Plagiarism Policy

Preface
Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai faculty and students are committed to high standards of excellence and personal responsibility as stated in our Standards of Conduct. To that end, faculty and students are expected to assume responsibility for their behavior and work.

Definition
According to the AMA Manual of Style: A Guide for Authors and Editors (10th edition)\(^1\), plagiarism is when an author documents or reports ideas, words, data, or graphics, whether published or unpublished, of another as his or her own and without giving appropriate credit. Plagiarism of published work violates standards of honesty and collegial trust and may also violate copyright law (if the violation is shown to be legally actionable).\(^1\)

The AMA Manual of Style goes on to define four common kinds of plagiarism:

1. Direct plagiarism: Verbatim lifting of passages without enclosing the borrowed material in quotation marks and crediting the original author.

2. Mosaic: Borrowing the ideas and opinions from an original source and a few verbatim words or phrases without crediting the original author. In this case, the plagiarist intertwines his or her own ideas and opinions with those of the original author, creating a “confused, plagiarized mass.”

3. Paraphrase: Restating a phrase or passage, providing the same meaning but in a different form without attribution to the original author.

4. Insufficient acknowledgment: Noting the original source of only part of what is borrowed or failing to cite the source material in a way that allows the reader to know what is original and what is borrowed.

Potential Venues
In the medical school environment, there are numerous situations that students must be cognizant of when representing their work accurately and honestly. These include, but are not limited to:

1. Scholarly work including scientific papers, proposals, presentations and posters

2. The electronic medical record in the context of appropriating another’s documentation into one’s own without clear attribution

3. Written examinations or assignments whether formative or summative

4. Essays and personal statements on applications for training, awards or any other reason

Consequences
All concerns regarding plagiarism will be reviewed by the Associate Dean of Undergraduate Medical Education & Student Affairs and the Associate Dean of Undergraduate Medical Education & Curricular
Disciplinary Action
Disciplinary action may include the following:

- **Warning**: an official notice in writing which describes consequences contingent on a student’s future actions or behaviors.
- **Probation**: an official notice in writing that specifies a time period that must pass without incident or conditions that a student must meet to avoid further consequences, including but not limited to disciplinary action.
- **Suspension of enrollment**: a removal of the student from educational activities or patient care settings. Immediate suspensions may be made in circumstances where the student poses a risk to the patient care, other members of the School community, the School, or the learning environment.
- **Dismissal**: expulsion of a student from the school.

Assault, sexual assault, theft, lying, cheating, or any intentionally dishonest behavior, including falsification of documents or other dishonest behavior during exams will result in dismissal from the Medical School absent exceptional circumstances. A student who is arrested or charged with a crime is required to inform Student Affairs. Failure to do so will result in dismissal. A dismissal decision cannot be changed to a voluntary withdrawal absent exceptional circumstances. All types of disciplinary action will be given in writing. Students are required to return a signed copy of the letter within 14 days of receipt.

Disciplinary action may be imposed by the Dean for Medical Education, the Associate Dean of Undergraduate Medical Education and Student Affairs, the Associate Dean of Undergraduate Medical Education and Curricular Affairs or the Promotions Committee.

The appeals process for disciplinary action is identical to the process for appealing the decisions of the Promotions Committee. (See section on “Committee Decisions and Appeals.”)

Any disciplinary action will appear in the MSPE in the Academic History section and also in Appendix C of the MSPE. (For more information about the MSPE, see Student Affairs Section.) Disciplinary actions will also be permanently recorded on the transcript in the comments section.