Mars Hill Plagiarism Guidelines
Revised August 2026

PLAGIARISM DEFINITION

- Plagiarism occurs when a writer deliberately uses someone else's language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source.
- Students are not guilty of plagiarism when they try in good faith to acknowledge others' work but fail to do so accurately or fully.

MARS HILL PLAGIARISM POLICY

- Willful plagiarism carries with it the same consequences as other forms of cheating at Mars Hill.
- Mere failure to cite sources correctly or completely will be evaluated on an individual basis and corrected by the respective English tutor.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES IN AVOIDING PLAGIARISM

Students should understand research and writing assignments as opportunities for genuine and rigorous inquiry and learning. Such an understanding involves:

- Assembling and analyzing a set of sources that they have themselves determined are relevant to the issues they are investigating;
- Acknowledging clearly when and how they are drawing on the ideas or phrasings of others;
- Learning the conventions for citing documents [MLA] and acknowledging sources appropriate to the field they are studying;
- Consulting their instructors when they are unsure about how to acknowledge the contributions of others to their thought and writing.

ON GENERATIVE AI

The use of AI chatbots or assistants to ease or offload the mental processes required to work through the various phases of the essay-writing process is tantamount to using a calculator in a basic arithmetic class, or having a robot lift weights on one's behalf at the gym. In other words, it defeats the entire purpose. While it technically counts as plagiarism (and therefore cheating) at Mars Hill, we are not ignorant to the fact that this is nearly impossible to detect and enforce with certainty. And so, we leave it to the consciences of students and parents to make every effort to live with integrity is this area. Students relying upon AI are cheating themselves of intellectual development and the formation of virtue, a far greater and more damaging offense than the violation of any school policy.