

Plagiarism

MW 26.1: Approaches to Economic Science

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These slides build up on the former lecture on plagiarism by Severin Weingarten and are enriched by the work of Henrik Hartmann on “Good scientific practices”

Let's start with a bad example: Who is this?



Figure: Guttenberg – Times Square New York, March 2009

Source: FAZ article "Er ist wieder da – oder nicht?" (02.10.2015), accessed 30 Oct 2017

Once a rising star...

- ▶ **Karl Theodor** Maria Nikolaus Johann Jacob Philipp Franz Joseph Sylvester Freiherr von und **zu Guttenberg** (born December 5, 1971)

2002 First entering the German parliament

2007 PhD in Bayreuth

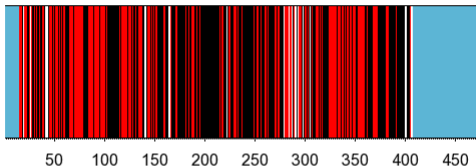
2008 General Secretary of Christian Social Union

Early 2009 Economics minister

Late 2009 Youngest defence minister and tipped as a future chancellor (opinion polls giving him 70 percent of approval ratings)

Source: Telegraph article "Karl Theodor zu Guttenberg: A profile" (09.05.2011), accessed 30 Oct 2017

1218 Plagiatsfragmente aus 135 Quellen
auf 371 von 393 Seiten (94.4%)
in 10421 plagiierten Zeilen (63.8%)



Stand: 03.04.2011 11:55 Uhr

- Seiten, auf denen Plagiate gefunden wurden
- Seiten mit Plagiaten aus mehreren Quellen
- Seiten, auf denen bisher keine Plagiate gefunden wurden
- Das Inhaltsverzeichnis (Seiten 1-14) und die Anhänge (ab Seite 408) wurden nicht bei der Berechnung des Prozentualwertes mit einbezogen

Figure: Plagiarism in Guttenberg's PhD-Thesis, April 2011

Source: GuttenPlag Wiki "Eine kritische Auseinandersetzung mit der Dissertation von Karl-Theodor Freiherr zu Guttenberg:" (03.04.2011), accessed 30 Oct 2017

... now a shooting star

2011 Revelation that large part of doctoral thesis had been plagiarized

2011 Resignation from the German Government

2011 Left Germany for a career in business in the US



Figure: Resignation Speech, March 2011

Source: Financial Times article "Lunch with the FT: Karl-Theodor zu Guttenberg" (26.02.2016) and Handelsblatt article "Ex-Verteidigungsminister tritt als Verwaltungsrat zurück" (18.05.2011), accessed 30 Oct 2017

Plagiarism will not be tolerated!

Since “the idea [plagiarism] remains problematic with unclear definitions and unclear rules,” we start with the definition of Plagiarism

(Wikipedia article “Plagiarism”, accessed 27 Oct 2015)

Outline:

1. What Is Plagiarism?
2. Why is Plagiarism bad?
3. How Do I Avoid Plagiarism?

1 What Is Plagiarism?

Definition

The FSU economics faculty agreed on:

Plagiarism is the act of stating or implying
that another person's work is your own.

(Penn State University's Online Student Tutorial, accessed 27 Oct 2015)

1 What Is Plagiarism?

Frequent Forms (1/2)

1. Non-attribution (*What you say*)

- ▶ Using material without citing it correctly
material = ideas, thoughts, results, data, tables, figures, ...
- ▶ Exception: Basic material that appears in text books

The number of steps between two nodes on the linguistic tree can be used to construct a measure of linguistic distance (Belot and Hatton 2012).

1 What Is Plagiarism?

Frequent Forms (2/2)

2. Quotations (word-for-word) without quotation marks
(How you say it)
 - ▶ Re-using others' phrases without quotation marks
 - ▶ Exceptions (naturally)
 - ▶ Technical terms, e.g. "female labor-force participation"
 - ▶ Common phrases, e.g. "leads to an increase in"
 - ▶ "same thing → same name" is core principle of scientific writing
 - ▶ Note: Quotations = very uncommon in economics. Only if:
 - ▶ particular wording relevant
 - ▶ rephrasing impossible

"The distinguishing mark of the firm is the supersession of the price mechanism" (Coase 1937).

1 What Is Plagiarism?

Other Forms

Other forms are usually easy to identify and, often, violate other rules, too:

3. Somebody else writes your seminar paper for you.
4. You copy half of your paper from a classmate.
5. You hand in the same seminar paper twice (self-plagiarism).

Generally: Be aware of how others' work enters into your own.

If in doubt: Ask your supervisor.

1. What Is Plagiarism?

2. Why is Plagiarism bad?

3. How Do I Avoid Plagiarism?

2 Why is Plagiarism bad?

Overview

There are three groups of reasons for avoiding plagiarism:

1. It is bad for you
2. Others consider it unethical → punishment
3. It really is unethical

2 Why is Plagiarism bad?

1. It is Bad for You

1. You don't **learn to distinguish** between your own thoughts and those of others.
2. You don't force yourself to **properly understand a problem**. If you can rephrase it to fit into your own argumentation, you know that you understand it.
3. Plagiarism is often interpreted as a **signal of low ability** when it is discovered.

2 Why is Plagiarism bad?

2. Punishment

1. **Failing the course** or the entire program
2. Being unable to **find work in academia**
3. In severe cases, being **sued for copyright infringement**

Those who decide about the punishment will seek to defend their own reputation by being strict.

2 Why is Plagiarism bad?

3. It Really is Unethical

1. Many **claims cannot be validated** without the original source
2. Plagiarism **disadvantages honest students** by making them appear relatively worse
3. **Attribution = payment + respect** for other researchers' good ideas

1. What Is Plagiarism?

2. Why is Plagiarism bad?

3. How Do I Avoid Plagiarism?

3 How Do I Avoid Plagiarism?

Avoiding Non-attribution (1/2)

- ▶ Review all of the relevant literature
This takes time! If too much → research question too broad?
- ▶ While taking notes, include sources
- ▶ While writing, add sources right away
Never write: TODO(add source)

- ▶ Use software to keep track of sources

3 How Do I Avoid Plagiarism?

Avoiding Non-attribution (2/2)

- ▶ Clearly mark where a citation begins and ends.
 - ▶ “Integrated citation” @ beginning of foreign material
 - ▶ Parenthetical citation @ end of foreign material
 - ▶ Textually indicate the other boundary!

Example for “Integrated citation”:

... the coefficient for income differences is 0.5. However, this may be an overestimation: **Bertoli and Fernandez-Huertas Moraga (2012)** *argue that the presence of multilateral resistance to migration can bias the estimated coefficients of different determinants of migration.* **The estimation presented above** may be affected by such a bias, since ...

3 How Do I Avoid Plagiarism?

Avoiding word-for-word quotations

- ▶ Note-taking and note-reordering is the most important and most time-intensive activity of academic work
- ▶ Avoid word for word quotations already while taking notes
- ▶ Ask what is the purpose of my text? How does what I am writing/citing serve that purpose? Then, restructure others' thoughts to fit the purpose of your text (and cite them)!
⇒ The importance of having a clear research question!

Last Words

If you have any questions about plagiarism, feel free to ask at any time. Ask me now or ask your supervisors when you are working on a paper!

The earlier you raise a question, the more time and options are available to solve it.

We look forward to working with you on your seminar papers and theses!

Thank you for your attention!