**Mid term exam on academic integrity case study**

The case is about Sophia’s doctoral research paper. Sophia is a doctoral student in the History Department at George Mason University, and she is required to write an independent research paper. She decided to write a paper about the Battle of Bull Run, but she has already written an article about this topic. She re-reads her published article for inspiration, and decided that she can use large portions of her published article for her current project. She assumed it would be acceptable to include passages from her old paper, and she did not cite her published paper. But her professor realized that she had included several pages worth of text from her published paper into her new paper. Professor informed Sophia about the situation and initiated a referral to the Academic Integrity Office. The assignment includes the following requirements: ‘The paper must advance the scholarship related to your dissertation topic’, ‘The paper must include original research from archival scholarly sources’, ‘All sources must be cited completely in the Chicago style footnote format’.

According to George Mason OAI(Office of Academic Integrity), Plagiarism is defined as using another individual’s ideas or words without attribution or credit. It also includes using prior work that has been submitted for credit or published in another venue as a new submission without citation. Using the ideas of others without proper attribution or citation is unethical and a violation of the Honor code. Subcategories of plagiarism include but not limited to: Self-plagiarism, Inadequate citation, False citation, Failure to quote sources or material. Plagiarism does not include mistakes in the format of a citation as long as the student has clearly indicated the materials quoted or relied upon and the source of the materials.[1] In this case, we can judge that Sophia has done self-plagiarism.

First, we can check whether Sophia followed assignment’s following requirements or not. Her previous writing had done while she was doing master, and current writing is for doctoral dissertation. It satisfies the first following requirement, “The paper must advance the scholarship related to your dissertation topic”. And her topic is closely related to previous writing, but she had conducted new research from scholarly sources, include her previous scholarly writing. This means that her writing also satisfies requirements, “The paper must include original research from archival and scholarly sources.”. On the other hand, we can find that she did not cite her published paper in the new work. It infringes the third requirement, “All sources must be cited completely in the Chicago style footnote format.”. Consequently, her writing did not followed whole following requirements.

Self-plagiarism is described as reuse of significant, identical, or nearly identical portions of one's own work without acknowledging that one is doing so or citing the original work.[2] According to Pamela Samuelson, the citation which want to treated as justify reuse of one’s previously published work, not the self-plagiarism, should satisfy several factors: (1)The previous work must be restated to lay the groundwork for a new contribution in the second work. (2)Portions of the previous work must be repeated to deal with new evidence or arguments. (3)The audience for each work is so different that publishing the same work in different places is necessary to get the message out. (4)The author thinks they said it so well the first time that it makes no sense to say it differently a second time.[3] Also, self-plagiarism is a problem when essentially the same article or book is submitted on more than one occasion to gain additional salary increments or for purpose of promotion.[4]

In this case, we compared those factors whether her writing be just for justify reuse. First, Sophia regards that her previous writing is well enough, so she cited her previous writing. It could satisfy the factor (4). But, Sophia’s current and previous writing has similar main contents, the Historical event, so we can understand those two paper’s aiming audiences are same field. And by comparing Sophia’s current and previous paper, her current paper does not give the new ideas and thoughts. According to Pamela Samuelson’s writing, Self-Plagiarism or Fair Use?(1994), she recommended “30% rule”, which means if one reuses no more than 30% of one’s prose in other article.[3] From the case, we can find that she used large portion of her published article. We could infer she used over 30% of her previous writing from “large portion”. Consequently, it means that her paper does not satisfies factors (2) and (3). And current paper does not influences re-defining previous work, so it also doesn’t satisfy factor (1). Even her writing satisfies factor (4), she didn’t write citation so it also infringe citation rule. For those reasons, we can judge that her writing is self-plagiarism and not enough to treated as justify reuse. In addition, she used her previous paper for getting higher scholarship, it could be the case of self-plagiarism.

We conclude that not to use our completed work for our future work without citing it. Even it is our own work also it comes under self-plagiarism. If there is no citation provided, then this situation will come under Self plagiarism and Sophia will be referred to the academic integrity office by our instructor who is going to evaluate her. So kindly follow the rules set by the academic integrity office. Honor code statement is read by every student while joining the university, so no student should violate the Honor code. Students of the university should be aware of the academic integrity Rules.

References

[1] George Mason University Honor Code 2018-2019

(<https://oai.gmu.edu/mason-honor-code/>)

[2] Dellavalle, Robert P. ; Banks, Marcus A. ; Ellis, Jeffrey I. Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology, 2007, Vol.57(3), pp.527-527

(<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0190962207008845?via%3Dihub>)

[3] Samuelson, Pamela Communications of the ACM, 01 August 1994, Vol.37(8), pp.21-25 (<https://dl.acm.org/citation.cfm?id=179731>)

[4] Hexham, I. (n.d.). The Plague of Plagiarism: Academic Plagiarism Defined. (<http://people.ucalgary.ca/~hexham/content/articles/plague-of-plagiarism.html>)