SELF–CITATION POLICY RESOURCE

In your degree program at Purdue Global, you are often asked to write about the same topic or theme multiple times, whether in discussion posts, short assignments, or longer research papers. Each time you address the same topic, your learning and understanding of it is expected to grow and deepen. Since an overlap exists when writing about the same subject, the potential also exists to build upon those foundational ideas. Therefore, using small, selected portions of writing you've done for a previous class or assignment is permitted if you use appropriate self-citation.

Definitions

Self-Citation: Authors use and appropriately give credit to (cite) their own previous research and ideas in a new paper or work in order to build on previous ideas.

Plagiarism: Purdue Global (2020) defines plagiarism as "using another's words, ideas, results, or images without giving appropriate credit to that person, therefore, giving the impression it is your own work" (para. 5).

Multiple Submissions: A form of self-plagiarism, Purdue Global (2020) defines submitting "substantial portions of the same academic work for credit more than once without authorization from the instructor as described in the coursework resubmission policy (p.2)" as a violation of the Code of Student Conduct (para. 12). Please listen to the [Self-Plagiarism](#) podcast for additional information.

When to Use Self-Citation

There may be times when it is okay to cite yourself in your coursework. Self-Citation is done for the following specific reasons:

- If you have conducted original research and you want to cite portions of previous results and findings, and

- If you want to build on thoughts and ideas that you developed in a previous paper.

Do not use self-citation to do any of the following:

- to save time when writing a new paper for a new assignment,

- to reuse a paper you wrote for a previous class,

- to cite sources you quoted or paraphrased in other papers, or

- to piece together a new paper by cutting and pasting multiple parts of multiple papers instead of writing an original paper.

How to Cite Yourself

Paper

When writing a paper, if you quote or otherwise refer to your previous work, cite yourself as the author and the work as an unpublished paper as shown in the *Publication of the American Psychological Association* (Jlh ed.). For example, if Julie Foo wanted to cite a paper she wrote for a previous course, her in-text citation might look like this:

Foo (2013) posited that writing outdoors captures a specific type of writing: "Writing in the out-of-doors creates moments which capture writing and thinking during that experience" (p. 4).

The reference list citation looks like this:

Foo, J. (2013). *My time outdoors: A study in writing and rhetoric* [Unpublished manuscript]. Department of Composition, Purdue Global University.

Discussion Board

If you are quoting a Discussion Board post you wrote in a classroom or course, the materials cited are considered personal communication because the content is not retrievable by anyone outside the course. Personal communications are only cited inside the text of the document and are not located on the reference list.

The in-text citation by a student named Jay Smith who is citing himself should look like this:

In a recent discussion board post in CM 220, J. Smith (personal communication, July 28, 2019) argued "Heroes are people who exceed your expectations."

There are no reference list citations for personal communications.

FAQ

Q: Can I cite my previous paper?

A: There are times when you can do a self-citation and cite small, select portions of your own previous writing. You only want to do this if there is an original idea, a conclusion, or results that you want to share and build upon in a new assignment.

Q: When should I cite myself?

A: When you want to reference an original idea, conclusion, or finding from your previous work or when you want to build on ideas you developed in a previous work.

Q: Can I resubmit a paper or assignment from my previous class?

A: No. Resubmitting a paper or assignment from a previous class without

permission and without significant revision is considered dishonest and violates the Purdue University Global Code of Student Conduct and Coursework Resubmission Policy . For more details, please refer to the Writing Center's Coursework Resubmission Policy Resource.

Q: How much of my previous paper can I cite?

A: Remember the 80/20 guideline when using citations in your research. At least 80 percent of any assignment you write should be new, original material. No more than 20 percent of any assignment you write should be from outside sources (cited appropriately) or your own previous writings (self-citation). While this is only a guideline, you will want to limit the amount of information from outside sources and from your own previous writings in order to create assignments appropriate for your college-level courses.

Reference

Purdue University Global. (2020, June). *Code of student conduct.* https://catalog.purdueglobal.edu/policy-information/student-information-services/conduct/#text