7.5: Citing Sources and Avoiding Plagiarism

style guides

Once you have gathered the appropriate sources to support your ideas, you will need to integrate citations for those sources into your speech using a style guide such as those published by the Modern Language Association (MLA), American Psychological Association (APA), or The Chicago Manual of Style (CMS). These style guides help you determine the format of your citations, both within the speech and in the bibliography. Your professor will likely assign a particular style guide for you to use. However, if you are not told to use a particular style, choose the one most appropriate to your area of study. MLA style is typically used by people in the humanities, APA is typically used by social scientists, and CMS can be used in either type of writing, but is most popular with historians (Miller-Cochran & Rodrigo, 2011). These style guides will help you record the places where you found support for your argument so that you can avoid plagiarism.

Facts are stubborn things; and whatever may be our wishes, our inclinations, or the dictates of our passions, they cannot alter the state of facts and evidence. ~ John Adams

plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act of presenting someone else's work or ideas as your own. Sometimes this is intentional, meaning people choose to copy from another source and make their audience think that the idea was original. Students in speech classes sometimes buy speeches from the internet, or repeat a speech written by a friend who took the class in a previous semester. These actions are cheating because the students did not do the work themselves, yet they took credit for it. Most instances of blatant cheating, such as these, are quickly caught by instructors who maintain files of
work turned in previously, or who are adept at searching the Internet for content that does not appear original to the student. Consequences for this type of plagiarism are severe, and may range from failure of the course to expulsion from the school.

More often, plagiarism occurs by mistake when people are not aware of how to properly summarize and cite the sources from which they took information. This happens when someone incorporates words or ideas from a source and fails to properly cite the source. Even if you have handed your professor a written outline of the speech with source citations, you must also offer oral attribution for ideas that are not your own (see Table 7.3 for examples of ways to cite sources while you are speaking).

Omitting the oral attribution from the speech leads the audience, who is not holding a written version, to believe that the words are your own. Be sure to offer citations and oral attributions for all material that you have taken from someone else, including paraphrases or summaries of their ideas. When in doubt, remember to "always provide oral citations for direct quotations, paraphrased material, or especially striking language, letting listeners know who said the words, where, and when" (Osborn & Osborn, 2007, p.23). Whether plagiarism is intentional or not, it is unethical and someone committing plagiarism will often be sanctioned based on their institution’s code of conduct.

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<tr>
<th>Proper Written Source Citation</th>
<th>Proper Oral Attribution</th>
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<tr>
<td>“Your time is limited, so don’t waste it living someone else’s life” (Jobs, 2005).</td>
<td>In his 2005 commencement address at Stanford University Steve Jobs said, “Your time is limited, so don’t waste it living someone else’s life.”</td>
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<td>“The Assad regime’s escalating violence in Syria is an affront to the international community, a threat to</td>
<td>In her February 24 speech to the Friends of Syria People meeting, U.S. Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, warned</td>
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regional security, and a grave violation of human rights. . . this group should take concrete action along three lines: provide emergency humanitarian relief, ratchet up pressure on the regime, and prepare for a democratic transition” (Clinton, 2012).

“Maybe you could be a mayor or a Senator or a Supreme Court Justice, but you might not know that until you join student government or the debate team” (Obama, 2009).

that Assad was increasing violence against the Syrian people and violating human rights. She called for international action to help the Syrian people through humanitarian assistance, political pressure, and support for a future democratic government.

In his 2009 “Back to School” speech President Obama encouraged students to participate in school activities like student government and debate in order to try out the skills necessary for a leadership position in the government.