

# Desperation can lead to plagiarism

(CPS)—Sometimes students plagiarize out of desperation because they are weak writers or because they didn't work on their assignments until the very end of the term. Other students say they do not know what plagiarism is, an excuse that doesn't wash with academicians.

"I believe 95 percent of college students understand what plagiarism is; they receive information about it from high school on," said Barbara Hetrick, dean of Academic Affairs at Hood College in Frederick, Md. "In most instances, students may not have given themselves enough time to complete the assignment, or in some cases, they may have felt over their heads academically. So rather than talk with the faculty member, they stole someone's work to pass."

It is difficult to put a definitive number on the rate of plagiarism cases. Many cases may be dealt with privately between the instructor and student, while other cases may go before a panel of students and faculty members for consideration and possible punishment.

The Higher Education Research Institute at the University of California-Los Angeles, which does annual freshman student surveys, used to ask questions about cheating, but does not any longer. Some schools told students not to fill out the section on cheating, so researchers stopped asking the questions, a spokeswoman said.

An average of 300,000 students a year are surveyed at 600 institutions. In 1988, the last year the cheating section was included in the survey, 36.6 percent of the respondents said they cheated on a test in school, while 57.1 percent said they copied homework from another student. If cheating on this level exists, it is fair to assume that similar rates of plagiarism will exist, school officials said.

In fraternity and sorority houses, in dorm lounges, even in classified ads in youth-oriented newspapers and magazines, term papers are openly peddled. Papers written by other students, or and research done by companies that specialize in providing term papers to students can be turned in to instructors and passed off as the students' own work.

Consider *Rolling Stone*. In the classified section, companies routinely advertise to sell papers and research. The cost can range from \$7.50 a page for undergraduate-level papers to \$50 a page for custom research at the master's and doctorate level. According to the companies, research is done by staff researchers who have advanced degrees or have been in business for many years.

George Thomas Wilson, classified advertising director for *Rolling Stone*, said "there are obvious ethical problems" with such services. He said that students could use the papers just for research, "but obviously that probably isn't the case. There is

## Only one campus plagiarism case reported here last spring

by Tricia Ciaravino

Plagiarism at UNLV is either non-existent or underreported according to Michael Bowers, associate dean for the College of Liberal Arts.

Bowers said that only one plagiarism case was reported during the spring semester.

"Either students aren't plagiarizing or they aren't being caught," said Bowers. This is fortunate because the penalties for robbing the intellectual effort of others can be stiff.

Students who plagiarize risk failing grades, probation, suspension and even expulsion from the university.

The disciplinary action taken depends on the in-

structor who discovers the misdeed. The professor may issue a failing grade for the work in question or for the entire course. Most cases are handled this way but the instructor has the option of reporting it to the deans office.

Ann Mayo, assistant dean for undergraduate programs in the College of Business and Economics, said that instructors are encouraged to report incidents to make sure students aren't repeating these actions.

Mayo said she usually hears about three or four incidents, resolved by instructors, per semester.

Students who have been accused of plagiarizing have the right to appeal. Appeals should be taken to the department chair, then the dean of the college and finally the academic standards committee (some colleges, like

Business and Economics, have their own standards committees).

The committee, which has the final say, may uphold the grade, overrule the instructor or deliver an even harsher punishment.

"The student always runs a risk. The sanction at that level could (be the same) or even worse," said Mayo.

Mayo said it's rare to see an appeal of a grade because the instructor usually has a pretty good case.

"Instructors will go to the sources listed in the (student's) paper and have pretty good proof," she said. "A lot of students don't realize the instructors have read the books and, given libraries today, it's not that hard to find them."

no control once it is in their hands. On the surface, we can't know what they're going to do with it but one can certainly surmise. Who's to say?"

Hetrick, from Hood College, said instructors get to know a student's work and turning in a paper that is different in style and approach could signal a plagiarism attempt. "Professors

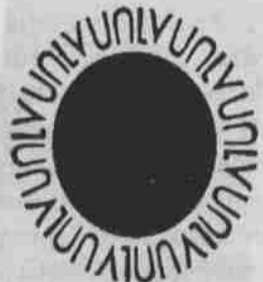
get to know writing styles pretty well. I'm sure they become suspicious if something is going on," she said.

Hood has an academic honor code that is run by students, and suspected plagiarism cases go to the Academic Judicial Council, which is made up of students and faculty members. If students are suspected of pla-

giarizing, they are expected to turn themselves into the council and present their case. They may flunk the paper, the course, or in extreme cases, be kicked out of school.

"The system works at Hood. I think there is an awareness of plagiarism. If they don't know, they will ask," Hetrick said. "They are very conscious of it."

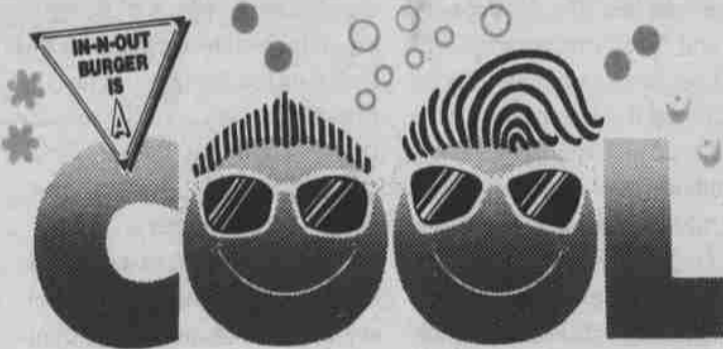
UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, LAS VEGAS  
**LONDON STUDY  
 ABROAD PROGRAM**  
 OPEN MEETING FOR ALL INTERESTED STUDENTS  
 TUESDAY, OCT. 6, 1992, 4 P.M.  
 DUNGAN HUMANITIES (FDH) ROOM 239  
 •••••  
 LEARN ABOUT STUDY IN LONDON  
 ACADEMIC CREDIT PROGRAMS  
 SPRING SEMESTER  
 JANUARY 6 THROUGH APRIL 14, 1993



### Scholarships

The Counseling and Educational Psychology Graduate Student Association (CEPGSA) is sponsoring two \$250 scholarships for the spring 1993 semester.

Additional information and applications are available in the UNLV Scholarship Office FDH-344 or by calling 895-3695.



### PLACE TO WORK! 2 NEW LAS VEGAS LOCATIONS

When it comes to jobs, IN-N-OUT BURGER is the place to be! We offer full and part-time opportunities, terrific free meals, full training, paid vacations and best of all, \$6 per hour to start! We've got schedules to fit around school or other activities. So, what are you waiting for?

We will be interviewing  
 for both of our new locations:

Mon., Oct. 12  
 9am - 4pm

Tues., Oct. 13  
 9am - 4pm



51 N. Nellis (corner of Charleston), Las Vegas  
 Equal Opportunity Employer