APPENDIX II

HOW TO AVOID PLAGIARISM

While your writing is expected to be your own, it is permissible to borrow from other writers so long as the borrowings are duly acknowledged. Plagiarism, the dishonest omission of such acknowledgment, makes another person's fact, idea, opinion, line of argument, or wording appear to be yours. Plagiarism gravely violates the academic integrity on which true education depends, and it shatters the mutual trust essential between a student and teacher.

This guide is designed to prevent even an innocent misunderstanding of the College-wide standards of academic honesty. Each student bears responsibility for knowing and abiding by them. Penalties for plagiarism are outlined elsewhere in the Student Handbook.

Various uses of a source are possible: you may quote a passage (use its exact words), paraphrase it (put it into your own words), summarize it, or adopt its line of argument. Whatever the use—with or without quotation—each borrowing must be documented. (Common knowledge need not be documented, however.) Common knowledge can be defined as facts known by most readers, e.g., the winner of the 2000 U.S. presidential election or facts available in a wide variety of sources, e.g., the date of the bombing of Pearl Harbor. (If a source provides any interpretation of a fact, it must be cited.)

Documentation. While a footnote (or endnote) is the most familiar acceptable form, many fields now prefer parenthetical citation supported by a bibliography. Proper documentation must show a book's author, title, and date of publication, as well as—under most systems of documentation—its city of publication and publisher and the page(s) where the borrowed material occurs. For a periodical article, most systems of documentation call for indicating the article author, article title, periodical title, volume number, year of publication, and the page(s) containing the borrowed matter. Intentionally false documentation is, of course, dishonest.

If you have any doubt about whether documentation is needed, consult your instructor before handing in your paper, if possible. Otherwise, put in the documentation. Your instructor will let you know if it was unnecessary.

Any quotation—even one or two words, if distinctive—must be identified as a quotation. Ordinarily this is done by using quotation marks. A longer quotation, however—more than four lines of prose or two of verse—is best set off as a block quotation, indented. (With block quotations, quotation marks are omitted as redundant.) Quotations must be reproduced with letter-perfect accuracy, any additions or changes being carefully placed within brackets [like this] and any deleted matter being replaced by an ellipsis (three spaced dots).

Examples. Some of the following examples of quotation and paraphrase are acceptable, some not. Study them carefully. Each example, except the last one, is properly documented according to the Modern Language Association style. Note that the bibliography ("Works Cited") properly lists the source.

   In "The Stationary Tourist," Paul Fussell contends that tourism "began more than a century ago, in England, [when] the unwholesomeness of England's great soot-caked cities made any place abroad... appear
almost mystically salubrious, especially in an age of rampant tuberculosis” (233-34).

2. Quotation without quotation marks.
   Unacceptable even though documented.
   The English considered foreign travel almost mystically salubrious, according to Fussell (234).

3. Partial paraphrase, documented, with the brief quotation properly identified. Acceptable.
   The English considered foreign travel “almost mystically salubrious,” according to Fussell (234).

4. Half-baked paraphrase: the original with a few words changed around. Unacceptable even though documented.
   Tourism started more than a century ago in England. The great soot-caked cities were so unwholesome that any place abroad seemed almost mystically healthful by comparison (233-34).

   Paul Fussell believes tourism grew out of nineteenth-century urban squalor: cities became so dirty and unhealthy that people took vacations to escape (233-34).

   Tourism grew out of nineteenth-century urban squalor: cities became so dirty and unhealthy that people took vacations abroad to escape.

WORKS CITED
The Random House Reader.
Ed. Frederick Crews. New York:
Random House, 1981. 233-44.