

Time required

An overwhelming majority of instructors report that using Turnitin.com required far less time than they had anticipated, and that the time required rarely exceeded time they would have spent using other means of searching the Web.

Recommendations

- Consider Turnitin.com as a teaching tool as well as a deterrent or surveillance device. The tool can give students a chance to sharpen their understanding of quotation, citation, paraphrase, and use of sources.
- Hold some office hours near a computer; space is available to you in TLTC's Main Library location. Contact them (855-7829) to make arrangements.
- Check reports regularly.
- Where appropriate, have students use Turnitin.com at the draft stage of writing. This way they have a chance to revise in light of their originality reports.
- When confronted with a case of plagiarism, consider the following before you have a face-to-face discussion with the student: reread the Code of Student Ethics; print all documents (TLTC staff in the Main Library will help you print in color if necessary); and contact your chair, course coordinator, or director of undergraduate studies for consultation.

Materials for syllabus/distribution to students

You may use the copyright-free templates at the end of this pamphlet or revise them to suit your needs. See

<http://www.indiana.edu/~turnitin/>

for specific instructions you can provide to students about registering and uploading papers to Turnitin.com.

Turnitin.com Template for Inclusion in Syllabus

In this course, we will be employing Turnitin.com software as a tool for learning how to write with sources. Turnitin.com is useful in helping to determine whether or not a writer is relying too heavily upon sources. We will have a demonstration of the software in class, as well as exercises based on Turnitin.com reports. All essays must be submitted to Turnitin.com at the draft stage (that is, before the final draft is turned in). Individual assignment sheets will provide specific instructions.

To read more about Turnitin.com, go to their web site:

<http://turnitin.com/>

You may also come to the TLTC (Main Library 305W in the undergraduate tower, or Ballantine Hall 307, 855-7829), where a TLTC staff member will work with you as you figure out how to use Turnitin.com.

How Turnitin.com works: Students (or instructors) submit electronic versions of essays to Turnitin.com, which in turn produces an "originality report." This report shows the writer and teacher the results of Turnitin.com's comparison of the essay to content on the Web, to Turnitin.com's database of student writing, and to some databases of common full-text journals. You will be given [in-class] instruction by TLTC staff about how to use Turnitin.com.

What this process requires of you as a member of this class:

- 1) for all assignments you are required to submit to Turnitin.com: all essays must be submitted by the date and time specified in the syllabus.
- 2) Turnitin.com reports are considered part of the final grade of a paper. As with rough drafts, no final essay will be acceptable without a record of its draft having been submitted to Turnitin.com on time.
- 3) You may submit each assignment ONE time to Turnitin.com and receive a report.
- 4) All draft and final drafts of papers are held to the University's *Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities* [and to the department's policies on plagiarism, if your department has some].

Using Turnitin.com

A Guide for Instructors

at

Indiana University

Bloomington



Teaching and Learning Technologies Centers and
the Campus Writing Program

What is Turnitin.com?

Turnitin.com (<http://turnitin.com/>) is a web-based plagiarism detection software owned by Turnitin.com, Inc., to which IUB has a pilot subscription through the 2004-05 academic year. As of May 2004, 200 IUB instructors have obtained accounts, and over 5500 papers, written by 1600 IUB students, have been submitted.

Turnitin.com is most effective as a deterrent, but it is also a means to teach students how to work with sources and to raise awareness of paraphrasing and quoting skills.

How Turnitin.com Works

Students or instructors submit electronic versions of essays to Turnitin.com, which in turn produces an “originality report.” This report shows the instructor the results of Turnitin.com’s comparison of the essay to content on the Web, to Turnitin.com’s database of student writing, and to some databases of common full-text journals.

If a student submits a paper, the teacher can allow the student to view the report; if the instructor makes the submission, the report is not available to the student.

Using Turnitin.com in a Course

Using Turnitin.com most effectively requires some preparation and planning on the part of the instructor, and is least successful when used surreptitiously for surveilling students’ work.

Before the semester begins:

Reacquaint yourself with the *IU Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct* sections on student academic misconduct and plagiarism. See this section online at

http://www.dsa.indiana.edu/Code/Part_3A.html

Familiarize yourself with the Turnitin.com tool. A workshop or individual consultation at the Teaching and Learning Technologies Centers (TLTC) takes about 60 minutes; contact TLTC at 855-7829 or turnitin@indiana.edu. The IUB web site for Turnitin.com is

<http://www.indiana.edu/~turnitin/>

Test the tool with materials from your discipline – see what it does with sample work from classes, a paragraph of yours, or text from a common web resource.

Decide whether you will submit student work or whether students will submit their own work.

Incorporating Turnitin.com into your syllabus

Incorporate use of Turnitin.com into your point structure or assignment parameters so that using this tool becomes part of the routine of submitting written work. Determine policies about late submissions, and include these in the syllabus as well (for example a paper handed in during class but not uploaded to Turnitin.com may be considered late.)

Secure orientation training for your students. Contact TLTC staff to make arrangements. Your options include:

- Demonstration in your own classroom
- Demonstration and hands-on in computer lab (when possible)
- Demonstration by TLTC staff in either your classroom or a lab (when possible)

Students will need directions on how to register with Turnitin.com and submit assignments. TLTC provides copyright-free instructions which can be made into a handout or linked from a course website. For more information, see <http://www.indiana.edu/~turnitin/>

Caveats for instructors interested in this tool:

Turnitin.com does not distinguish between direct quotations and text lifted directly from a source; students who are quoting correctly will likely have reports that indicate overlap with these sources. The reports are easy enough to read, however, that these instances are easily noted.

Conversely, Turnitin.com does not catch essays that include plagiarized ideas or concepts, nor can it detect paraphrasing that dramatically changes the wording of an original source while maintaining that source’s organization and/or sentence structure.

The implications of originality reports are not always self-evident. Teachers need to discuss the interpretation of these reports with students, and allow students an opportunity to familiarize themselves with the tool.

Classroom Practice

Minimally, conduct a practice assignment in conjunction with introducing Turnitin.com. Doing so allows students to practice for relatively low stakes. If you take this option, ask students to produce and submit something original, rather than having all students submit writing based on a common text. Asking students to work with the same source material may result in overlaps Turnitin.com cannot accommodate easily; in this case students’ originality reports become more complex with each subsequent submission. Consequently, students who submit last will have to deal with reports that are unwieldy if not inaccurate.

Lead students in a brief (15-minute) in-class discussion about Turnitin.com’s results, so that they have a chance to ask questions. TLTC can provide samples of Turnitin.com originality reports for use in a classroom discussion. Color overheads can be made by IUB instructors in the Teaching Resources Center (Ballantine 132, 855-2636).

Include information about the software in your syllabus. You may use the copyright-free templates at the end of this pamphlet or revise them to suit your needs.

Effects on your classroom

Instructors use many tools—Google.com searches, for example—to detect plagiarism; Turnitin.com is one among many such resources. Nonetheless, teachers worry that using Turnitin.com will have a chilling effect on teacher-student relations. Those using the tool report that it does not, but strongly recommend that all instructors clearly introduce students to Turnitin.com and answer any questions they may have before students are required to use the tool.

Discuss Turnitin.com with your students, explain your rationale for using it, and set their expectations for its use in class.