

Master of Liberal Arts  
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College of Liberal Arts

# Master of Liberal Arts Temple University

## *Statement of Academic* *and* *Scholarly Expectations*

## **Academic Honesty**

Academic honesty and integrity constitute the root of the educational process at Temple University. Intellectual growth relies on the development of independent thought and respect for the thoughts of others. To foster this independence and respect, plagiarism and academic cheating are prohibited.

Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of another individual's ideas, words, labor, or assistance. All coursework submitted by a student, including papers, examinations, laboratory reports, and oral presentations, is expected to be the individual effort of the student presenting the work. When it is not, that assistance must be acknowledged and reported to the instructor. If the work involves consulting outside resources such as journals, books, or other media, those resources must be cited in the appropriate style. All other borrowed material, such as suggestions for organization, ideas, or actual language, must also be cited. Failure to cite any borrowed material, including information from the internet, constitutes plagiarism.

Academic cheating results when the general rules of academic work or the specific rules of individual courses are broken. It includes falsifying data; submitting, without the instructor's knowledge or approval, work in one course that was done for another; helping others to plagiarize or cheat from one's own or another's work; or undertaking the work of another person.

The penalty for academic dishonesty results in a failing grade for a particular assignment and a failing grade in the course. It may also result in suspension or expulsion from the University. Students who plagiarize their MLA Qualifying Papers can expect to have their case heard before the University Disciplinary Committee (UDC).

Students who believe that they have been unfairly accused may appeal their cases to the College of Liberal Arts' Graduate Committee through the established academic grievance procedure and, ultimately, to the Graduate Board if academic dismissal has occurred.

This statement on Academic Honesty can be found online at: <http://www.temple.edu/grad/policies/index.htm>

## **Citing Sources**

You need to include a citation anytime you include someone else's words or idea(s) in your own work. According to the *Ready Reference Handbook*, "Frequent, fair, and accurate documentation gives credibility and authority to your writing" (Dodds 332).

*Citing does not apply only to quotes.*

You do not need to cite information that can be considered common knowledge; if an average person is probably aware of the fact in question, you don't need a citation. If your information could be easily found in at least three different reliable sources, it is probably common knowledge. When in doubt, cite anyway to be on the safe side.

## **Paraphrasing**

You are paraphrasing when you take someone else's idea and completely rephrase it using your own words. It does NOT mean taking the original quote and replacing a few words here and there, which is considered plagiarism.

*A paraphrased passage must be cited.*

If you think you will be tempted to "borrow" too much from a source, try paraphrasing with the book closed.

## **Sample paraphrase:**

**Original text:** Land, then, is not merely soil; it is the fountain of energy flowing through a circuit of soils, plants, and animals. Food chains are the living channels which conduct energy upward; death and decay return it to the soil. The circuit is not closed; some energy is dissipated in decay, some is added by absorption from the air, some is stored in soils, peats, and long-lived forests; but it is a sustained circuit, like a slowly augmented, revolving fund of life.

*Aldo Leopold, A Sand County Almanac, p. 212*

**Plagiarism:** Land is not simply soil; it is a waterfall of energy moving through a circuit of soil, plants, and animals. Food chains are the channels that move energy upward; dying and decay return it to the ground. The circle is not closed; some energy is lost in decay, some is added to the air, some is saved in soil, peat, and forests; but it is a continuing circle, like a mutual fund of life.

**Acceptable Paraphrase:** More than “merely soil,” land is a “fountain of energy.” It generates the life cycle, lifting energy upward through plants and animals, receiving it returned through death and decay, absorbing extra energy from outside itself, and storing it to maintain the life cycle (Leopold 212).

## **For general information on citing sources, visit:**

[http://www.temple.edu/writingctr/student\\_resources/citing\\_sources.htm](http://www.temple.edu/writingctr/student_resources/citing_sources.htm)

## **For additional handouts on conducting research, using source materials effectively, and avoiding plagiarism, visit:**

[http://www.temple.edu/writingctr/student\\_resources/sr\\_research.htm](http://www.temple.edu/writingctr/student_resources/sr_research.htm)

## **For information on different citation styles and guides (e.g. APA, Chicago, MLA), visit:**

[http://www.temple.edu/writingctr/student\\_resources/sr\\_citation.htm](http://www.temple.edu/writingctr/student_resources/sr_citation.htm)

## **Academic Rights and Responsibilities**

Temple University students who believe that instructors are introducing extraneous material into class discussions or that their grades are being affected by their opinions or views that are unrelated to a course's subject matter can file a complaint under the University's policy on academic rights and responsibilities.

### **The full policy can be found at:**

*[http://policies.temple.edu/getdoc.asp?policy\\_no=03.70.02](http://policies.temple.edu/getdoc.asp?policy_no=03.70.02)*

The policy encourages students to first discuss their concerns with their instructor. If a student is uncomfortable doing so, or if discussions with the instructor do not resolve the student's concerns, an informal complaint can be made to the Student Ombudsperson for the student's school or college. Unresolved complaints may be referred to the dean for handling in accordance with the school or college's established grievance procedure. Final appeals will be determined by the Provost.

## **Temple University's Writing Center**

Temple University's Writing Center, located on the second floor of Tuttleman Hall, offers tutoring and editing services especially designed for graduate students.

**Read-ahead tutoring (one-on-one tutoring for grad students who are working on longer papers.**

### **More information here:**

*[http://www.temple.edu/writingctr/student\\_resources/read-ahead.htm](http://www.temple.edu/writingctr/student_resources/read-ahead.htm)*

**A for-pay editing service, for grad students in the final stages of a thesis or dissertation.**

### **More information here:**

*[http://www.temple.edu/writingctr/edit\\_resources/edit\\_resources\\_student.htm](http://www.temple.edu/writingctr/edit_resources/edit_resources_student.htm)*

## from “Testing the Water: Are You Ready for Graduate School?”

The Princeton Review

We feel your pain. You've been out of college for a couple of years, dabbled in some entry-level jobs, and feel like you're going nowhere. Or: You're about to graduate from college, are uninspired by the job market, and dread the thought of leaving academia behind. Or: You've been working within the professional world for a decade--and have actually made some kind of mark--but are feeling unfulfilled and hungry for a new challenge. Sound familiar? If so, you may be flirting with the possibility of heading to graduate school for a fresh beginning.

Graduate school is a tricky business. It makes a lot of sense if you have a vision of what your career should be and possess the energy required to pursue it. It can deliver a vital intellectual wake-up call and expanded economic opportunities. Unfortunately, when embarked upon without sufficient focus or planning, graduate school can also deliver deep debt and continued professional frustrations. Before jumping into a program, ask yourself the following questions.

Am I considering going to graduate school for the right reasons? Your investment in grad school should be the result of carefully considered goals and interests, not panicked career crisis. Don't get us wrong--we understand if you feel stuck, and grad school might just be the thing to un-stick you. But it's no guaranteed cure-all, and should not be decided upon hastily. Before committing yourself to years of further education and (most likely) financial debt, make sure that you're choosing a grad school program because it makes sense within a larger plan, and not because you're frustrated with your current job or feeling discouraged about the economy.

## **Do I know what I want to study?**

It's not a good sign if, when people ask you what you think you'll do next, you respond, "I want to go back to school" without knowing what you want to go back to school for. While no one expects you to know your dissertation topic upon entering a PhD program or your single area of expertise upon entering law school, you should have a clear sense of your field of interest--as well as the potential professional extensions of that field--upon submitting in your applications.

If you're considering earning your masters degree in Communications, it will help to pinpoint a particular interest in broadcast journalism; if you're applying for a PhD in English, it will help to identify a focus in 19th-Century American Literature. If you don't yet have a clear sense of what you would like to focus on, take some time to meditate on the topic and hold off on applications till you feel confident about your choice

## **What are my prospects after grad school?**

Though you may not want to start thinking already about what comes after grad school (getting there in the first place seems stressful enough), this question could prove the most crucial when deciding whether or not to return to school for an additional degree. Research your chosen field and contact professors or other knowledgeable advisors about what you'll actually be able to do with your degree after graduation.

Some fields are a no-brainer: Law, business, and medical schools attract so many applicants because they provide solid promises of careers after graduation. The PhD track often leads to a career in academia (though academic jobs are growing increasingly few and far between in proportion to the number of doctoral candidates). Other fields provide less career certainty: An MFA in fiction writing or a master's degree in art history promises to be intellectually enriching but may offer limited practical returns.

## **Am I financially prepared?**

If you've recently come into an inheritance or your trust fund is burning a hole in your pocket, you can skip this question. For the rest of us, the financial repercussions of attending graduate school will have an impact on the decision to return to school. While most PhD programs are fully funded--and might also grant you a stipend to cover living expenses--master's programs offer less financial assistance and often require taking out loans to cover your tuition and/or the cost of living. Of course, this is no reason to back away from the graduate school plan. A well-chosen program is an investment in your future, and, theoretically, you will be able to pay back your loans when you have become professionally established. In addition to this consideration, keep in mind that many schools do offer financial aid, merit scholarships, and student loans with manageable interest rates.

If you are thinking of attending a master's program, you can also look into the possibility of going to school part-time while you hold down a job to cover the rent.

## **Am I ready for the graduate-school lifestyle?**

If you are hungry for a new challenge and are prepared to sacrifice some of the free time that comes with a nine-to-five job, you should be A-okay. Different programs require different levels of commitment: a master's program might leave you with your weekends free, while the early years of a PhD program will likely require round-the-clock study. As long as you keep your eyes on the prize, your necessary lifestyle adjustments should feel well worth it. Should I panic if I've been out of school for several years?

No way. Many programs appreciate candidates who have taken some time to put their careers in perspective, and might even prefer them. If you're nervous about getting back into the academic swing of things, take a deep breath. Before you know it, you'll be highlighting and note-taking like a pro. If you are really nervous, you can ease your transition by

taking a class or two as a non-matriculated student in your field of study before heading back to the classroom full-time as a degree-seeking student.

**The full article can be found at:**

<http://www.princetonreview.com/grad/research/articles/decide/ready.asp>

*As graduate students, candidates in the Master of Liberal Arts program at Temple University are held to the level of academic and scholarly rigor, dedication, and ethics befitting graduate study. These standards entail high expectations on behalf of the University regarding both the student's capacity to engage in well-informed critical analysis and the production of new knowledge, and the framework with which to research and apply that knowledge appropriately and ethically.*

*This booklet offers an overview of what is expected of Master of Liberal Arts candidates around academic honesty/plagiarism, academic rights, and pursuing scholarly research, as well as some resources and articles pertaining to graduate study in general. Where appropriate, online links are given for other useful resources or to provide additional information or clarification.*

*For more information about the Master of Liberal Arts Program, degree requirements, courses, policies, and expectations, please go to [www.temple.edu/mla](http://www.temple.edu/mla).*

