Examples of Plagiarism

Borrowing a Friend's Paper
Students sometimes share papers with one another, especially if they have the same instructor or course. You cannot put your name on your friend’s paper and submit the work as your own. In essence, you have stolen the work of another author. Students are the authors of their own papers, assignments, email, etc. It is ill advised to use any of your friend’s paper for content; however, you need to cite those portions you use.

Buying a Paper
Students occasionally buy papers from other students or from an online service. You cannot put your name on a paper you purchased and submit the work as your own. In essence, you have stolen the work of another author.

Citing without Quotation Marks
Students occasionally extract sections of text written by an author for use in their papers. While they give credit to the author, they do not always attribute these sentences to the author through the use of quotation marks. You need to use quotation marks to separate the author’s words from your own words to avoid an act of plagiarism.

Common Facts
Commonly known facts, generally known by many people, can be found in numerous resources. You do not need to cite commonly known facts. If you do not know whether the information is common knowledge, play it safe and cite it.

Copying and Pasting (also known as Cutting and Pasting)
Oftentimes, a student will “copy” information from the Internet, from another student’s paper, from an email, or from another online source and “paste” it into his/her paper. You need to cite any works that you “copy and paste” when you are not the author of the original source. If you need assistance locating the author and source, ask a librarian or your instructor. Additionally, if you “copy and paste” directly, you need to use quotation marks to denote the author’s exact words.

Editor
A student will occasionally pay an editor to review his/her research paper. Some editors may identify a student’s errors, but other editors may identify and correct a student’s errors. If an editor makes changes to your work, you have in essence committed an act of plagiarism.

Email
Students or professors may send email which interprets course related material, such as a passage in a novel, a paragraph in an article, or a segment from a DVD. You need to cite email that you have received or that you have not written on your own.

Ideas
Students sometimes use ideas that originated with another person and they fail to cite the original source. You need to cite any ideas that did not originate with you.

Images, Tables, Graphs, and Illustrations
Students often use images in class speeches, PowerPoint presentations, papers, etc. You need to cite any images that you utilize that you have not created on your own.

Interviews
Students are often able to use oral or written interviews. They may interview classmates, professors, professionals, and family members. Oral interviews may take place in person or via the phone. Written interviews may take place online or in another written format. You need to cite oral or written responses that you either paraphrase or directly quote. Additionally, you need to use quotation marks to denote the interviewee’s exact words.
Paraphrasing
When a student paraphrases work attributed to someone else, he/she is interpreting the information and expressing the author's ideas in his/her own words.
You need to cite any works that you paraphrase. You are not the author of the original source. You cannot claim the author's ideas as your own.

Public Domain
Students often use books, lyrics, images, and other sources that are in the public domain. Public domain means that the items were never copyright protected or that the copyright protection has expired.
You should cite works in the public domain that you paraphrase or quote. You are not the author of the original source. You cannot claim the author’s ideas as your own. Additionally, you need to use quotation marks to denote the author’s exact words.

Quoting (Direct Quotes)
Students often quote an author’s work verbatim (word for word) or with a word change here and there. You need to cite any works that you quote. Additionally, you need to use quotation marks to denote the author’s exact words. A word change here and there still constitutes the need to cite and quote the original source.

Reusing Papers or Assignments
Students will sometimes re-use papers or projects that they have completed for other courses. You cannot re-use your work in lieu of a new assignment. You can quote an occasional section from one of your previously submitted/graded assignments; however, you must cite it.

Song Lyrics
Students sometimes cite song lyrics in their assignments. You need to cite any song lyrics that you include. Additionally, you need to set these lyrics apart with quotation marks to denote the artist’s exact words.