Quick Guide to Turnitin

This guide provides information and tips for maximizing Turnitin and promoting academic honesty in your course.

Checklist for your Course

- Syllabus statement on academic honesty
- Turnitin clause in your syllabus
- Discuss the use of Turnitin and consequences of plagiarism with students
- Provide custom “Turnitin Comments” for assignments
- Provide instructions to students for submitting papers and understanding feedback
- Use an arsenal of plagiarism solutions
- Understand how the originality report works
- Additional strategies for reducing plagiarism

Syllabus statement on academic honesty

The following is from the University Policies: “Students are expected to know, understand and comply with the ethical standards of the university. In addition, students have an obligation to inform the appropriate official of any acts of academic dishonesty by other students of the university. Academic dishonesty is defined as a student’s use of unauthorized assistance with intent to deceive an instructor or other such person who may be assigned to evaluate the student’s work in meeting course and degree requirements.”

Examples of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to the following: plagiarism, cheating, fabrication and falsification, multiple submissions without faculty approval, misuse of academic materials, and complicity in academic dishonesty.

Put a Turnitin clause in your syllabus

UC Denver has a license agreement with Turnitin.com, a service that helps detect plagiarism by comparing student papers with Turnitin’s database and Internet sources. Students who take this course agree that all required papers may be submitted to Turnitin.

While students retain copyright on their original course work, papers submitted to Turnitin do become part of Turnitin’s reference database for the purposes of detecting plagiarism. Use of the Turnitin service is subject to the Terms and Conditions of Use posted on Turnitin’s website at turnitin.com.

Discuss the consequences of plagiarism with your students

Giving students information about what plagiarism is and how to prevent it can help prevent cases of “accidental plagiarism” including inappropriate paraphrase and mistaking information requiring citation for “common knowledge”.

Provide students with plagiarism resources including http://www.plagiarism.org/ or the academic honesty course provided by CU Online. Your dean or college can provide guidance on how to handle academic dishonesty cases.
Provide custom “Turnitin Comments” that will be shown to students when they submit a Turnitin assignment.

Course Settings > Edit Course Details

Provide instructions to students about Turnitin

Submitting an Assignment

Submitting a Turnitin Assignment is just like submitting a regular assignment, although you will have a note reminding you that your submission will be checked by Turnitin for originality. You will also have to click the checkbox to agree with the pledge before submitting the assignment. When you are ready to submit, click the Submit Assignment button.

Reviewing the Report

View the assignment. The speech bubble will indicate what percent of your assignment matches internet sources. Click on the speech bubble to open a detailed originality report in a new window.

Understand the Report

Each paper submitted receives what is called a Similarity Score in terms of a percentage. The higher the Similarity Score, the more content from other sources the Turnitin search has identified. The Originality
Report also highlights matched passages and identifies the source of those passages. By default, all matches are shown, even those that were cited properly.

**Use an arsenal of plagiarism solutions**

CU Online provides an academic honesty course. The course comes in two flavors - both containing the exact same content. Both options create a Module in your Canvas course containing a link to content and a quiz. The first option links to the static public website for the content. The second option creates customizable pages inside of Canvas for the content that can be edited.

You can download the course from cuonline.edu/upgrade. Click on Resources.

You might also consider having your students sign an honesty pledge. This could be course specific or something that you implement at a department or college level.

**Understand how the originality report functions**

All the top sources found to match the paper submission are in the sidebar to the right of the paper contents. Top sources are the sources that have the closest match (most matching words without variation) to the document's text.

To view all underlying sources for a top source hover the cursor over the source and click on the arrow icon. The overlapping sources are listed below the top source.

To exclude a source from the Match Breakdown list click on the "Select Sources to be Excluded" button at the bottom of the source list.

Click on the check box next to all the sources you would like to exclude.

Once you have selected all the sources to exclude, click on the "Exclude (#)" button at the bottom of the Match Breakdown list. If the sources that were excluded affects the Similarity Index it will recalculate and display a new percentage of matching content.

[Originality Report for Instructor](http://turnitin.com/en_us/training/professional-development)
[Originality Report for Students](http://turnitin.com/en_us/training/professional-development)

**Additional Resources:** [http://turnitin.com/en_us/training/professional-development](http://turnitin.com/en_us/training/professional-development)

**Strategies for Reducing Plagiarism**

Develop Unique Assignments: Create assignments that are focused, not general term paper topics. Meet with students to encourage, motivate and guide student writing.

Require drafts, preliminary bibliographies, study notes: Set due dates for smaller assignments that build into a larger final paper.

Help students understand plagiarism: Provide resources for understanding plagiarism.