Plagiarism Policy

Intention

One of DECA's Guiding Principles is to prepare our members to be Professionally Responsible. "DECA members are poised professionals with ethics, integrity and high standards." Ethical behavior is a large part of responsible citizenship; therefore, we believe it is important to have a clear policy concerning plagiarism and other forms of academic cheating.

Definitions

Cheating by students is defined as attempting to take credit for someone else's work, using unauthorized materials, submitting work that has previously been entered into any competition, or otherwise acting to deceive the evaluator in an assignment, project, or test.

Is Using AI Considered Plagiarism?

Using artificial intelligence (AI) during testing or competition is considered cheating and a form of academic dishonesty, which violates the Michigan DECA Code of Conduct. Using AI as a resource to help you study or gather your thoughts for testing and competition is different than having it answer test questions or complete a prepared event, even if the chapter advisor approves.

Intentional Plagiarism is defined as, but not limited to:

- Obvious, substantial, verbatim reproduction of information.
- Fabrication of sources, falsification of page numbers, or other deliberate mis-documentation.
- Submission of others' work as the students' own. This applies to un-cited paraphrasing of another's ideas as well as verbatim use of others' words. (Others' may refer to either scholarly sources, online "cribbed" essays, or the work of other students).

Technical Plagiarism is defined as, but limited to:

- Poor paraphrasing, amounting to "translating" another's work
- Improper citation or documentation that misrepresents a source
- Insufficient citation of factual information not held to be common knowledge (common knowledge is defined as facts readily available from a variety of sources)
- Poor integration of direct quotations with the student's own writing.

Determination of Plagiarism/Cheating

The Chapter Advisor will be informed immediately when a student is suspected of plagiarism or cheating. State staff will review the plagiarism report to determine if evidence of plagiarism exists, and which definition applies, by utilizing TurnItIn.com and other search engines.

Consequence

Plagiarism and cheating shall result in the student being disqualified from competition. No refunds will be given for disqualified students.

Disciplinary consequences

In addition to being disqualified, Michigan DECA will refer the student to the school principal, and other actions could be taken as outlined in their school's code of conduct.

The Ledyard (CT) Public School's Plagiarism Policy of 2008 was used with permission, as a basis for this policy.