noted in the Student Honor Code.

- i. Collaboration with other LAWS students:
 - a. You can discuss thoughts and ideas with other students currently enrolled in the LAWS course. You cannot, however, share your notes (other than class notes), case lists, printouts, charts, drafts or any other material that contains your thoughts on the problem except as expressly permitted by your professor. Reading your written materials out loud to another student counts as sharing.
- ii. Collaboration with anyone other than a LAWS student:
 - a. We encourage you to seek assistance from your LAWS professor and their teaching assistant, the research faculty, and the Writing Center staff. They will know how to give you appropriate assistance.
 - b. You may not seek any assistance outside of these sources. For example, you may not seek assistance from family members, acquaintances, mentors, or tutors regardless of whether the individual is an attorney. Assistance of any kind is prohibited including not only substantive guidance but also help with grammar and citation.
- iii. Use of court briefs prepared by attorneys:
 - a. You can review court briefs that have been written on your issue in real cases. Keep in mind, however, that not all briefs prepared by attorneys are well-written, and the availability of briefs online is no indication of their quality.
 - b. Use of someone else's words, thoughts, and ideas:
 - c. You must never copy another's words without putting them in quotation marks and citing the source.
 - d. You must never paraphrase someone else's words without citing the source.
 - e. You must never use someone else's idea without citing the source.