Can Instructional Videos Influence Perception of Plagiarism Among First Year Composition (FYC) Students?

Robert M. Ryder

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of The University of Findlay's College of Liberal Arts in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTERS OF RHETORIC AND WRITING

May 2016

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine whether video intervention influences student perception about plagiarism and to test whether students rank different forms of plagiarism and originality infraction by degree of severity. Plagiarism is often unintentional. Honor codes do not do much, but intervention might. Similarly, studies have suggested that the term plagiarism is outdated, and that the term incorrectly encompasses a wide range of writing practices, some major and others far less severe. The study’s scope was limited to first year composition (FYC) students at The University of Findlay (UF), a small Midwestern comprehensive university in Findlay, Ohio. The study utilized survey research of a control group and two experimental groups. Classes were administered a pre- and post-survey in the Fall 2015 and Spring 2016 semesters, and different video interventions were shown each semester. In addition to survey data, two study participants were also interviewed about their perception of different forms of plagiarism. While results did not lead to conclusive determination of whether videos result in a perceptual change about plagiarism, they did show that students do rank different forms of plagiarism and originality infraction by degree of severity. Study results led to two conclusions. First, videos that provide students with instructional variety and engaging content can be an excellent supplement to in-class writing exercises and face-to-face instruction. Second, students do not consider all types of plagiarism and originality infraction to be equally problematic. This necessitates use of a more extensive meta-language about plagiarism and originality infractions rather than categorizing all infractions as plagiarism.

Keywords:
Plagiarism, originality infraction, authorial voice, attribution, intervention, perception, first year composition (FYC)
DEDICATIONS

This thesis project is dedicated to my wife Lindsay who patiently supported my many hours away from home gathering data and writing this project, my parents Robert and Marlene who instilled in me a spirit of inquiry and discovery, and my grandparents Eugene and Lillian who encouraged intellectual growth as a pathway to personal empowerment and service to others.
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CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

Plagiarism on college campuses is an issue that challenges students, faculty, and administration. Those who plagiarize are often accused of “embracing the dark side” in much the same way that Darth Vader was accused of betraying his fellow Jedi when he took the easy route to power and galactic dominance. Honor codes use threats to deter would-be plagiarists from risky writing practices. However, to many students plagiarism may be viewed from a risk-rewards perspective. In the same way an English professor might take a calculated risk and speed to work in order to arrive sooner and get a prime parking space, her student might take a similar calculated risk and plagiarize a portion of his paper to get the assignment done faster or with less effort. In the above scenario, both professor and student run the risk of getting caught, but the reward is often worth the risk.

Background of the Problem

If some students view plagiarism as a risky practice with potential benefits, low risk of being caught, or minimal punishment, changing student perception about plagiarism may do little to reduce its appearance in first year composition (FYC) student writing. McCabe (2005) reports: “results of a longitudinal study of 50,000 undergraduates [show] that up to 70% of students admitted to cheating in some way and the incidence of academic misconduct was increasing” (as cited in Smedley, Crawford, and Cloete, 2015). Bennett (2005) also observes, “In one [United Kingdom] study, 46% of undergraduates reported having copied an entire paragraph into their work without acknowledgement at least once, and 23% reported having done so more than once or twice” (as cited in Elander, Pittam, Lusher, Fox, and Payne, 2010, p. 157). While many instances of plagiarism are intentional and done to save time or add length to a paper, others are unintentional, and may decrease as a writer becomes more educated about the conventions of
correct source usage. Interventions that improve understanding of different forms of plagiarism and ways to avoid them may benefit students. Research suggests that many of the issues associated with student writing do not involve cut-and-paste plagiarism, but rather, a range of other types of errors that may either be unintended or indicative of lack of understanding of conventions of correct source usage. Upon reviewing papers written by college students, Rodrigue, Serviss, and Howard (2007) found that all the writers exhibited a range of citation problems in their writing which were numerous in some cases (as cited in Howard and Davies, 2009, p. 67).

Further complicating the issue of how to reduce plagiarism on college campuses is the ongoing debate over how to define plagiarism. The same infraction may scream plagiarism to some instructors and be considered much less severe to other instructors. This variety of ways that the term plagiarism can be defined creates confusion about not only what plagiarism is, but how to address student writing containing a range of different infractions.

**Rationale, Significance and Purpose of the Study**

If a causal connection between video interventions and changed perception about different forms of plagiarism and originality infraction could be found, instructors would have at their disposal a powerful tool to change the way that students perceive plagiarism and originality infractions. The way instructors discuss plagiarism with students, which is rooted in the language used to describe infractions, might also change. Videos addressing a range of issues related to plagiarism are easily found on the internet, and could be enlisted by instructors as a resource that could be integrated into class discussion and lessons. If videos were found to create in a perceptual change in writers, it could also lead to reduction in plagiarism.
If it is determined that FYC students rank plagiarism and originality infractions by severity, with major infractions such as cut-and-paste plagiarism classified as major writing issues and others such as forgetting to provide a lead-in before quoted passages classified as minor issues, this could confirm that writers do not consider all types of infractions equally problematic. This would confirm what foundational researchers such as Rebecca Moore Howard have been suggesting for years; that the term plagiarism lumps together a range of problematic writing practices which are not all equally detrimental to authorial voice and writing growth among students. In the early stages of her career, all writing which incorporated incorrect paraphrasing and poor source attribution yielded an “F” and the opportunity to rewrite. However, as time went on, her perspectives on plagiarism gradually changed. Howard (1992) realized that in many cases problematic writing practices such as patchwriting are not reflective of a poor sense of ethics or a willful rejection of proper writing conventions. Instead, patchwriting often reflects a legitimate attempt on the writer’s part to become comfortable and adept within a complex and intimidating community of academic writers. “That this effort involves a transgression of the values of that culture is indeed an irony, for patchwriters, far from being unethical plagiarists, often strive to observe proper academic conventions (p. 236). Howard’s observation that patchwriting is a writing practice that can actually reflect a valid attempt on the writer’s part to improve writing underscores the importance of examining plagiarism and originality infractions as distinct writing practices which undermine writing quality to varying degrees.

Confirmation that FYC students rank different types of infraction differently could also encourage widespread creation and adoption a new meta-language for describing plagiarism and other types of originality infractions found in student writing. Such a meta-language would
provide instructors and students alike with a more extensive vocabulary to describe the infractions found in student writing in much the same way some Native American tribes such as the Inuit Eskimos have over 50 words to describe snow. The time has come to open up our language describing plagiarism to encompass a much wider and more nuanced range of writing practices, and this study could help move instructors and writers in the right direction.

Theoretical Framework

The current teaching model used in composition classrooms is to advise students to “use their own words” when paraphrasing others’ work, to properly quote material taken word-for-word from sources, and to not plagiarize the ideas of other writers. Instructors, myself included, advise their students of the negative ramifications of plagiarizing, including failure of the paper, reporting to the academic institution, and possible failure of the course.

Most first year composition (FYC) classrooms consist of between 15 and 22 students. ENGL104 and ENGL106 are both university competencies which all students are required to complete. In class, students learn the conventions of one of the major citation styles and are provided with examples of ways to organize ideas and thoughts in writing. Informal writing assignments serve as practice and to reinforce writing practices which are graded more strictly in longer formal papers.

Aside from being told not to do it, the topic of plagiarism is rarely brought up in class. Similarly, discussions of ways to maintain a strong authorial voice in writing and writing exercises designed to teach proper strategies of paraphrasing the ideas of others properly do not constituted a huge portion of class time. If found to create a change in the way that FYC writers perceive plagiarism, videos could be an easy way to integrate more discussion about plagiarism into class. Similarly, if found that students organize different types of infraction by degree of
severity, instructors would be more empowered to propose a range of new terms to define the nuanced range of infractions that FYC students make in their writing.

**Research Questions and Hypotheses**

The study was entered with a desire to answer the following research questions and test the following hypotheses.

**Research Questions:**

1. Do videos change the way in which students perceive different forms of plagiarism and/or originality infractions? If so, could perceptual change lead to decreased plagiarism and originality infractions in student writing?

2. Do students perceive some forms of plagiarism and originality infraction as more severe than others? Will students rank originality issues such as forgetting to include a lead-in or in-text citation as minor problems and issues such as cut-and-paste plagiarism as major problems?

**Hypotheses:**

1. Videos can be utilized with face-to-face instruction to increase student awareness of different forms of plagiarism, ways of avoiding plagiarizing, and why plagiarism undermines authorial voice. A change in perception about different forms of plagiarism and originality infractions will result in a decrease in infractions among many, but not all students.

2. Students inherently rank different forms of plagiarism and originality infraction. Students will perceive infractions which are intentional attempts incorporate the ideas of others into a written work without attribution such as cut-and-paste plagiarism and patchwriting as more serious infractions than those which are often unintentional or
the result of lazy writing practices such as forgetting to include an in-text citation or lead-in when using quoted material.

Definition of Terms

The different types of plagiarism and originality infractions have been defined below. A key distinction made in the study involves differentiating between plagiarism and originality infractions.

Plagiarism. Cutting a section of text from an outside source and pasting it into one’s own work without attributing the original source and without using quotation marks to denote a shift in voice from the author to an outside source.

Originality Infraction. Other types of writing infraction which undermine authorial voice and could be interpreted as plagiarism. Originality infractions may fit into one of five different infraction types: patchwriting, missing authorial voice, missing quotation marks, missing lead-in, and missing in-text citation.

Patchwriting. A passage of text in which the author takes a section of text and substitutes synonyms for key words without actually changing the content of the original text. In this type of originality infraction, the author has not formulated or presented a new idea to the reader, but rather, has made a minimal modification of the original text. Patchwriting can also be seen as a form of incorrect paraphrasing.

Missing Authorial Voice. The absence of a strong writing voice in which the writer asserts his or her voice over the voices of outside sources. Writing with missing authorial voice might be interesting and engaging to read, but difficult to determine whether the writing is reflective of the author’s voice or the voice of an outside source from which passages are integrated.
**Missing Quotation Marks.** The absence of quotation marks around a passage utilized word-for-word from an outside source. The writers may have provided a proper lead-in to introduce the material and an in-text citation afterwards, but quotation marks do not demarcate where the author’s writing ends and word-for-word passage from an outside source begins.

**Missing Lead-in.** There is no introduction of an outside source’s ideas such as: According to Smith (2007), . . . or Deeter observes, . . . Correctly-used quotation marks and/or an in-text citation may still be present.

**Missing In-text Citation.** There is no in-text citation within text to show readers where source information came from. The reader is unable to connect a quoted or paraphrased passage within the text to a source in the References or Works Cited page of the paper.

**Delimitations**

Delimitations of the study included the decision to use a survey research method, the classes chosen to survey, the videos selected to show to participants, the semesters chosen to survey students, and the decision to utilize different videos in the Fall 2015 and Spring 2016 semesters. A survey research method was chosen for ease of use. Surveys require minimal time when gathering data and provide a wealth of information for analysis. While there were a range of surveys available which could have been utilized in the study, the decision was made to create pre- and post-surveys so that questions could be tailored to specific types of plagiarism and originality infractions that the researchers wanted participants to rank according to degree of severity.

The classes chosen to survey were selected because of the greater experience ENGL106 students were expected to have in writing. ENGL106 is a first year composition (FYC) course,
but it is a second semester introductory composition course. It was expected that students enrolled in ENGL106 would have more experience with writing conventions, and would have stronger familiarity with writing conventions, plagiarism, and ways to avoid plagiarism.

The videos selected to show to experimental groups were chosen to present participants with instruction about how plagiarism is defined and many of the ethical implications associated with plagiarism. There was the option to create videos for the surveys, but it was decided that the wealth of videos available on Youtube offer a range of different instructional videos which presented the types of instruction desired for the study.

The semesters chosen to have participants conduct surveys was based on the researchers’ availability and availability of courses to survey. Not all course sections could be surveyed in the Fall 2015 semester, and as such, an equal number of surveys was completed in the Spring 2016 semester. The decision was made to utilize different videos in the Fall and Spring semester to see if there would be a difference in the effectiveness of one type of video versus another. Videos shown in the Fall 2015 semester had a stronger instructional element to them that defined different types of plagiarism and how to avoid them. In contrast, videos shown in the 2016 semester presented participants with ethical considerations associated with plagiarism and ways to avoid it.

**Limitations**

Limitations of the study outside of researchers’ control include whether there is a difference in the type of student enrolled in ENGL106 in the Fall versus Spring semester and whether the student responses were accurate representations of the way students perceive different forms of plagiarism.
While research does not suggest that stronger students generally enroll in ENGL106 in one semester or the other, there are still some differences in the types of students who enroll in the Fall versus Spring sections of the course. Similarly, there are differences in individual classes that could not be controlled in the study.

Another limitation of the study is not knowing whether student responses were accurate reflections of their true perceptions about different forms of plagiarism and originality infraction. A FYC participant in the study might, for example, reflect what she or he has been taught about plagiarism in the surveys, but it might not coincide with how she or he actually feels about plagiarism and other types of originality infractions.

Yet another limitation lies in the differentiation between perception and likelihood to commit plagiarism. For example, a FYC student might be fully cognizant of the ways that cutting and pasting sections of text from an outside source without attribution problematizes writing and undermines authorial voice, but might still choose to conduct this practice because the risk is worth the potential reward. Thus, measuring a difference in student perception about different forms of plagiarism and originality infraction might reduce plagiarism among all students.

**Researcher Bias**

This study has several researcher biases, including the researcher’s experience teaching first year composition and working in a college writing center, as well as the preconceived notion that many FYC students do not understand correct writing techniques and that this predisposes many students to producing writing that contains plagiarism and other forms of originality infractions.

The researcher’s experience teaching first year composition has exposed him to many infractions ranging from minor originality infractions to plagiarism. This experience has left the
researcher with the belief that the problem of student writing containing plagiarism and a range of originality infractions is widespread, possibly more than it actually is. Working in a community college writing center has also created a bias in the researcher that many students do not know how to write properly and thus are very prone to weaving plagiarism and originality infractions into their writing. I must therefore be mindful of the fact that most students who visit writing centers are students who struggle with writing conventions, and are thus not representative of the majority of student writers.
In a South African study that examined the efficacy of interventions intended to reduce plagiarism, it was found that “despite these interventions, a quarter of the students were judged to have plagiarized in an essay assignment” (Ellery, 2008, p. 508). Most writers who plagiarized were not deliberately trying to deceive the reader, but instead didn’t fully understand the referencing guidelines covered in the study’s instructional module. Some writers also had difficulty with other more fundamental features of the writing process such utilizing language and sources to establish the author’s identity.

This study underscores that few students intend to plagiarize when they write. Instead, they have difficulty navigating a range of writing conventions which can be confusing and intimidating. Utilizing a range of sources about a subject the student has limited understanding of can range from daunting to nearly impossible. Often, mistakes found in student writing equate to misunderstanding writing conventions or limited abilities at writing skills such as paraphrasing and source attribution.

The same study that found “little deliberate intent to deceive” noted Park’s (2003) description of the reasons students plagiarize, including “lack of understanding; efficiency gain; time management; personal values or attitudes; defiance; attitudes towards teachers; denial; temptation and opportunity; and lack of deterrence” (as cited in Ellery, 2008, 507). Based on observations such as these, many might surmise that plagiarism is often not an issue not involving moral decrepitude or intention to deceive, but rather a lack of understanding of the conventions of academic writing.

Research suggests that instructional interventions intended to educate students about different forms of plagiarism can be effective at reducing plagiarism. In addition to intervention
effectiveness, instructor assertions that the digital age is at the center of the plagiarism issue hint that instructional strategies that amalgamate intervention with digital technology may be the most effective way to address the plagiarism issue. If plagiarism is at the very least facilitated by digital technology, interventions that are delivered digitally may be more effective at preventing plagiarism than interventions delivered face-to-face or through other modalities. This study seeks to determine whether instructional videos yield a noticeable change in perception about plagiarism and originality infractions. It is hypothesized that the degree of severity FYC student writers assign to different forms of plagiarism and originality infractions will be measurably higher after watching instructional videos. For example, it is hypothesized that FYC student writers who describe infractions as very minor or minor will mark the same issues as more severe after watching video interventions.

Faculty often find addressing plagiarism within their classrooms to be difficult and are challenged by assessing when a student’s writing infraction is severe enough to warrant punishment. Additionally, it can be challenging to determine whether the decision was intentional: and the issue should be classified as an originality infraction or plagiarism. Presenting students with opportunities to learn about different forms of plagiarism and how to avoid them can allow instructors to open up dialogue about plagiarism and discuss it with students in a relaxed, non-accusatory fashion. In a study by Elander, Pittam, Lusher, Fox, and Payne (2010), an instructional intervention was utilized to increase student understanding of different forms of plagiarism and how to reduce or eliminate them in writing. A questionnaire administered to students following the intervention found favorable results. According to the study, many students believed that the intervention helped them to avoid plagiarism, produce better writing, and enjoy the writing process more. Over half of the participants believed that the
intervention prevented them from needing to ask for additional outside help or support (Elander et. al., 2010, p. 163). Favorable responses from students about interventions designed to reduce plagiarism suggest that students not only learn from such interventions, but welcome the opportunity to expand their understanding of ways to avoid plagiarism in their writing. In addition to the study conducted by Elander et. al, other research suggests that plagiarism instruction can have similarly positive results.

A study conducted by Holt (2012) found that instruction about plagiarism had a significant influence on student ability to detect plagiarism. The study observed that “the first week of class, the students who had passed a university-level introductory biology course or its equivalent were incorrectly labeling plagiarism (or the lack thereof) in one out of four cases” (Holt, 2012, pp. 588-589). Holt’s study found “at the end of the semester, the students trained to avoid plagiarism had greater success in the discrimination of poor paraphrases, improper attribution, and a lack of quotation marks” (p. 589). Many previous studies utilized focus groups or direct interventions in which students received instruction within the classroom. Research on the effectiveness of video-based intervention at changing student perception of plagiarism fills a gap in existing literature as it examines whether a teaching tool rooted in technology can change the way writers view plagiarism and other forms of infraction. This study seeks to fill this gap in existing literature by examining how effective video interventions are at changing student perception of different forms of plagiarism was more limited.

Since interventions have been shown to teach help students better understand and avoid plagiarism, this study seeks to determine whether video interventions might be equally effective. Past interventions have taken the form of focus groups, discussion, and instruction. Studies suggest that interventions provide students with the opportunity to reflect on their writing
practices, think about how their writing is representative of their own unique identity, and
establish ethos with their reader. Indeed, digitally-delivered plagiarism intervention may benefit
many individuals within an academic institution. The first group of beneficiaries; students,
might find video-delivery of instructional material about plagiarism to be more interesting and
engaging than other delivery methods. DeGeeter, Harris, Kehr, Ford, Lane, Nuzum, Compton,
and Gibson (2014) found that “the effectiveness of honor codes and penalties on reducing the
incidence of plagiarism have not been established in the literature; however, providing some
form of concrete intervention, such as live or Web-based education programs specifically
designed to educate students about plagiarism, can be effective” (p. 4). DeGeeter’s observation
that Web-based education can be effective at instructing students suggests that more research
into digitally based plagiarism instruction is needed.

In addition to students, instructors might also benefit from digital instruction on
plagiarism. The topic of plagiarism can be a difficult one to pose to students. Mentioning the
word plagiarism often puts all individuals on the defensive and creates concern that the writing
practices being utilized by students, the way in which an instructor is teaching, or both, are
substandard. Showing a video to a class can often be a more innocuous way to bring the subject
up within a classroom. A video about plagiarism could serve as the framework upon which to
build a class discussion. A short video can also lay the groundwork for classroom activities that
practice strategies for correctly paraphrasing the ideas of others and correctly using in-text
citations to acknowledge the work of another.

Still another potential beneficiary of digitally presented plagiarism intervention are the
academic institutions often tasked with simultaneously deterring and policing plagiarism on
campuses. Administration at academic institutions often lump all types of plagiarism with other
forms of academic dishonesty. Institutions must decide how to punish acts of plagiarism and deter recidivism. The primary strategy institutions utilize to deter plagiarism is an academic honor code meant to increase ethical standards among students. Using punishment as a way to deter plagiarism may be effective at deterring some would-be plagiarists, in the same way that speed limits deter some would-be speeders. However, honor codes don’t address why instructors and institutions should be deterring plagiarism in the first place: to strengthen authorial identity and agency.

**Plagiarism in the Spotlight**

Several high profile plagiarism cases have brought plagiarism to the forefront of the public’s eye. One case involved Master’s Degree students in the Engineering Department at Ohio University. Another case tainted the reputation of an up-and-coming German writer whose writing was found to contain plagiarized content. In yet another case, also in Germany, the careers of multiple politicians were cut short by plagiarism allegations.

**The Ohio University case.** In an interview with National Public Radio’s (NPR’s) Steve Inskeep, reporter Fred Kight, described a plagiarism case at Ohio University (OU) which briefly blighted the school’s engineering program. Kight (2006) describes former OU Engineering Student Tom Mattrka’s experience when his thesis advisor requested changes to his project proposal. In response, Mattrka reviewed past thesis projects at the OU library and discovered numerous examples of plagiarism. “[Mattrka said] in one case more then [sic] 50 pages had been copies, and another 14 pages, including typos” (as cited in Inskeep). The discovery led to institutional response that impacted students and faculty members alike.

Much of the resulting scandal affected the theses of non-native student writers. The case demonstrated how quickly a concern of plagiarism within student work can enact harsh
punishment, even when the alleged plagiarism occurred many years beforehand. According to an Associated Press (2006) article, Ohio University found evidence corroborating Matrka’s claim and requested that the predominately international students involved address the allegations of plagiarism against them or “risk having their degrees revoked.” With the institution’s reputation and Engineering program at risk, Ohio University sought a swift and efficient reconciliation to the allegations made against 39 of its former students.

While much of the scandal in OU’s Engineering Program focused on former students, faculty members did not remain unscathed. One advisor; Dr. Bhavin Mehta’s, justification for why the plagiarism occurred did not sit well with Matrka or others at Ohio University. Mehta was the advisor for many of the thesis projects which allegedly were plagiarized. Sidestepping accusations of student wrongdoing, Mehta instead linked the plagiarism to student inexperience with writing conventions. Mehta asserted, “They were not really intending to copy.” Claiming ignorance was not acceptable to Tom Matrka, the student who originally discovered the plagiarism, or to OU who granted degrees for the theses with plagiarized content. Matrka described that “he was frustrated because he couldn’t get his thesis proposal approved ‘and you had students who were cheaters moving on.’”

The OU plagiarism case suggests that for academic institutions, catching and punishing plagiarism serves the purpose of maintaining and restoring Ethos to the institution. When a pattern of plagiarism, which is not being adequately handled by faculty and advisors, the institution must step in to bring about swift punishment to perpetrators and corrective action to individuals who weren’t correcting the plagiarized papers. Permitting plagiarized work, regardless of whether the writer intended to plagiarize or not, demonstrates an institutional inability to teach writers the standards of writing and source use upon which Western academic
institutions are built. Similarly, much like a devalued currency, the value of a degree from an institution that has been accused of plagiarism allegations might be undermined as well if not punished.

While it is beyond the scope of this study, the OU plagiarism case highlights how plagiarism not only involves ethical standards, but also weaves racial and cultural differences into its conceptual paradigm. OU’s Tom Mattrka, presumably a Caucasian Engineering student, was concerned that he could not get a project approved by following correct protocol within the Engineering Department. Meanwhile, numerous other students, mostly from Sri Lanka, had successfully passed the requirements of their Master’s Degrees while working under an Indian-born thesis advisor. Mattrka was stuck and unable to move ahead while a slew of plagiarists had advanced to a variety of careers in Engineering. None of those accused of plagiarizing would have been caught had it not been for Mattrka’s investigation.

As American Universities continue to attract international students interested in earning degrees, similar clashes to the one which occurred at OU will likely occur. As academia moves forward in creating a set of terms which identify the range of infractions that can be found in writing, instructors and students alike will be better equipped to discuss ways of maintaining writing originality and addressing concerns when they arise.

Axolotl Roadkill. A recent case in Germany highlights how there are limits to the degree to which the intertextual connection between works can be capitalized upon when writing. Author Helene Hegemann’s novel Axolotl Roadkill was initially praised by critics as a powerful work that would certainly prove to be the first of many works by the talented 17-year-old author. However, the acclaim Hegemann received was short-lived. A blogger posted that Axolotl Roadkill was very similar to another work titled “Strobo.” “In one case, an entire page was lifted
with few changes” (Kulish, 2010, A4). The discovery was a significant blow to Hegemann’s career and elicited a response from the young writer which deflected blame and instead suggested a fundamental shift in the way sources are used.

Hegemann’s rationale for how she used Arien’s work did not admit fault or mistake on her part; but rather, suggested her writing style represented a new way of approaching the writing craft. Kulish observed,

Although Ms. Hegemann has apologized for not being more open about her sources, she has also defended herself as a representative of a different generation, one that freely mixes and matches from the whirling flood of information across new and old media, to create something new (A4).

While Hegemann presented her writing style as no different from the writing of anyone else who capitalizes on the intertextual connection between works, perhaps the greatest flaw in Hegemann’s writing is the profit she made from *Axolotyl Roadkill*.

**Plagiarizing politicians.** In another recent case, several high ranking German political officials were deposed from their posts after plagiarism allegations. Annette Schaven, who ironically served as Germany’s education minister, was one of the alleged plagiarists. Schaven’s doctorate from Heinrich Heine University in Düsseldorf when it was found that Scaven didn’t properly cite passages from other sources in her thesis. The resulting scandal required Schaven to relinquish her political post (Hockenos, 2013, p. A25).

Ethos is also at the heart of concerns felt in the aftermath of the case. Wolfgang E.J. Weber, director of the Institute for European Cultural History, describes, “The reputation of German universities is suffering, and it looks like it will suffer for some time to come” (as cited in Hockenos, 2013, A26). The case in Germany suggests another disturbing trend related to
plagiarism: in some instances accusations of plagiarism are not done to restore the credibility of an institution, but rather is the result is done of undermine or oust a political adversary. In such cases the credibility of those involved is not as important as removing a potential political rival through accusations of plagiarism.

With the significant impact that plagiarism can have on academic institutions and careers, many questions begin to go through the minds of instructors and administrators at academic institutions. Foremost is how to identify plagiarism when it appears. While it isn’t difficult to find issue with a work that contains entire pages taken from another source, other examples aren’t so clear cut. What, for example, is a professor of FYC students to make of a work that properly cites all sources used in the paper, but is ultimately little more than an effective summary of sources? The individual grading the paper is left to wonder whether such a work that contains none of the author’s original ideas, analysis, or synthesis, might be entering plagiaristic waters.

In other instances, a student might have masterfully patchwritten the work of another author. In the place of certain words, synonyms have been swapped out with other words such that the finished work doesn’t match other known words when checked with an online plagiarism checker, but is also not representative of the author’s own thoughts. In this example, it seems a bit more clear-cut that the writing is plagiarism. However, whether minor instances of this form of plagiarism within the writing of a FYC student warrants failure of a paper or course is also debatable.

While the lines between what is an original interpretation of another idea, or at the very least, a properly cited reference to another’s idea within a work of writing, there is also considerable confusion regarding should be considered plagiarized content and what is original.
Easy access to a myriad of ideas on seemingly any subject imaginable produces countless snares that can entangle even the most careful of writers. But there are snares in this process and at every corner the writer risks plagiarism.

This raises the question of whether a properly-cited work that takes existing ideas and remixes them into a well-crafted amalgam of the ideas of others is in fact writing. The reader, who could easily access the range of sources listed on the References page of a work yearns for something more, and rightly so. This study seeks to determine how first year composition (FYC) students perceive different forms of plagiarism, and whether they attribute greater problem with certain forms of plagiarism as opposed to others. Through this process, I hope to also shed light on whether the things that first-year composition instructors do in the classroom; namely, engage in instructional exercises about plagiarism and utilize resources which provide students with examples of different forms of plagiarism, change student perception of different forms of plagiarism.

**Defining Plagiarism**

While many individuals have a very clear definition of plagiarism, others attest that the definition can be more elusive. Some assert, “I can’t tell you exactly what plagiarism is, but I know it when I see it,” while others assign different terms to different types of infractions, as this study does. For many, the term “plagiarism” is appealing because it allows a range of different infractions that may or may not be intentional to fit into one category. Howard (2002a) asserts, “We like the word ‘plagiarism’ because it seems simple and straightforward: Plagiarism is representing the words of another as one’s own, our college policies say, and we tell ourselves, ‘There! It’s clear. Students are responsible for reading those policies and observing their guidelines’” (pp. 47-48). Howard (2001) distinguishes between “four types of academic
plagiarism: (a) submission of a paper that was written by other student; (b) patchwriting – copying sentences from a source and mixing them with your own words without attribution; (c) failure to cite sources, and; (d) failure to use quotation marks.” (as cited in Baruchson-Arbib and Yaari, 2004, p. 2)

For the purposes of this study, the term plagiarism is limited to instances in which the writer has taken one or more sections of text from another source and inserted it into his or her writing without attribution. For all other infractions in which source information is incorrectly attributed or another author’s voice is not apparent, the term originality infraction is used. This decision wasn’t made to ameliorate the term plagiarism reduce accountability for writers who intentionally attempt to deceive their reader and pass off the writing of others as their own work. Rather, it is a rhetorical decision intended to serve two distinct purposes. First, the strategy is intended to create a more diverse nomenclature that can be used to describe the types of writing errors which undermine authorial voice. Second, distinguishing between plagiarism and originality infraction assigns different degrees of intentionality to different types of writing issues. This study assigns the term plagiarism to intentional writing decisions intended to save time, increase a paper’s length, or decrease the amount of work that a writer must do. In contrast, most originality infractions are unintentional and do not represent a willful attempt on the part of the writer to deceive the reader. While it is much easier to immediately define writing infractions such as cutting large section of text from a source, pasting it into one’s own writing, and passing it off as one’s own ideas with no attribution of the original source as plagiarism, other examples are more challenging. One type of writing practice that occupies a grey boundary between plagiarism and original writing is patchwriting. When patchwriting, a writer is often attempting to become comfortable with the conventions of an unknown discourse
community by swapping out synonyms and other words from an existing passage. Other writing practices that occupy a grey area between plagiarism and original writing are paraphrasing the work of another author with some adequately rewritten text but other sections that bear too great a similarity to the original source, remixing the ideas of others without effectively contributing one’s own ideas in a piece of writing, forgetting to include quotation marks, and leaving out in-text citations. The degree of severity of different forms of plagiarism and originality infraction is visually represented on the Ryder Scale of Originality Infraction (Fig. 1). Infractions range from major at the top to minor at the bottom.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7</th>
<th><strong>Plagiarism</strong>: Sections of text are cut and pasted from other sources without attribution.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td><strong>Patchwriting</strong>: Words are substituted for one another with little difference from original source.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><strong>Voiceless Montage</strong>: A variety of sources are used but the author’s own voice is absent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td><strong>Pure Remix</strong>: A variety of sources are used but the author’s own voice is only minimally apparent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><strong>Absence of quotation marks</strong>: Source is attributed, but quotation marks do not surround one or more word-for-word passages from an outside source.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><strong>Absence of signal phrase or lead-in</strong>: A signal phrase or lead-in does not proceed quoted passages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>Absence of in-text citations</strong>: In-text citations are not utilized within text.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 1*. Ryder Scale of Originality Infraction. This figure presents a proposed scale which ranks plagiarism and originality infractions by degree of infraction severity.
A review of literature suggests that the Ryder Scale of Originality Infraction is one of the first attempts to organize different forms of plagiarism and originality infraction by degree of infraction. However, there have been many other attempts to assign different names to different forms of plagiarism. The *WriteCheckVideos* series, which created one of the videos used for this study, describes the Top 10 forms of plagiarism as “clone, CTRL-C, find-replace, remix, recycle, hybrid, mashup, 404 error, aggregator, and re-tweet” plagiarism (10 Types of Plagiarism). This range of terms used in the *WriteCheckVideos* series represents a wonderful first step towards incorporating a range of different terms describing different forms of plagiarism into use.

**Plagiarism: A Question of Intention?**

Intentionality is another issue related to plagiarism that becomes apparent when instructors look at a questionable student writing and have to assess whether the infraction was an intentional attempt to deceive or confuse the reader, or unintentional errors stemming from lack of understanding of rules or conventions or laziness in applying known conventions correctly. In such instances, the instructor must briefly put her or himself in the shoes of an investigator who must ascertain the guilt of an accused perpetrator of a crime. The instructor must decide if the writing she or he is looking at exists in the realm of true plagiarism, in which the writer has wilfully attempted to deceive the reader with sections of text that aren’t the author’s own writing. When intentionality seems definite or highly probable, the instructor must often decide how to proceed with punishing the infraction. If intentionality or understanding of correct writing conventions is questionable, the work is often lumped into another category of problematic, but potentially less devastating originality infractions. Originality infractions usually do not represent intentional attempts to deceive the reader and are teachable moments for student and
instructor growth. Testing the effectiveness of videos as readily available and easily utilized “teachable moments” within a composition instructor’s repertoire is the focus of this work.

But herein lies one of the underlying issues associated with policing plagiarism and instructing students how to avoid it. Plagiarism is not a crime. At worst, it reflects a lack of appreciation or concern about the rules of original authorship. At best, plagiarism is a correctable issue of techne afflicting many writers who enter an academic setting. Plagiarism is at its core an academic concern, and when we teach writers that plagiarism has serious implications within an academic setting, that degree of seriousness associated with the theft of others’ ideas may not be as problematic in other settings.

For writers who intend to deceive their readers educational intervention may not be beneficial: Better understanding of ways to avoid different types of originality infractions might not deter a writer who enters a writing project intending to use the ideas of other writers and pass them off as his or her own. In contrast, writers who have a better understanding of the many types of originality infractions that one can make might demonstrate significant reduction in errors as a result of educational interventions.

Gross (2011) suggests that plagiarism is not as much an issue of ignorance or lack of understanding of writing conventions, but rather is the result of a change in the value system adopted by today’s students. Gross’s study utilizes values shift theory and concludes that “the acceptance of cheating among students is the product of a different, post-millennial, value orientation toward what education means and how to obtain it” (p. 435). While watching videos is unlikely to change the value system that students bring with them into the classroom, it may be effective at changing the perception students have about the importance of avoiding plagiarism and ensuring that a writer incorporates sources into his or her work correctly.
Student interviews conducted by Power (2009) revealed a range of reasons students chose to plagiarize, including

It is easy to do; they are confident they won’t get caught; laziness (usually attributed to others); there is no victim; an assignment is deemed busywork; they don’t like or don’t understand the class or topic; they feel pressured for grades; they procrastinate; they don’t know how to avoid it; they are unaware that they are plagiarizing; they have a sense that plagiarism in school is more acceptable than in the real world; they lack the ability to rephrase; they feel the professor didn’t give enough time to complete the assignment (p. 649).

Thus, there seems to be distribution among intentional reasons to plagiarize where a writer willfully chooses to plagiarize. In many instances, this may be akin to other behaviors which would be considered a violation of a law or rule in an effort to achieve some form of personal gain. For my Master’s degree, I weekly travel between Columbus and Findlay, Ohio. A great deal of the trip is through farmland where the temptation to exceed the speed limit to arrive at school or return home quicker is very high. I frequently find myself easing off my vehicle’s accelerator after realizing that I’m approaching 10 miles per hour over the speed limit. I have to check my desire to reach my destination quicker by reminding myself that I could get a ticket by one of the many police cruisers monitoring the road for potential speeders.

Plagiarism may be very similar for many FYC students. Oftentimes, students know plagiarism is something they shouldn’t do, but are tempted by the act’s promise of allowing larger amounts of written work to be produced in a shorter amount of time. A myriad of justifications probably go through the individual’s mind who chooses to plagiarize. In the same way that I told myself “there’s minimal risk to driving fast because all that’s out here are cows
and corn,” or “this road is so flat and straight it begs to be driven at no less than 85 miles per hour” when driving between my home and place of graduate study, so too might the would-be plagiarist find numerous reasons to justify his or her decision to plagiarize.

After realizing that students plagiarize for a number of reasons, some intentional and others unintentional, the next thing to consider is whether or not intervention could deter an individual from plagiarizing. While some may choose to plagiarize regardless of whether they have been provided with ample instruction on ways to avoid plagiarism, intervention may also significantly empower many students to avoid plagiarizing. In her study of reasons students plagiarize, Power (2009) noted that one of the students she interviewed, Beth, observed that in many instances, instructors advise students not to plagiarize, but fail to teach ways to avoid the practice. Beth noted that it can be detrimental for students to write with the belief that they are infallible experts in the subjects they’re writing about, as instructors also want to demonstrate their command of the subject. The result can be that instructors sometimes focus heavily on the subject of writing and don’t take the time to help students understand proper writing mechanics (Power, 2009, p. 652).

When little instruction accompanies honor codes intended to scare students into using sources correctly, the result can lead to student frustration. In Beth’s case, because a threat is being substituted for sound pedagogy, “Beth is frustrated by her professors’ assumption that warnings of dire consequences are the best means to prevent plagiarism. She, and others like her, craves the skill (or agency) to know when and how and why to cite sources to support her own voice” (Power, 2009, p. 652). The notion of agency is an important one when it comes to plagiarism. While it is important to remind students of the consequences of plagiarism, it is also important to provide instruction about plagiarism and advise why plagiarism is assigned the
often severe consequences it is. When considering the classical rhetorical strategy of Ethos, plagiarism is the antithesis of strong Ethos in writing. Plagiarism amounts to hijacking the words of other authors without recognizing the other writers. There seems to be few ways that authorial voice could be undermined to a greater extent than through such practice. While the issue of maintaining authorial voice and strong Ethos in one’s writing should be of utmost concern to every writer, this doesn’t appear to be the case with many FYC students. Instead of being an issue that should exist at the core of a writer’s authorial identity, many writers seem to place the focus of plagiarism’s importance not on themselves, but on their professors and the institutions. All students should understand why plagiarism is problematic and how it undermines a writer’s voice. However, for many students the focus of plagiarism is shifted. Problematic writing thus becomes something a student’s professor or institution is concerned about, but not the student (Power, 2009, p. 656).

Intervention that is successful in transitioning student concern about plagiarism away from the instructor or institution and on the student could be highly effective at reaching FYC students. This study chose to utilize short videos about plagiarism as instructional tools given current research that multimodal presentation may be effective at helping learners better understand a range of topics. Power (2009) notes, “Students maintain a curious sense of separation from the phenomenon of plagiarism. They do not claim it as their own. For these students, plagiarism is very often couched in terms of otherness” (p. 657). Perhaps by utilizing a range of strategies, including video and other forms of intervention which distribute power more equally between instructor and student, students will see reasons for changing attitudes towards plagiarism.
Plagiarism from a Historical Perspective

If we were to go back to Homer’s time when the Greek poets sang for audiences, we would find that the concept of plagiarism was virtually nonexistent. The Homeric question of whether oral texts such as the *Odyssey* were composed by one or multiple authors reminds scholars that in Homer’s time ideas weren’t owned, and could not be protected in the way modern copyrights assign authorial ownership to written material. The articulate utterances of one poet could be freely utilized and woven into the composition of another, often with the other poet’s own additions and embellishments. This compositional strategy exemplifies remix in its purist form, and was utilized by oral composers to create new works which arose from extensive collaboration.

Porter (1986) reminds us that the composition strategy utilized by Homer and his contemporaries is equally at home in written discourse. Porter notes, “Not infrequently, and perhaps ever and always, texts refer to other texts and in fact rely on them for their meaning. All texts are interdependent: We understand a text only insofar as we understand its precursors” (p. 225). Thus, while it is easy to imagine a work of writing as distinct and separate from works which came before and those that will follow, perhaps a better way to think of a text is as a rhizome amidst a sea of other nodes in which ideas and concepts overlap and intermix. While a great author is often thought of as an individual who creates original ideas distinct and unique from others, the phrase “great appropriator of existing ideas” might be a better fit than “author.”

Porter uses Thomas Jefferson as an example of a writer who skillfully appropriated the ideas of others. Porter describes, “Jefferson was a skilled writer, to be sure, but chiefly because he was an effective borrower of traces” (p. 226). The same practices Jefferson utilized in his writing would be labeled plagiarism by many writing instructors today. When an author draws
from a range of sources without properly attributing those sources, the writing effectively becomes a co-authored work. Such was the case with Jefferson’s Declaration of Independence, in which the ideas of many authors were woven into a singular document to which Jefferson declared himself sole author (Porter, 1986, p. 227).

Porter’s observation reminds us that the composition process is at best a process of amalgamating what Ron Tulley, Dean of Arts and Sciences at The University of Findlay, describes as “nuggets of thought,” to create something new. As with the Greek orators, modern day writers draw from a range of ideas surrounding them and assemble the ideas into something “new.”

While there is no doubt that the intertextual connection between ideas is one that every author utilizes throughout the writing process, there is also a limit to which the ideas of others can be freely used in writing. The Hegemann case mentioned earlier highlights how a strong intertextual connection between texts can be abused if a writer simply cuts and pastes a large section of another’s writing into his or her own work without attributing the original source.

Indeed, the very notions of plagiarism and original authorship are rooted in copyright law and writing for profit. Woodmansee (1984) observes,

> In my view the ‘author’ in its modern sense is a relatively recent invention. Specifically, it is the product of the rise in the eighteenth century of a new group of individuals: writers who sought to earn their livelihood from the sale of their writings to the new and rapidly expanding reading public (p. 426).

Woodmansee describes how authors had to protect their ideas from others who might seek to steal and use their writing for profit. The copyright was a way to protect one’s ideas from theft and ensured that one’s writing would remain profitable.
Woodmansee associates the eighteenth century with the rise of the modern notion of authorship. Before the eighteenth century, writing was seen more as a craft than an inspired work written by an originary genius. The author who transcended what was required to effectively communicate a message through written discourse was no longer identified as a mere craftsman or craftswoman. She or he possessed either an innate gift, or was divinely-inspired (Woodmansee, 1984, p. 427). Woodmansee describes, “These two conceptions of the writer—as craftsman and as inspired—would seem to be incompatible with each other; yet they coexisted, often between the covers of a single treatise, until well into the eighteenth century” (p. 427). These distinctions seem to persist today. Writing instructors often separate the craftsmen and craftswomen in their classes who adequately meet the requirements of course assignments from the inspired writers whose ideas seem to be called forth from less clearly-defined, even mystical place.

In much the same way that craftsmen and craftswomen of today are considered highly adept at using available tools to create, so too were Eighteenth Century writers seen as adept at utilizing ideas (traces in Porter’s nomenclature), to create something new. While a work written by a skilled writer bears the author’s stamp, it would not be considered a work of originary genius unless it, as Woodmansee describes, “managed to rise above the requirements of the occasion to achieve something higher” (p. 427). As eighteenth-century theorists departed from the previously held distinction between writers as craftsmen and writers as originary geniuses. The first departure was made by minimizing the role that craftsmanship played in the writing process. The second departure came in the form of internalizing the writer’s source of ideas. Inspiration, which was once seen as originating from an outside source or a divine entity, was now something that originated from within the writer (p. 427). “’Inspiration’ came to be
explicated in terms of original genius, with the consequence that the inspired work was made peculiarly and distinctively the product—and property—of the writer” (p. 427). Perhaps largely due to the large sums of money exchanging hands for written works, authors could no longer compose in the way the Greek poets did thousands of years before by combining narrative fragments attributed to a range of other singers without attribution. When 21st author Helene Hegemann tried to do she was sternly reprimanded.

This idea of the “inspired” author who conveys a range of ideas to her or his audience without utilizing the ideas of others placed writers in a new position in society. No longer could the writer stand alongside a furniture maker, carpenter, or jeweler and be considered simply a skilled craftsman adept at his or her skill. This new concept of the writer as an inspired individual had significant implications for the use of others’ ideas as well. If one was inspired, there shouldn’t be need to continually tap into the fountain of ideas heard and read by the author. Rather, the inspiration should come from within. When a writer did use the ideas of others, she or he had to acknowledge those ideas so that full credit was given to the writer who originally penned the thought.

When a writer practices her or his craft, a highly complex process is at work. The writer draws upon a wide range of ideas that have been read, heard, or discussed within his or her academic community. Additionally, the writer takes the ideas he or she has been exposed to and reworks them into new ideas or variations of preceding ideas. The writer makes connections with other texts and ideas that she or he has been exposed to and reveals those connections through writing an original work. Woodmansee (1984) describes the shift in thinking that gave rise to viewing an author as the sole creator of an original work. She notes,
Eighteenth-century theorists departed from this compound model of writing [which separated writers who were craftsmen that assembled the ideas of others into new works from writers who were inspired originary artists] in two significant ways. They minimized the element of craftsmanship (in some instances they simply discarded it) in favor of the element of inspiration, and they internalized the source of that inspiration. That is, inspiration came to be regarded as emanating not from outside or above, but from within the writer himself. “Inspiration” came to be explicated in terms of original genius, with the consequence that the inspired work was made peculiarly and distinctively the product-and the property-of the writer” (Woodmansee, 1984, p. 427).

While many instructors and FYC students still adhere to a model that designates gifted writers as “original geniuses,” change is in the air. Greater understanding of the crucial role that intertextuality and exposure to a range of other ideas plays in the writing process has assigned greater significance to the role of writer as craftsman or craftswoman.

**Plagiarism Today**

Flash forward to 2016. The internet has made available a wealth of information that can be utilized by writers for seemingly any purpose, noble or corrupt. Adept at utilizing a range of technologies such as the cut and paste feature in word processing programs, internet searches which can yield everything from source information to complete papers on any number of subjects, and at times a blunted understanding of why the free use of a range of sources to add length or content to a piece of writing is problematic, today’s students can complicate the many benefits of technological literacy with technology abuse which does little more than utilize technology to further student “chicanery, fraud, collusion, and plagiarism” (Ammari, 2010, p. 4).
Ammari presents a particularly bleak outlook on today’s student writers, particularly given the wealth of electronic resources available that strengthen and improve writing. While many instructors suggest that the digital age is directly to blame for many issues plaguing modern authors, some suggest otherwise. Simmons (1999) observes that plagiarism is by no means a new phenomenon, and that students have been doing it for hundreds of years. Still, many researchers point to the internet, and its wealth of easily-accessed information, as the cause of plagiarism. (as cited in Howard and Davies, 2010, p. 66). Dant (1986) conducted a survey of high school students well before widespread use of the internet in which most students admitted to plagiarizing at least a portion of their writing. This shows how the internet complicates, didn’t create the plagiarism issue (as cited in Howard and Davies, 2010, p. 66).

As Howard notes, the internet has certainly complicated the plagiarism issue. The internet provides developing writers with a wealth of sources that can be utilized in a variety of incorrect ways to produce a text quickly and minimal thought or effort. However, it cannot be ignored that plagiarism has been around for millennia. The way plagiarism is defined and manner in which plagiarism is associated with deficiency in a writer’s skill, understanding of conventions, or moral compass has changed over the centuries. However, individuals have been copying the ideas of others and presenting them as their own since the first primitive writing instruments touched stone or papyrus tablets.

Reid (2007) offers new ways to think of the composition process, particularly as it applies to composition in the digital age. Reid’s approach is to examine writing as a process involving “rip, mix, bum” when moving from the acquisition of sources to composing something new. Reid uses the lowly mushroom to contextualize the first step in the composition process. He describes, “Much like the mushroom, the compositional saprophyte breaks down (digests,
interprets, or actualizes) textual matter. That is, it injects itself into an existing composition and rips material from it, digesting the content for its own uses” (p. 132). The analogy is a powerful one, and certainly imparts humility within a writer. As I compose this work, I like to think of the process I am utilizing as more than simply “digesting” the parts that I find of value with the goal of utilizing those components for my own purposes. Upon consideration; however, this may be exactly what I am doing as I write, drawing upon the beneficial ideas and traces within a work in the same way a Venus fly trap utilizes beneficial macromolecules, proteins, and amino acids extracted from an insect it has snared. Reid reminds his readers that while this process accurately represents what a writer does when creating his or her own work, there are also complications to the process. He describes,

Of course, ripping is anathema to the marketplace-factory logic of the traditional classroom, which insists upon consistent interpretation and exchange (for grades) and thus cannot accept the notion of ripping from a shared collection of data, without a payment being made, without an acknowledgement of debt (a citation) (p. 133).

While it is hard to imagine the process by which scholars utilize the works of others as anything other than ripping, it is also not difficult to see why the process would be frowned upon by many individuals. The reader of a text should ideally be engaging with the author, searching for intertextual connections and connections to one’s life, observations, and experiences. When examined from Reid’s perspective, the process of ripping seems more akin to the way the pitcher plant, a carnivorous plant native to Ohio and Michigan, lures a fly to the slippery edge of its vessel-shaped leaves, trapping and digesting its quarry to utilize its component proteins and macromolecules. Even the term “ripping” suggests a process of tearing away important parts and leaving the unneeded behind.
Less violent is Reid’s next stage in the composition process: mixing. Reid discusses the rhizomatic connection between ripped material combined to create something new. Like other organisms that exist as part of a rhizomatic community of living creatures, individual extensions of the larger community are often easily found by the individual who wishes to compose with them. Ripped saprophytes, like mushrooms found on the forest floor, are mixed by capitalizing on the rhizomatic connection between individual saprophytes. “Infectious beats on the music mix” are produced by the combining of parts to produce a unique, and new, whole (Reid, 2007, p. 136). As Reid describes, the different parts which constitute a whole are combined through the process of mixing, and there is eventually a final stage in which the ripped material is assembled into a new whole work. Reid refers to this process as burning, and compares it to burning a CD containing a mix of songs. As music is burned onto a CD, ripped content is organized in layers similarly to how software programs layer content until the time comes to “flatten the layers” by “burning” a new file (p. 139).

The burning process represents the successful culmination of ripping content from a variety of sources and mixing those sources into something new with the addition of the author’s own insights. The comparison between burning a CD and burning a finished piece of writing is a useful one which also takes into account the changes that will occur to a burned work, but will ultimately require that the finished work be burned anew.

**Plagiarism and Technology**

While using others’ ideas without giving credit has existed since the first writing instruments touched stone and papyrus tablets, the internet age has facilitated plagiarism by providing writers with access to content on virtually any subject imaginable and technology which makes copying the work of others into one’s own writing simple. Howard and Davies (2009) observe, “Certain
features of online research may affect how plagiarism creeps into writing, and it’s little wonder that educators are alarmed by the potential of the Internet to encourage unlawful copying” (p. 66). Howard and Davies’ concerns should not be overlooked. We live in an age where technology and access to information are often mistaken for thought. When a question is asked of a class, students often respond by stating “I’ll look it up!” Quicker than Wyatt Earp or any of a myriad of other gunslingers of the 19th century, the student whips and electronic device and proudly announces the “answer” within 5-10 seconds. The student, believing he or she has completed their task satisfactorily, would be disappointed to hear that what they are passing off as knowledge is in fact little more than an ability to quickly look up information through the use of technology.

A similar scenario encounters the writing instructor who has presented with student work that may have effectively utilized technology to access a great deal of information about a topic, but doesn’t hit the mark when it comes to new, original thought. This belief that technological adeptness is akin to thinking must be banished from student thinking so that students realize that strong writing is reflective of effective technology use, but rather, indicative of solid thinking. As writing instructors, our primary goal should be to teach developing students how to better think through the medium of written discourse.

Instructors face challenges when realizing that the same technology which often aids plagiarism is also intertwined with the learning styles of many, often millenial students. Prensky’s term “Digital Native” was coined for such individuals whose learning and interaction with the surrounding world has been rooted in technology since birth. While the term has been largely discredited, the idea that today’s students and learning practices are firmly rooted in accessing information and creating new ideas persists. If technology aids and abets the practice
plagiarism for many students, it might also hold the solution. This study asks the question: Can short instructional videos rooted in technology can change student perception of different forms of plagiarism and reduce a problem which many argue is facilitated by technology?

While many argue that technology is the cause of increases in plagiarism, particularly among FYC students, technology may also be the solution. This study attempts to take advantage of the affinity that many of today’s FYC students have towards digitally-presented information. The videos selected for the study present participants with information about different types of plagiarism and suggest ways that plagiarism can be avoided.

Just because digital lessons resonate with many students does not automatically mean that students will benefit from digitally presented instruction. Complicating the use of digital lessons to change student perceptions about plagiarism are fundamental shifts in the way that many millennial students view the writing process and plagiarism. Gross (2011) acknowledges these changes when she states, “the acceptance of cheating among students is the product of a different, post-millennial, value orientation toward what education means and how to obtain it” (p. 435). She further observes that “we should consider adapting our institutional policies and classroom practices—our expectations and evaluation of student performance and behavior --in order to capitalize on the best meaning of these changes, particularly those that emphasize student autonomy, inquiry, and initiative” (Gross, 2011, p. 435). As Gross advises, using videos as a pedagogical tool to increase student awareness and perception of different forms of plagiarism may be one way to “adapt our institutional policies and classroom practices” regarding plagiarism, and adapt the way that the topic is addressed to our students as Gross advises.
Similarly, a study by Moniz, Fine, and Bliss (2008) suggested that the way in which plagiarism instruction is presented to students is not as important as simply ensuring that students are exposed to a variety of instructional modalities about plagiarism. They observe, “[T]he fact that all treatments resulted in significant gains indicates a definite need to provide undergraduates with a better understanding of plagiarism as opposed to simply relying upon vague admonishments to avoid it at all costs” (Moniz, Fine, & Bliss, 2008, p. 277). Moniz, Fine, and Bliss’s observation underscores the importance of studying new instructional modalities that expose writers to examples of different types of plagiarism and how to avoid them. If writers are simply told not to plagiarize, but aren’t given the tools necessary to better understand what plagiarism is, how to avoid it, and why it is problematic to writing, there is little chance that writers will grow in their understanding of plagiarism. Whether delivered through technology or face-to-face, plagiarism instruction is key to the growth and development of writers who are able to express a range of ideas clearly with proper paraphrasing and citation of outside sources.

**Summary**

Plagiarism is a multifaceted issue of great importance to instructors, writers, and academia at large. While numerous studies have examined the way that instructors define and present plagiarism to students, this study attempts to fill in the gap in literature by testing whether a instructional modality, online videos, could serve to change the way in which students perceive plagiarism. Foundational researchers such as Rebecca Moore Howard have blazed the trail towards greater understanding of plagiarism as a nuanced concept in which all infractions are not equally problematic. This study tests whether or not students organize different forms of plagiarism and originality infraction into a hierarchy with major infractions occupying higher levels within the hierarchy and lesser infractions remaining at lower levels.
CHAPTER III. METHODOLOGY

This study was designed to assess whether videos change perception of different forms of plagiarism and originality infractions and to determine whether infractions are organized into a hierarchy ranging from minimally problematic infractions at the bottom to highly problematic infractions at the top. The following research questions and hypotheses drove the study.

Research Questions/Hypotheses

The following research questions and hypotheses drove the study’s methodology.

Research Questions:

1. Do videos change the way in which students perceive different forms of plagiarism and/or originality infractions? If so, could perceptual change lead to decreased plagiarism and originality infractions in student writing?

2. Do students perceive some forms of plagiarism and originality infraction as more severe than others? Will students rank originality issues such as forgetting to include a lead-in or in-text citation as minor problems and issues such as cut-and-paste plagiarism as major problems?

Hypotheses:

1. Videos can be utilized with face-to-face instruction to increase student awareness of different forms of plagiarism, ways of avoiding plagiarizing, and why plagiarism undermines authorial voice. A change in perception about different forms of plagiarism and originality infractions will result in a decrease in infractions among many, but not all students.

2. Students inherently rank different forms of plagiarism and originality infraction. Students will perceive infractions which are intentional attempts incorporate the ideas
of others into a written work without attribution such as cut-and-paste plagiarism and patchwriting as more serious infractions than those which are often unintentional or the result of lazy writing practices such as forgetting to include an in-text citation or lead-in when using quoted material.

This study utilized web-videos to deliver short interventions about plagiarism to first year composition (FYC) students at The University of Findlay (UF), a small Midwestern university. Participants completed a pre-survey to assess perception of different forms of plagiarism and originality infractions. Survey questions provided examples of different forms of plagiarism and infractions which could be perceived as detrimental to the writer’s authorial voice. Examples presented to students aligned with plagiarism and originality infractions depicted on the Ryder Scale of Originality Infraction, and included cut and paste plagiarism, patchwriting, absence of authorial voice, absence of quotation marks, absence of signal phrase or lead-in, and absence of in-text citation (See Fig. 1, p. 23). Some examples were very problematic, such as cutting large sections of text, pasting them into the writer’s work and passing them off as the writer’s own ideas. Other infractions were far less severe, including those in which writers forgot to include an in-text citation or signal phrase to lead in a quoted passage so that it was clear when authorial voice shifted from the author to an outside source.

When completing the pre-survey, participants marked on a Likert Scale how minor or major each infraction was. The pre-survey was designed to present participants with several examples of each type of infraction. After completing the pre-survey, some classes served as experimental groups and were shown instructional videos about plagiarism while other classes served as control groups and were not shown instructional videos before completing the post-survey.
Experimental groups were shown two web-based interventions about plagiarism. Interventions were located on YouTube and presented participants with a definition of plagiarism, examples of different forms of plagiarism, and suggested methods of avoiding plagiarism. Experimental group participants were provided with paper to take notes while watching intervention videos. To determine if the intervention videos influenced student perception, control groups were provided with the pre-survey but were not shown the web-based videos.

After the pre-surveys were administered followed by videos for experimental groups only, a post-survey was administered to all participants. Post-survey questions were based on the same types of errors that the pre-survey questions were based on, but worded and ordered differently. At the end of the post-survey was a request to be interviewed about responses and space for an email address. Interview participants were those students who expressed willingness on the post-survey to be contacted to schedule a telephone interview.

Determination of whether perception changed between the pre- and post-survey was based on whether participants found any of the examples of plagiarism or originality infractions to be more severe after the video interventions than before. Previous research has established the effectiveness of interventions at changing student perception of different forms of plagiarism, but did not examine whether watching web videos can influence student perception of plagiarism. This study serves to fill the previously unexamined gap in literature by focusing specifically on the role that videos play in changing perception of plagiarism.

If found to influence student perception of plagiarism, videos could be an inexpensive, readily available pedagogical tool which, when combined with face-to-face instruction and
practice in writing skills such as effective paraphrasing and source usage, could decrease the number of incidents of plagiarism at academic institutions.

**Research Design**

The study utilized a survey research method. This research method was chosen because it offered an easy way to collect information from study participants and there were a range of different ways to analyze the collected data. Videos were the chosen method of delivering instructional interventions for similar reasons: it was relatively simple to locate online a range of useful videos about plagiarism and ways to avoid it, and they were easy to access and show to experimental groups when conducting pre- and post-surveys. Also, utilizing videos readily available on the web was more representative of the way that many instructors might bring instructional videos into their classrooms. Busy teaching and research schedules leave little time for many instructors to create their own video content, and widespread incorporation of instructional videos in English classrooms would require many instructors to find instructional videos online.

**Survey research rationale.** Surveys were chosen for ease of use to gather student perception of different forms of plagiarism before and after showing video interventions. Mavrinac, Brumini, and Bilić-Zulle’s (2010) Attitudes Towards Plagiarism Survey has been utilized in other studies to measure student perception of plagiarism, but new surveys were created for this study so that study participants were asked two questions about each type of plagiarism and originality infraction in the pre-survey and two questions about each type of plagiarism and originality infraction in the post-survey (See Appendices F and G). Each type of plagiarism and originality infraction aligned with the infractions indicated on the Ryder Scale of Originality Infraction (See Fig. 1, p. 23). Aligning the survey with this scale permitted
measurement not only of how participants perceived plagiarism before and after watching video interventions, but also allowed analysis of whether students naturally organize infractions into a hierarchy similar to the one presented in the Ryder Scale of Originality Infraction.

Survey questions presented participants with different forms of plagiarism and originality infractions, and asked participants to rank how minor or major each infraction is using a Likert Scale ranging from 1 for a very minor issue to 5 for a very major issue. Questions asked participants to rank scenarios which presented infractions involving absence of an in-text citation after a passage that was otherwise properly quoted, absence of quotation marks around a passage which was correctly introduced with the author’s name, absence of a lead-in to introduce an outside source, absence of authorial voice in which it is unclear whether the author or an outside source is addressing the reader, patchwriting where synonyms and other words were swapped out by the writer to create a “new” and “original” passage, and cut and paste plagiarism where a passage was taken from an outside source and inserted into writing with no reference to the original source. One final question asked participants to determine how minor or major it was to have a paper which yielded a 27% similarity to other papers accessible using SafeAssign, a plagiarism-checking software utilized at UF. 27% was selected as a percentage of identical content because it represented a number which indicated over one fourth of the entire submitted writing assignment matching what was produced by other writers. Even if properly quoted, this number was intended to signal to the study participant that a significant portion of the submitted paper matches previously submitted work.

Table 2 shows the matched scenarios utilized in the pre- and post-surveys. While the questions and scenarios were worded differently, they were designed to present participants with an identical type of infraction in the pre- and post-survey. The ordering of questions was also
rearranged to ensure that participants were carefully reading each question and not simply ranking responses to the post-survey in the same order they were ranked in the pre-survey. For example, Question 6 in the pre-survey asked participants to rank the severity of an example of cut and paste plagiarism. Question 2 of the post-survey asked a similar, but differently worded question which asked participants to rank the degree of severity of cut and paste plagiarism. The pre-survey/post-survey combination was assigned a new number, Q1, which allowed the pre- and post-survey responses to each question type to be analyzed together.

Table 1

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<th>Pre/Post-Survey Question Combinations Yielding Q1-Q13</th>
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The decision to utilize surveys was based on the effectiveness of this data-gathering method in other studies. Elander et. al. utilized the Student Authorship Questionnaire (SAQ) created by Pittam et. al. (2010). Pittam et al. (2010) describe, “The SAQ comprises 17
statements with five-point Likert-type response scales ranging from ‘strongly agree’ to ‘strongly disagree,’ and one item that asks participants to indicate the proportion of their assignments they would expect to consist of quotations or material taken directly from other sources” (qtd. in Elander et. al., 2010, p. 160). This study sought to utilize a similar data collection strategy given the ease of administering surveys and ease of analysis of Likert-scale responses. In Elander et. al.’s (2010) study, “[t]he results show that interventions focusing on authorial identity can be used to help students avoid unintentional plagiarism by adopting more authorial roles in their academic writing” (p. 167). The results of this study suggested that if videos are found to successfully change student perception about different forms of plagiarism, they might also lead to increased writing confidence and decrease writing infractions attributed to poor understanding of writing conventions.

By using surveys in which participant responses ranged from 1 to 5 depending on how minor or major each type of infraction was, it was hoped that a similar conclusive statement about how effective video interventions were at changing student perception of different forms of plagiarism and originality infraction could be made. Since this study hypothesized that video interventions could benefit writers by altering the way that different forms of plagiarism are perceived and by increasing writer awareness of different forms of plagiarism, it was hypothesized that the results of the study would show that videos could be a valuable part of this process. The success of surveys which utilized a Likert scale in studies such as Elander et. al.’s study encouraged the use of surveys as a viable data collection method.

Other studies about plagiarism, such as those by Mavrinac et al. (2010), have utilized questionnaires and surveys to assess student attitude towards plagiarism. Mavrinac et. al’s (2010) Attitudes Towards Plagiarism Questionnaire (ATP) divides questions into categories,
including positive attitude toward plagiarism, negative attitude toward plagiarism, and norms
toward plagiarism. Participants were asked a series of questions to determine what students felt
about plagiarism and how they believed it influenced their writing. Mavrinac et. al. (2010) note,
“We developed the ATP questionnaire as a useful tool for measuring attitudes towards
plagiarism. The three-factor structure of the questionnaire confirmed its psychometric
characteristics: good internal consistency and good construct validity” (p. 199). Mavrinac et. al’s
study also assessed student attitude towards plagiarism and other types of originality infraction.
To obtain similarly useful data for this study, a survey was utilized.

Instead of seeking positive or negative attitude towards different forms of plagiarism, the
researchers in this study were interested in determining whether participants would rank different
forms of plagiarism and originality infraction as minor or major infractions before and after
watching instructional videos. The Attitudes Towards Plagiarism (ATP) questionnaire asked
respondents to provide the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with questionnaire
statements. In this study, a Likert scale was also used; however, the questions consisted of
examples of different forms of plagiarism which participants were asked to assign degree of
severity to.

Given the success of survey use in other studies on plagiarism, this study found surveys
utilizing a Likert Scale to be the best way to collect data. The surveys could be quickly administered through classroom visits and it was relatively easy to transfer data from the completed surveys to Excel spreadsheets used to organize and analyze data.

**Video rationale.** While the researchers in this study had the option of creating
instructional videos, the decision was made to utilize videos available on YouTube. This
decision was made because it would allow easier implementation of video interventions and
because it was more reflective of the way that busy instructors might bring plagiarism videos into their classrooms. Many instructors are very versed and confident at producing multimodal works for instructional purposes, but for those who aren’t or don’t have the time to create videos, online videos such as the ones selected for this study are examples of go-to instructional tools that could be easily located and utilized.

As with the rationale behind the decision to utilize surveys to gather data, the decision to present instruction about different forms of plagiarism to participants in video format was based on past research which found connections between technologically-delivered plagiarism instruction and a reduction in plagiarism among writers. Elander, Pittam, Lusher, Fox, and Payne (2010) describe the different ways in which software and internet technology have been utilized to reduce plagiarism. They note, “Plagiarism prevention programmes have taken three broad forms: systematic detection methods using software like Turnitin, honour codes to promote ethical values and standards, and instructional initiatives to improve student writing skills” (Elander et al., 2010, p. 158). Of these plagiarism programs, the most valuable are instructional initiatives. Instructional initiatives bring about the changes that instructors ultimately want to see; better writing with stronger authorial voice and correct citation use, from their students. While plagiarism checking software such as Turnitin and SafeAssign are useful tools to give the writing instructor a quick glimpse of which sections of a student’s writing match existing work submitted by other students, they are not necessarily effective at teaching developing writers how to improve their writing. Similarly, honor codes effectively remind writers why plagiarism is to be avoided. However, outside of scaring writers into avoiding certain writing practices, honor codes do not offer students much insight into why plagiarism is a problematic practice. Instruction about what plagiarism is, why it should be avoided, and how it
undermines writing is the best strategy to reduce plagiarism and improve the quality of written work submitted by students. This study sought to determine the effectiveness of videos as a teaching tool which could potentially change student perception about different forms of plagiarism. Videos were chosen for ease of use and their potential as a teaching tool that could supplement instruction in face-to-face classes or stand alone instruction in online courses. If found to be effective at changing student perception of different forms of plagiarism, videos might be an easy tool for instructors to forward to students for review throughout the semester or embed on a learning management system (LMS) such as Blackboard or BlueQuill.

Another benefit of utilizing videos as an instructional tool is the minimal time investment needed to use them. A quick YouTube search on topics such as “plagiarism” and “writing originality” yielded many quality videos on these topics. While an instructor still has the option of making his or her own videos to instruct students, knowing that there are a range of good videos accessible on the internet be could reassuring to a busy instructor who would like to expose his or her students to additional instruction or augment material covered in class.

Institutional response to plagiarism has been varied. In many instances, signing of Academic Honor Policies by students either upon arrival at an academic institution or upon completion of each written work submitted seems to deter many students from taking the risk of plagiarizing a submitted work. Despite deterrents; however, plagiarism still takes place, suggesting that fear of reprisal alone is not enough to deter all would-be-plagiarists. Providing students with information about different types of plagiarism, how to avoid plagiarizing, and how plagiarism impacts authorial voice may be an effective way to influence student perception about plagiarism.
DeGeeter and colleagues (2014) observe that videos could be far more beneficial at changing student perception of different forms of plagiarism than honor codes. They observe, “The effectiveness of honor codes and penalties on reducing the incidence of plagiarism have not been established in the literature; however, providing some form of concrete intervention, such as live or Web-based education programs specifically designed to educate students about plagiarism, can be effective” (DeGeeter et. al., 2014, p. 4). DeGeeter et. al’s study found that among the PharmD students who participated in study, students were much more effective at identifying different forms of plagiarism after completing the educational intervention (pp. 3-4). Such successes show that widespread instructional intervention at many levels of study can strengthen student ability to recognize a range of writing infractions.

**Video Selection**

While unique surveys were created for the study, the decision was made to utilize existing videos which present instruction on plagiarism and how to avoid it. This decision was made primarily because a wealth of quality videos are available on YouTube and utilizing existing videos more closely models the way in which busy composition instructors might bring instructional videos into their own classrooms: through the use of existing videos rather than creating new ones.

It is also important to note that different videos were shown to Fall 2015 study participants than Spring 2016 study participants. The rationale for this decision was based on researcher interest in testing whether some types of videos are more effective than others. While the primary purpose of the study was to test whether instructional videos could change student perception of different forms of plagiarism, there was also a desire to understand if one type of video was more effective than others.
**Fall 2015 videos.** The videos shown in the Fall 2015 semester depicted different forms of plagiarism and general information about what plagiarism is (See Appendix J). These videos focused more heavily on defining different types of plagiarism and originality infractions for viewers. Viewers of these videos were shown that there is not just one form of “capital P” plagiarism that can undermine writing, but rather, there are a range of different infractions that can be problematic. Within the study, these types of videos were referred to a “definitional videos” as they spent time examining the complexity involved in defining plagiarism and showed some basic strategies for avoiding it in writing.

**Spring 2016 videos.** The videos shown in the Spring 2016 semester depicted some of the ethical considerations associated with plagiarism (See Appendix J). These videos focused more heavily on why writers might be tempted to plagiarize, as well as why plagiarism undermines the integrity and authorial identity of a writer. Within the study, these videos were referred to as “ethical videos” because instead of presenting viewers with the differences between different forms of plagiarism or how the concept is a nuanced one, they sought to work at the viewer’s sense of ethical standards and show why plagiarism is problematic not just to a writer’s GPA or academic success at an institution.

While the primary research question of the study asked whether videos could change perception about different forms of plagiarism, another question addressed in the study examined whether or not different types of videos could yield different participant responses. Videos which focused most heavily on teaching participants about how plagiarism is defined, as well as ways to avoid plagiarism, might yield a different response in post-survey questions than videos which focus on the ethical implications of plagiarizing. Differences in the way that Fall 2015
and Spring 2016 participants responded in the post-survey was expected to offer additional insights into how different types of videos might influence perception.

**Interview Rationale**

Interviews were chosen as an additional outside source of information for the study as they offered insights and information not offered by survey data alone. Basing a study completely on collected survey data can distance a researcher from the insights and viewpoints that individual interviewees can offer. At the end of the post-survey, participants were queried as to whether or not they would be willing to be contacted to participate in a brief interview to share their insights. Interviewees were selected based on those individuals who acknowledged that they would be willing to participate. While multiple individuals checked “yes” and provided email addresses to be reached at, only two responded to email requests (See Appendix H) to participate in a phone interview. Those individuals who responded were briefly interviewed via phone and the interviews yielded interview transcripts (See Appendix L and Appendix M). The two participants were interviewed within a month of completing the surveys to ensure that the survey and videos were relatively fresh in the participants’ minds. This also ensured that participants could offer some insights into the video interventions based on memory.

**Participants**

Participants were students enrolled in ENGL106 (College Writing II) at the University of Findlay, a Midwestern comprehensive university. ENGL106 is a first year composition (FYC) course designed to familiarize students with research conventions and use of MLA and APA citation guidelines. A total of six sections of ENGL106 were surveyed. In both the Fall 2015 and Spring 2016 semesters, two classes were treated as experimental groups who were shown
instructional videos between the pre- and post-survey and one control group was administered the pre- and post-surveys with no instructional videos shown between the surveys.

Participants were divided by class into experimental groups and control groups. For example, in the Fall 2015 semester, two class sections served as experimental groups and one class section served as a control group. In the Spring 2016 semester, two class sections served as experimental groups and one class section served as a control group as well. Experimental groups were given a pre-survey, followed by instructional videos and a post-survey. Control groups were given a pre- and post-survey with no instructional videos in between. Table 2 provides a breakdown of group size by semester:

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Type</th>
<th>Fall 2015</th>
<th>Spring 2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experimental A</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental B</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Instrumentation, Data Sources, and Design**

The surveys utilized for the study were designed by creating pre- and post-survey questions which presented similar, but not identical scenarios in both the pre- and post-survey. The survey was designed to ensure that study participants were presented with an equal number of similar scenarios. Scenarios in the pre-survey presented a range of infractions ranging from plagiarism to far less severe originality infractions. Setting the study up in this manner ensured that participants could assess how severe each type of infraction was and whether or not participants perceived each scenario differently in the post-survey than how they perceived a similar type of infraction in the pre-survey.
The survey was designed to contain seven different types of originality infractions: cut and paste plagiarism, patchwriting, absence of authorial voice, absence of quotation marks, absence of signal phrase or lead-in, absence of in-text citations, and 27% SafeAssign similarity. Each infraction type was presented twice in the pre-survey and twice in the post-survey. Each pre-survey/post-survey infraction pairing was assigned a unique number to allow for easy analysis (See Table 2). The infraction types presented in the surveys were aligned with infraction types presented in the Ryder Scale of Originality Infraction. There were some small differences in the types of infractions presented in the survey and those listed on the Ryder Scale of Originality Infraction. For example, the survey question asked participants to rank writing in which there was an absence of authorial voice, and instead relied on quoted and paraphrased material. In the Ryder Scale of Originality Infraction, infractions in which authorial voice was absent or weak were broken into two categories: voiceless montage and pure remix. Also, the Ryder Scale of Originality Infraction does not include an infraction involving a similarity to writing found in a plagiarism checking software.

The survey questions were designed to examine the two research questions established at the beginning of the study. The first research question asked whether video interventions could change the way that first year composition (FYC) students perceive plagiarism. The study utilized pre- and post-surveys to help assess whether videos changed participant perception about plagiarism. Pre-surveys were administered first to establish how minor or major participants believed each type of infraction was. Post-surveys were then administered to determine whether participant perception of the same types of infractions had changed. If a consistent, measurable change in how participants perceived the infractions presented in the post-survey for experimental groups, the researchers might determine that the change was caused by the videos.
Control groups were also utilized in the study to test whether or not a change in perception measured between the pre- and post-survey resulted from something other than the instructional videos. If, for example, there was a perceptual change between the pre- and post-survey that was measured in the control groups, the change in perception could likely be attributed to something other than the video interventions.

In addition to utilizing pre- and post-surveys to measure perceptual change among participants, analysis of whether perceptual change trended towards infractions being considered more major or minor was also considered when utilizing surveys for the study. If infractions were considered more major in pre-survey questions than in post-survey questions, it might be concluded that videos were effective because they encouraged participants to consider the same types of infractions more problematic. While a trend towards infractions being considered more major was considered the best measure of whether or not instructional videos were changing student perception about different forms of plagiarism, a trend downward could also lead to interesting further study. If, for example, students in experimental groups considered the same types of infractions as less major in the post-survey than in the pre-survey, the instructional videos could also be a possible cause of the change in perception. One possible perceptual change might be attributed to the videos offering increased insight into how only certain types of infractions are really problematic, and the vast majority are simply mistakes indicative poor understanding of writing conventions or citation methods.

The same pre- and post-survey questions were also valuable in answering the second research question, which asked whether students rank some types of plagiarism and originality infractions as more major than other infractions. The pre- and post-surveys each included two questions about seven different types of infractions. The average response of pre- and post-
survey questions for each infraction type were be averaged because for the second research question the researchers were not interested in determining whether there was a change in perception between the pre- and post-survey, but rather, how minor or major each type of infraction was ranked. By including questions which asked participants to rank how minor or major each form of plagiarism or originality infraction was, infractions could be compared against one another to see which were considered minor and which were considered major.

Pre-survey/post-survey question pairings were combined to create unique question pairs which could be analyzed. For example, infraction pairings which examine cut and paste plagiarism are labeled Q1 (consisting of pre-survey question 6 and post-survey question 2) and Q9 (consisting of pre-survey question 14 and post-survey question 10). This yielded two infraction pairings per infraction type (See Table 1, p. 45). The pre-survey question in Q1 read:

6. In writing her book *Axolotl Roadkill*, German author Helene Hegemann inserted entire pages from another book, *Strobo*, into her novel without attributing the original source. This error is:

---o-------------------o-------------------o-------------------o-------------------o---
Very Minor Neutral: Neither Major Very Minor Minor nor Major Major

Which compared to post-survey question:

2. The author was running out of time to finish a paper about earthquakes for a geology class. The United States Geologic Survey (USGS) website had an excellent description of how earthquakes form which was about a page long. The author retyped the passage exactly as it appeared on the USGS website and inserted it into the center of his paper. The original source was not attributed and there was no in-text citation or Works Cited entry for the original source listed at the end of the paper. This error is:

---o-------------------o-------------------o-------------------o-------------------o---
Very Minor Neutral: Neither Major Very Minor Minor nor Major Major
This pairing of pre-survey question 6 and post-survey question 2 became Q1, which allowed responses to this pre-survey/post-survey pairing to be analyzed together.

Similarly, Q9 consisted of the below pre-survey/post-survey pairing:

14. A half-page of text was taken from an outside source and inserted into the author’s writing without giving credit to the outside source. This error is:

---o-------------------o-------------------o-------------------o-------------------o---
Very Minor Neutral: Neither Major Very Minor Minor nor Major Major

Which compared to post-survey question:

10. The author is very tired after a tennis tournament and did not have the time to devote to a paper for a history class that is due on Monday. On Sunday night, she is working on her paper and finds a paper online that says exactly what she want to say in her paper. Knowing that the likelihood of being caught is low because it was a very difficult paper to find online, the author cuts and pastes two paragraphs and inserts them into her own paper without attributing the original source. This error is:

---o-------------------o-------------------o-------------------o-------------------o---
Very Minor Neutral: Neither Major Very Minor Minor nor Major Major

The decision was made to create unique pre- and post-surveys so that questions could be designed that presented unique scenarios to study participants. These unique scenarios which presented corresponding infraction types in both the pre- and post-survey questions were also created to allow assessment of whether or not participants considered some types of infractions more problematic than others. This would have been difficult to do using existing survey instruments such as the Attitudes Towards Plagiarism Questionnaire (ATP) which focused more on how students feel about plagiarism in general rather than how their perception might change following intervention or whether or not they perceived plagiarism as a nuanced concept in which infraction types can be ranked hierarchically from low to high infraction. Since a survey
instrument designed to capture how students perceived the degree of severity of different types of infractions was not readily available, the decision was made to design an instrument which presented participants with different infractions of varying degree of severity that aligned with the types of infractions presented on the Ryder Scale of Originality Infraction.

**Data Collection Procedures**

Approval to collect survey data from students enrolled in ENGL106 classes at the University of Findlay was assigned by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the University of Findlay (See Appendix A). To request permission to visit classes, instructor correspondence was sent to professors and teaching assistants who taught ENGL106 at times that the researcher would be available to collect data. The instructor correspondence consisted of a brief email which advised instructors about the study being conducted and how the results could improve understanding of the ways that first year composition students perceive different forms of plagiarism. Instructors were also provided a brief overview of how the surveys would be conducted and how long they would take to complete (See Appendix B).

For each class surveyed, prospective participants were read a recruitment discussion advising that participation in the survey would be beneficial to improving understanding of how students perceive plagiarism and originality infraction, but that they were not required to participate and if they felt uncomfortable at any time during the survey process they could stop participating (See Appendix C). This was done to minimize risk to student participants. Students willing to participate were provided with an informed consent which was reviewed with the class (See Appendix D). Afterwards, students were provided with a full consent form which they were asked to sign (See Appendix E). All participants were given the pre-survey to complete (See Appendix F). Upon completion, experimental group participants were shown
instructional videos (See Appendix I). Videos shown in the Fall 2015 semester were different than those shown in the Spring 2016 semester (See Appendix J). Control groups were not shown any videos. Afterwards, all participants were given the post-survey to complete (See Appendix H). At the end of the post-survey was a checkbox requesting that participants willing to be interviewed about responses check “yes” and provide their email addresses in the space provided. Two participants who marked “yes” and responded to emails sent to them were administered phone interviews (See Appendix K). The phone interviews asked questions related to the videos and how effective the interviewees thought the videos were at providing information about plagiarism (See Appendix L and Appendix M).

A change in perception between pre- and post-survey was based on whether participants found any of the examples of plagiarism or originality infractions to be more severe after the video interventions than before. Data provided by control groups allowed the researcher to determine if a change in perception might be related to independent variables other than the video interventions. Previous research has established the efficacy of interventions at changing student perception of different forms of plagiarism, but did not examine whether watching web videos can influence student perception of plagiarism. In a study in which examined the effectiveness of web-based interventions at reducing plagiarism among undergraduate and graduate students, Stetter (2013) noted “the study suggests that all students ultimately need instruction in paraphrasing to avoid plagiarism. The students themselves recognised this fact, with the majority both in the total group and in various subject areas seeing the benefit of the module” (p. 687). While web-based videos can introduce students to examples of different forms of plagiarism and suggest ways to avoid them, other types of instruction, such as hands-on practice at writing skills such as paraphrasing can be more challenging to facilitate online. In
Stetter’s (2013) study, she compared the perceived helpfulness of both live and web-based instruction reported by study participants. She found that among the graduate and undergraduate study participants, graduate students preferred modules taught by an instructor. Participants who used a web-based module felt that they needed more assistance from a teacher. While participants did respond favorable to modules about plagiarism and paraphrasing, additional modules or some instructor-led material could also be helpful (p. 687). Thus, while it might be appealing to many instructors to solely use web-videos to provide instruction about plagiarism and originality infractions, it is important for instruction to be delivered in many modalities other than just via the web. Also, if an instructor chooses to utilize videos as an instructional tool, the videos should supplement face-to-face instruction and writing practice rather than take the place of it.

While studies such as Stetter’s comparison of web and live instruction about plagiarism provide many insights into how valuable web-based instruction on plagiarism can be for students, a review of literature did not find previous studies which sought to determine whether there was a perceptual change about different forms of plagiarism and originality infraction after intervention. This study serves to fill the gap in existing literature by focusing specifically on the role that videos play in changing perception of plagiarism.

If found to influence student perception of plagiarism, videos could be an inexpensive, readily available pedagogical tool which could be combined with face-to-face instruction and practice in writing skills such as effective paraphrasing and source usage.

**Experimental and Control Groups.** Experimental and control groups were utilized in the study to test whether any measured difference in perception between the pre- and post-survey was the result of the video interventions shown to participants or some other independent
variable. If, for example, there was a measured difference in perception about a type of infraction between the pre- and post-survey that was discovered in data sets collected from experimental groups but not control groups, there would be a much stronger likelihood that the change was the result of the video interventions.

If, on the other hand, a change in perception was measured in both the experimental groups and the control groups, it could be concluded that some other variable was responsible for changing perception other than the videos. In such a scenario, if control groups were not shown instructional videos between the pre- and post-survey, some other factor would have to account for the perceptual change.

The decision was made to survey classes in two different semesters because there was not enough time to complete all of the class visits required of the study in the Fall 2015 semester. Additionally, collecting data in two different semesters ensured that a range of students enrolled in ENGL106 were surveyed.

**Pre- and Post-Surveys.** Pre- and post-surveys were utilized in the study because they permitted the study’s researchers to determine if there had been a change in perception after watching the instructional videos. It was also important to ensure that an equal numbers of scenarios presenting each type of infraction was present in both the pre- and post-survey. For this reason, two questions presenting each type of infraction were presented to participants in both the pre- and post-survey.

**Data Analysis**

Data was analyzed using calculated averages. Several assumptions regarding how collected data would be examined were made. These assumptions included defining what constituted a
measurable change in perception between pre- and post-surveys as well as what constituted a minor or major infraction.

**Experimental and control group averages and significance.** Calculating and comparing response averages was the chosen method of data analysis for ease of comparison of data. Obtaining average responses allowed the researcher to compare pre- and post-survey responses side-by-side. The data could also be entered into bar charts (See Results section) to visually compare the results of the study.

**Perceptual differences between pre- and post-survey and significance.** For the study, a difference in perception between the pre- and post-survey was considered measurable if it exceeded 0.25. For example, if the average degree of severity of writing which was missing a lead-in was 2.87 in the pre-survey and was 3.25 in the post-survey, this would be considered a measurable difference in perception because the difference between 3.25 and 2.87 is 0.38. While the difference is not massive, it is significant enough to be measured and demonstrates some difference in perception between the pre- and post-survey.

**Major and minor infractions.** For the study, a major infraction was defined as an infraction in which the average responses were >4. Minor infractions were those in which average responses were <2.

**Comparison of Infraction Type.** To compare the different infractions, each infraction type was compared to other infraction types. This allowed each infraction to be ordered according to how severe study participants perceived each type of infraction to be. Infractions considered major could be ranked at one end of a continuum ranging from major to minor infraction. This alignment was intended to follow the same ranking presented in the Ryder Scale of Originality Infraction. If participant results were found to follow a similar hierarchical
organization of infraction from minimally problematic infractions at the bottom of the scale to much more problematic infractions at the top, this could further reinforce the importance of expanding the language used to describe plagiarism and originality infractions. If participants confirmed what researchers had suggested for a long time; that not all types of plagiarism are equally problematic, this would show how there is great need to widen the range of terms used to describe plagiarism and other forms of originality infractions.

This linguistic move would not be intended to ameliorate the term *plagiarism*. There would still be a place for this term firmly rooted in writing instruction. Students who participate in practices such as taking the ideas of another individual by cutting sections of text and inserting them into their own writing, having another individual write a paper for them, or intentionally attempting to deceive the reader into believing that a written work was wholly produced by the writer should be labeled *plagiarists* and punished accordingly. However, students who commit a range of other lesser originality infractions should lose points on their work and be required to make corrections, but not be labeled plagiarists and equated with thieves.

Most of the infractions found in student writing are not theft, but rather involve incomplete understanding of writing conventions and source usage. A wider range of terms used to describe different types of infractions could help instructors and writers better see originality infractions not as stealing, but rather as issues rooted in techne and writing craft.

**Assumptions**

The key assumption that was necessary to analyze the data collected was that participants provided accurate responses to scenarios. In some instances, a participant might choose to answer a response in a manner she or he feels reflects the researcher’s or institution’s view of the infraction. When a survey participant marked that she or he perceived that cut-and-paste
plagiarism was a major infraction (4 on the scale) it had to be assumed that the participants truly perceived the infraction as somewhat problematic and weren’t recording that response for another reason.
CHAPTER IV. RESULTS

This survey research study sought to determine whether videos can create perceptual change among first year composition (FYC) students. The study also sought to test whether students rank different types of plagiarism and originality infractions into a hierarchy. The study did not conclusively show that instructional videos create a change in perception about plagiarism and other types of originality infraction. However, data showed that students do not consider all types of plagiarism and originality infraction to be equally problematic. Rather than categorizing all infractions as equally major, students instead consider some infractions to be major issues and others to be much less severe.

Characteristics of the Sample

The sample consisted of 116 participants. Of the 116 FYC students who participated in the study, 80 students were in experimental groups and 36 were in control groups. In the Fall 2015 semester, 37 students were in experimental groups and 14 were in a control group. In the Spring 2016 semester, 43 students were in experimental groups and 22 were in a control group.

While any prospective change in perception discovered on the post-survey could be the result of the video interventions watched, there are also notable limitations to the study which could create different results in the post-survey compared to results found in the pre-survey.

One potential limitation is that the pre-survey, and not the videos, resulted in a change in participant perception about different forms of plagiarism. As I was leaving one of the classes in which I had administered surveys in the Fall 2015 semester, one student made an interesting observation. The student was in one of the classes in which no videos were shown, and he quickly deduced “so we were the control group?” I affirmed he was correct, and the student replied, “it seemed as though I might have also considered some of the examples you gave us
more serious in the post-survey just because the pre-survey got me thinking more about plagiarism before I took the post-survey.” The student’s observation was really intriguing, as it suggested that many types of activities, videos, or other forms of intervention could potentially make students think more about different types of plagiarism and potentially change perception.

Another limitation of the study is that the videos were only administered once, which might lead to minimal, or only short-term change in perception. As with any instructional method, sustained presentation and discussion of material is important to ensuring lasting comprehension, and potential change in perception about a subject.

Another limitation of the study is that changing a writer’s perception doesn’t necessarily lead to a change in behavior. For example, many writers might become more aware of different forms of plagiarism and how to avoid them in writing with the use of videos or other forms of intervention, but if a writer has chosen to plagiarize, she or he might still choose to do so regardless of whether or not the practice is perceived as more problematic than how it was previously perceived. Regardless of whether or not the writer views an infraction differently, a change in the way a writer views an infraction might be insignificant if the writer’s behavior, and decision not to plagiarize, is not also changed.

Yet another limitation of the study is that despite attempts to ensure that the type of scenario presented in the pre-survey matched what was presented in the post-survey, there is still a possibility that readers might have interpreted the pre- and post-surveys as representative of different types of scenarios. For example, a pre-survey question about cut-and-paste plagiarism would only match well with a post-survey question about the same type of infraction if both questions presented similar types of infractions accurately.
**Instrument Validity and Reliability**

It is important to note that the validity of the survey utilized in this study was not fully vetted. A thorough analysis of the validity of the instrument being utilized is important to the successful outcome of any study. Attempts were made to locate a survey instrument that effectively tested whether or not the perceptions of study participants changed as a result of watching instructional videos and whether or not participants organize different forms of infraction on a hierarchy. This was done by carefully creating questions that tested how minor or major study participants believed each type of infraction to be. In future studies, further research will be conducted to determine if a sufficient survey is available to test the hypotheses set forth in the study. If a self-created instrument is utilized, it will be fully validated before utilizing to collect data. Coming to this understanding has been a valuable part of this thesis project process, and despite the shortcomings of the instrument utilized, valuable information can still be gleaned from the data it provided.

In the same way that the survey instrument could have been validated, greater correlation between the videos shown to participants and the desired change in perception about different forms of plagiarism could have been made. This was another valuable learning experience gleaned from this project. If, for example, the goal of the project was to test whether videos changed participant perceptions about originality infractions such as cut and paste plagiarism, patchwriting, missing authorial voice, missing quotation marks, missing lead-ins, missing signal phrases, and similarity found in plagiarism-checker software, the videos shown to participants should have ideally also addressed those specific types of infractions that can be found in student writing. However, the use of videos readily available on the internet were used in the study to expose study participants to important definitions and ethical considerations related to plagiarism
still yielded useful information. All participants, regardless of whether or not they had been shown videos, demonstrated a sense of what types of infractions are major and which are less problematic in survey responses. This data serves as an important first step towards improving understanding of how students perceive different forms of infractions and how a greater range of terms to describe those infractions could significantly benefit instructors and students alike.

**Implications of Different Video Selection in Fall 2015 and Spring 2016**

Different types of videos were utilized in the Fall 2015 and Spring 2016 semesters (See Appendix J). Definitional videos shown in the Fall 2015 semester presented participants with a description of different forms of plagiarism and how to avoid them. The organizations who produced the definitional videos were reputable. The first video is titled “10 Types of Plagiarism” and was produced by WriteCheckVideos, an organization affiliated with Turnitin.com. The video was professionally-produced, and at the time of writing had 132,040 views. While the number of times a site has been viewed is not an automatic indicator of the quality of the video content, it does indicate that there is a high likelihood that there valuable information within the video. The second video shown in the Fall 2015 semester is titled “A Quick Guide to Plagiarism” and was produced by Sea Devil TV. At the time of writing the video had 233,934 views.

The first video shown in the Spring 2016 video was titled “Understanding Plagiarism” and was produced by the George Mason University Library System. While the video only had 393 views at the time this project was written, it contained quality content which provided some definitional information about plagiarism as well as honor code information and a discussion of the implications of plagiarizing. The second video titled “Episode 1: Plagiarism” was produced by Canada’s Ryerson University. At the time of writing, the video had 47,370 views. The video
provided some definitional information about plagiarism and walked the viewer through a short narrative about a student’s ethical dilemma she experiences when she considers plagiarizing on a paper.

**Research Question 1/Hypothesis 1**

**Research Question 1**: Do videos change the way in which students perceive different forms of plagiarism and/or originality infractions? If so, could perceptual change lead to decreased plagiarism and originality infractions in student writing?

**Hypothesis 1**: Videos can be utilized with face-to-face instruction to increase student awareness of different forms of plagiarism, ways of avoiding plagiarizing, and why plagiarism undermines authorial voice. A change in perception about different forms of plagiarism and originality infractions will result in a decrease in infractions among many, but not all students.

The following section results display data directly related to Research Question 1/Hypothesis 1.
Figure 2: Cut & Paste Summary. This figure displays responses from Fall 2015/Spring 2016 survey questions about cut-and-paste plagiarism

**Q1/Q9: Cut & Paste Plagiarism Results.** There was some change between pre- and post-survey responses for survey questions which asked participants to rank examples of cut and paste plagiarism. Q1 and Q9 were the two pre-survey/post-survey pairs which examined cut and paste plagiarism. Q1 consisted of pre-survey question 6 and post-survey question 2. Q9 consisted of pre-survey question 14 and post-survey question 10 (See Table 1, p. 45). To see which pre-survey/post-survey question pairs were used in analyzing the other infractions listed in the Results section, please refer to Table 1, p. 45.

The average response to Question 1 for Experimental Group 2 participants in the Spring 2016 pre-survey was 4.667. The average response for this same question and group rose to
4.917 in post-survey responses (See Fig. 2). This difference of 0.25 was not extreme, but suggests that on average participants viewed cut and paste plagiarism as very slightly more problematic after viewing the intervention videos than before. While this result was measured in one of the experimental groups, a similar increase was also found in one of the control groups. The average response to Question 9 for the Control Group in the Fall 2015 pre-survey was 4.643. The average for this same question and group rose to 4.857 in the post-survey, a difference of 0.214. Thus, while there was some increase in average response within experimental groups, there was a similar increase in average response in one of the control groups that wasn’t shown the instructional videos.

In both the pre- and post-surveys cut and paste plagiarism was considered one of the most problematic errors that a writer could make. The average responses in both the pre- and post-surveys were above 4.5. As such, almost all participants considered cut and paste plagiarism as a major writing issue.
Figure 3: Patchwriting Summary. This figure summarizes responses from Fall 2015/Spring 2016 survey questions about Patchwriting.

Q5/Q12: Patchwriting Results. As with examples of cut and paste plagiarism, there was some change between pre- and post-survey responses. One notable result was that responses to Question 5 for Experimental Group 1 in the Fall 2015 semester decreased from pre- to post-survey. The response average for the pre-survey was 3.75, while the average for the post-survey was 3.125: a difference of 0.625. This difference suggests that after watching the videos, participants in this group considered patchwriting to be less problematic than before. In Question 12, the same group’s responses increased from 3.25 to 3.563 between the pre- and post-
survey: a difference of 0.313. Thus, the same participants ranked patchwriting less problematic in Q5 and more problematic in Q12 after watching videos. The relatively small difference in average responses and the fact that the same types of originality infraction are considered less problematic in some instances and more problematic in others makes it difficult to conclusively determine if the videos are resulting in widespread perceptual change about plagiarism and originality infractions.

In both pre- and post-surveys patchwriting was not considered a major infraction, but was not considered insignificant either. The average responses in both the pre- and post-surveys were above 3.1. As such, participants did not consider patchwriting a major writing issue, but one that wasn’t insignificant either.
Figure 4. Missing authorial voice Summary. This figure summarizes responses from Fall 2015/Spring 2016 survey questions about Missing authorial voice.

Q4/Q7: Missing authorial voice Results. Questions which highlighted examples of missing authorial voice were not considered very problematic by participants. One of the highest average responses, 3.588, was reported for Question 4 by Experimental Group 1 in the Spring 2016 semester. This pre-survey response dropped to 3.117 in the post-survey for the same group: a difference of 0.471. This result suggested that participants on average considered writing which was missing authorial voice to be less problematic after watching the intervention videos than
before. As with cut and paste plagiarism and patchwriting, the results did not conclusively suggest that the videos were bringing about a perceptual change about plagiarism and originality infractions among participants. For example, for Question 7, Spring 2016 Control Group participants recorded an increase in average response from 2.955 to 3.364; a difference of 0.409. As such, measurable differences between average pre- and post-survey responses were recorded for individuals who did not watch the intervention videos.

In both pre- and post-surveys measuring examples of missing authorial voice, the infraction was considered not very problematic. While it was not below the threshold to be considered a minor infraction, it was only slightly more problematic than minor. The average responses were 2.672.
Figure 5: Missing Quotation Marks Summary. This figure displays responses from Fall 2015/Spring 2016 survey questions about missing quotation marks.

**Q2/Q10: Missing Quotation Mark Results.** Questions which highlighted examples of missing quotation marks were not considered minor or major infractions by study participants. There was some increase in average response between pre- and post-survey. For example, for the Spring 2016 Experimental Group 1, the average score of Question 2 was 3.118. In the post-survey, the same respondents’ average score was 3.824. This difference of 0.706 was similar to the average response of the control group, which changed from 2.045 in the pre-survey to 2.864 in the post survey. The fact that the response average for this group increased less than the control group (0.706 versus 0.819) makes a determination of whether the videos changed participant perception about this type of infraction inconclusive.
While it was inconclusive whether or not the videos shown to participants resulted in a change in perception, it was clear that on average, participants ranked writing with missing quotation marks as less problematic than cut and paste plagiarism. As such, the data seemed to support the hypothesis that students do not consider all types of plagiarism and originality infractions equally problematic.
Figure 6: Missing Lead-In Summary. This figure displays responses from Fall 2015/Spring 2016 survey questions about missing lead-ins

Q6/Q8: Missing Lead-In Results. Questions displaying instances in which a writer did not include a lead-in to properly introduce a quoted passage were considered less problematic in pre-survey results than post-survey results. When responding to Q8 in the Fall 2015 semester, for example, participants did not consider this type of infraction to be very problematic. Responses for Experimental Groups 1 and 2 were 1.875 and 2.1, respectively. These response averages increased to 3.438 and 3.5, a difference of 1.563 and 1.4, in the post-survey. While data from this infraction type seems to support the influence of videos at changing perception about different forms of plagiarism, it is also noteworthy that the control group in the Fall 2015 semester actually had a greater change between pre- and post-
survey data. This increase from 1.714 to 3.286 (a difference of 1.572) was greater than either of the experimental groups for the Fall 2015 semester. Thus, it is likely that the difference in perception may have been due to a factor other than the instructional videos.

Data from the study suggests that study participants do rank different forms of plagiarism and originality infraction on a hierarchy. The average responses of Experimental Group 1 in the Fall 2016 semester were 1.875 and 3.438, which average to 2.657. This average is significantly below other infractions such as cut and paste plagiarism and patchwriting which study participants considered more problematic. Thus, participant responses seem to confirm that writers will organize infractions on a hierarchy ranging from low to high infraction.
Figure 7: Missing In-Text Citation Summary. This figure summarizes responses from AU15/SP16 survey questions about missing in-text citations

Q3/Q11: Missing In-Text Citation Results. Some change in perception was measured among this data group. Several notable perceptual changes were measured in the Fall 2015 semester. For Experimental Group 2 in the Fall 2015 semester, the pre-survey participant average for Q3 was 2.15 and the post-survey participant average was 2.7, for a difference of 0.55. For the Control Group in the Fall 2015 semester, the participant average in Q3 dropped from 2.714 to 2.143: a difference of 0.571. Similarly, for the Control Group in the Fall 2015 semester, the participant average in Q11 dropped from 3.143 to 2.714: a difference of 0.429. While this data group did show some changes in perception between pre-
and post-survey, the changes were not all consistent and occurred in both the experimental and control groups. This did not conclusively show that student perception was changed by the video interventions.
Figure 8: SafeAssign 27% Similar Summary. This figure summarizes responses from AU15/SP16 survey questions about missing in-text citations.

Q4: SafeAssign 27% Similarity Results. The data shows that participants didn’t consider examples of writing in which there was a 27% similarity to other papers found in a plagiarism-checker software to be more problematic in the post-survey compared to in the pre-survey. The greatest change in perception was recorded by Experimental Group 1 in the Fall 2015 semester when pre-survey participant response average was 2.5 and post-survey participant response average was 2.813. This difference of 0.313 was the largest recorded change in perception among this data group.
Summary

Collected data did not conclusively show that instructional videos resulted in a change in perception about plagiarism and other forms of originality infraction. This does not completely discount the usefulness of videos to reinforce concepts and strengthen student understanding of plagiarism and other types of originality infractions.

While the results did not conclusively show that student perception about plagiarism and originality infractions changed as a result of the video interventions, this does not mean that videos are invaluable as a way of offering additional instruction about plagiarism and originality infractions in composition classrooms.

Research Question 2/Hypothesis 2

Research Question 2: Do students perceive some forms of plagiarism and originality infraction as more severe than others? Will students rank originality issues such as forgetting to include a lead-in or in-text citation as minor problems and issues such as cut-and-paste plagiarism as major problems?

Hypothesis 2: Students inherently rank different forms of plagiarism and originality infraction. Students will perceive infractions which are intentional attempts incorporate the ideas of others into a written work without attribution such as cut-and-paste plagiarism and patchwriting as more serious infractions than those which are often unintentional or the result of lazy writing practices such as forgetting to include an in-text citation or lead-in when using quoted material.

The following section results display data directly related to Research Question 2/Hypothesis 2
Figure 9: Pre/Post-Survey Average Responses for Experimental Group 1. This figure displays how study participants from Experimental Group 1 ranked some types of infraction as very problematic and other infractions as less problematic.

Experimental Group 1: AU15/SP16 Results. The data shows that study participants from Experimental Group 1 considered different types of plagiarism and originality infraction to be more problematic than others. In the Fall 2015 semester, study participants ranked Cut and Paste
Plagiarism to be the most problematic, followed by Patchwriting, Missing Quotation Marks, Missing authorial voice, SafeAssign 27% Similarity, Missing In-Text Citation, and Missing Lead-In. In the Spring 2016 semester, study participants ranked Cut and Paste Plagiarism to be the most problematic as well, followed by Patchwriting, Missing Quotation Marks, SafeAssign 27% Similarity, Missing In-Text Citation, Missing authorial voice, and Missing Lead-In. As with other study participants, the two types of infractions considered most problematic were Cut and Paste Plagiarism and Patchwriting. While none of the infraction types were considered minor, many were considered far less problematic than other types of infractions. As such, participants considered some types of infractions as more problematic than others.
Figure 10: Pre/Post-Survey Average Responses for Experimental Group 2. This figure displays how study participants from Experimental Group 1 ranked some types of infractions as very problematic and other infractions as less problematic.
Experimental Group 2: AU15/SP16 Results. The data shows that study participants from Experimental Group 2 considered different types of plagiarism and originality infraction to be more problematic than others. In the Fall 2015 semester, participants considered Cut and Paste plagiarism to be the most problematic type of infraction, followed by Patchwriting, Missing authorial voice, Missing Quotation Marks, Missing In-Text Citation, Missing Lead-In, and SafeAssign 27% Similarity. In the Spring 2016 semester, participants also considered Cut and Paste plagiarism to be the most problematic type of infraction, followed by Patchwriting, Missing authorial voice, Missing Quotation Marks, Missing In-Text Citation, SafeAssign 27% Similarity, and Missing Lead-In. While study participants did not on average rank any of types of infractions as minor, or below 2 in severity, many types of infractions were considered less problematic than others. As with other averages, Cut and Paste plagiarism was one of the most problematic types of infraction for study participants, followed by Patchwriting.
Figure 11: Pre/Post-Survey Average Responses for Control Group. This figure displays how study participants from the Control Group ranked some types of infractions as very problematic and other infractions as less problematic.
**Control Group: AU15/SP16 Results.** The data shows that study participants from the Control Group also considered some types of infractions as more problematic than others. In the Fall 2015 semester, Control Group participants considered Cut and Paste Plagiarism to be the most problematic, followed by Patchwriting, Missing Quotation Marks, SafeAssign 27% Similarity, Missing authorial voice, Missing In-Text Citation, and Missing Lead-In. In the Spring 2016 semester, Control Group participants considered Cut and Paste Plagiarism to be the most problematic, followed by Patchwriting, Missing authorial voice, SafeAssign 27% Similarity, Missing Quotation Marks, Missing In-Text Citation, and Missing Lead-In. As with the Fall 2015 semester, Spring 2016 participants considered Cut and Paste Plagiarism and Patchwriting to be the most problematic types of infractions. Control Group data shows that regardless of whether or not participants were shown instructional videos, they still ranked infractions and considered some types of infractions as more problematic than others.
Figure 12: Pre/Post-Survey Average Responses for All Experimental Groups. This figure displays how study participants from all experimental groups ranked some types of infractions as very problematic and other infractions as less problematic.
**Combined Experimental Group Results.** As with other groups, combined responses for AU15/SP16 experimental groups showed that students rank infractions from major infractions that participants consider highly problematic lesser infractions that participants consider far less problematic. As with other result groups, cut-and-paste plagiarism was the most problematic infraction, followed by patchwriting and lesser infractions afterwards.

![Average Responses: AU15/SP16 Control Groups](image)

*Figure 13: Pre/Post-Survey Average Responses for Combined AU15/SP16 Control Groups.* This figure displays how study participants from combined AU15/SP16 control groups ranked some types of infractions as very problematic and other infractions as less problematic.

**Combined Control Group Results.** Combined control groups ranked infractions similarly to combined experimental groups. This shows that participants considered cut-and-paste plagiarism and patchwriting to be the most problematic infractions regardless of whether or not they viewed instructional videos. As such, the understanding participants had about plagiarism and other types of infractions had to be rooted in past understanding and knowledge of plagiarism and not gained solely from the instructional videos.
Participant Results Through the Lens of the Scale of Originality Infraction

The Ryder Scale of Originality Infraction was proposed as a way to present the different types of infractions that writers can make in a hierarchy which places minor infractions at the bottom and major ones at the top (See Fig. 1, p. 23). On The Scale of Originality Infraction, Plagiarism was the most problematic infraction, followed by Patchwriting, Voiceless Montage, Pure Remix, Absence of quotation marks, Absence of signal phrase or lead-in, and Absence of in-text citations. Pre- and post-survey questions utilized in the study asked participants to rank how minor or major they thought examples of Cut-and-Paste Plagiarism, Patchwriting, Missing Authorial Voice, Pure Remix, Absence of quotation marks, Absence of signal phrase or lead-in, and Absence of in-text citations were. As such, questions combined Voiceless Montage and Pure Remix from the Scale of Originality Infraction into one category.

Participants in both experimental groups considered cut-and-paste plagiarism and patchwriting to be the most problematic infractions. In all average responses for both experimental and control groups, participants ranked cut-and-paste plagiarism as the most problematic type of infraction and patchwriting as the second most problematic infraction. The Scale of Originality Infraction ranked cut-and-paste plagiarism and patchwriting as the most problematic types of infractions because they are often taught as writing practices that amount to stealing the ideas of others for one’s own use.

In the Fall, when students got definition videos, the results frequently ranked plagiarism and other forms of originality infractions as more problematic in the post-survey results than in the pre-survey results. This trend generally held true for both experimental and control groups. While this was the case with many responses, it was not in all cases. Occasionally the average response was lower in the post-survey responses than in the pre-survey responses, indicating that
participants considered the infractions to be less problematic after watching the videos than before. For control groups, the increase in average score would have had to have been attributable to variables other than the videos.

In the Spring, when students go ethical videos, the results also frequently ranked plagiarism and other forms of originality infraction as more problematic in the post-survey compared to the pre-survey in both experimental and control groups. While this difference could be attributed to a range of possible factors, one notable difference between responses from students shown definition videos versus responses from students shown ethical videos was associated with the degree of severity that participants assigned to infractions.

On average, participants in the Fall 2015 groups ranked many infractions as less problematic than participants in the Spring 2016 groups. For example, for Q2-Missing Quotation Marks responses, in the Fall 2015 semester, average pre-survey was 2.313 and average post-survey response was 2.625. For the same pre-survey/post-survey pairing, average responses increased to 3.118 in the pre-survey and 3.824 in the post-survey (See Fig. 5, p. 72). This increase in pre-survey average response of 0.805 and post-survey average response of 1.199 could be attributed to a number of different possible factors. The videos shown could have influenced responses, or differences in student populations enrolled in ENGL106 in the Fall and Spring Semesters could have been associated.

A similar increase in average responses occurred in Q6-Missing Lead-In responses. Average responses in the Fall 2015 semester were 1.75 in the pre-survey and 2.625 in the post-survey. In the Spring 2016 semester, average responses increased to 2.471 in the pre-survey and 3.647 in the post-survey (See Fig. 6, p. 74). This increase of 0.721 in the Fall semester and 1.022 in the Spring semester could once again be attributed to a range of different possible factors.
CHAPTER VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study sought to determine whether video interventions can change student perception about plagiarism and originality infractions and test whether students organize infractions into a hierarchy which classifies some infractions as major and others as minor. While it was inconclusive whether or not videos create a change in perception about plagiarism and originality infractions, data from the study suggests that students do consider some types of infractions as major issues and others as minor issues.

Review of the Study

This study sought to show that greater emphasis needs to be placed on creating a wider and more all-encompassing range of terms to describe the range of writing practices which undermine authorial identity and erode voice. Once in place, a wider range of terms will give the writer and writing instructor a much wider nomenclature with which to describe a range of different infractions. Instructors will be able to impart to their students that there are still infractions which are very problematic to writing and amount to theft, but the vast majority are issues with technique. Students empowered with terms assigned to these lesser infractions which are used by instructors in graded work will see firsthand how many of the infractions committed in writing can be corrected relatively easily and will not result in failure of the paper or course.

One additional strategy that might be effective for instructors to utilize is to attach a copy of the Ryder Originality Scale in which the most problematic infraction within the submitted work is highlighted or circled. Writers will be able to see how high on the scale infractions in their work lie, and can challenge themselves to bring the highest infraction found in their work down to the lowest possible infraction over the course of the semester.
To support this argument for a wider range of terms to describe the infractions found in student writing, surveys and instructional videos were utilized. A pre-survey and post-survey were administered to First Year Composition (FYC) students at the University of Findlay to assess how participants perceived the degree of severity of infractions before and after watching instructional videos. Data was analyzed by calculating averages of responses and presenting data on charts which allowed average results to be compared side-by side for pre- and post-survey responses as well as comparison of responses by infraction type.

**Perceptual Changes in Both Experimental and Groups**

Changes in average response between the pre- and post-surveys occurred in both the experimental groups and control groups. For example, in Fall 2015 responses to Q4-Missing authorial voice, there was a decrease in average response from 2.813 to 2.375 for Experimental Group 1. A decrease was also recorded in the Control Group for the same pre-survey/post-survey question pairing and the average response decreased from 2.643 to 2.286. This change in average responses measured in both experimental and control groups suggests that the change in average response between the pre- and post-survey may have been attributed to many possible variables in addition to the videos.

**Study Limitations**

The decision to show different videos to study participants in the Fall 2015 and Spring 2016 semesters may have influenced the study’s results. One way this might have impacted student responses was by encouraging students to consider *all* types of infractions to be more problematic in the Spring semester than the Fall semester. When looking at the results for Patchwriting, for example, Experimental Group 2 participants in the Fall 2015 semester provided an average response of 3.55 in the pre-survey. The pre-survey response rose to 3.833 in the
Spring 2016 semester: a difference of 0.28. Increases such as these that were recorded in other experimental and control groups may have been a result of Spring 2016 participants being shown videos that were more focused on the ethical implications of plagiarism rather than defining plagiarism.

The decision to utilize readily-available videos accessible on YouTube was made for convenience and was also intended to reflect the way in which composition instructors would realistically bring video instruction into their classrooms. While many composition instructors are skilled at multimodal composition and could create their own instructional videos to show to students, it is also unlikely that many instructors have a great deal of time to create their own videos and locating instructional videos online is most reflective of what instructors would do in their own classrooms. A potential issue with utilizing videos which are found online is that they will not perfectly represent the types of infractions that are presented in the survey questions. To truly seek a perceptual change between pre- and post-survey, the selected videos must instruct students about the different types of infractions that can be found in writing and look for ways to reduce them in writing.

Another important note about the data was that there were notable differences in average scores for different questions within the same participant groups. Results for Q4-Missing authorial voice were different than results for Q7-Missing authorial voice for AU15 experimental and control groups. Average scores for Experimental Group 2 in the AU15 semester dropped from 3.2 to 2.85 in Q4-Missing authorial voice. For the same group, average scores increased from 2.9 to 3.1 in Q7-Missing authorial voice. This could have been attributed to many different possible factors. One possible cause for the change in average score could have been differences in the way that pre- and post-survey questions were worded. Each of the different forms of
plagiarism and infraction represented in pre- and post-survey questions appeared twice. For example, it is possible that the pre-survey/post-survey question pairing for Q4-Missing authorial voice did not capture the infraction type as accurately or in same way that the pre-survey/post-survey question pairing for Q7-Missing authorial voice did. For this study, pre-survey and post-survey questions did not undergo a validation test to ensure that they were measuring participant perception about how minor or major each presented infraction was. This could be a valuable area of future study to test the effectiveness of the pre-survey/post-survey questions used in the study at accurately measuring participant perception of different types of infraction.

Another feature of the study which requires discussion is the role that each type of video played in participant responses. The videos shown in the AU15 semester were definitional in nature. The videos provided viewers with details about different types of plagiarism, as well as definitions of different forms of plagiarism (See Appendix J). Different videos which highlighted the ethical implications of plagiarism were shown to participants in the SP16 semester. As a part of the study, it was intended to find out whether the difference in videos also played a role in survey results. In some instances, the difference between results collected from AU15 and SP16 study participants was not very big. For example, Experimental Group 2 participants in the AU15 semester responded to Q7-Missing authorial voice with an average response of 2.9. In the post-survey, the same participant group average response was 3.1. For Experimental Group 2 participants in the SP16 semester, participant average response was 3.25 in the pre-survey and 3.417 in the post-survey. This slight increase in how problematic respondents considered the infraction in the post-survey in the SP16 semester could be attributed to the different videos shown to this participant group. Another observation that was made when comparing the pre- and post-survey data was that in many instances, respondents generally
considered many types of infractions to be more problematic in the SP16 semester than in the AU15 semester. Data collected from survey questions involving Patchwriting highlighted this. For example, AU15 responses about Q5-Patchwriting from Experimental Group 1 was 3.125. In contrast, SP16 responses about Q5-Patchwrting from Experimental Group 1 was 4.177. The increase could be attributed to a range of different factors. One possible reason might be that videos which highlighted the ethical implications of plagiarism caused participants to rank similar types of infractions as more severe in the post survey than videos which provided definitions of different types of plagiarism and how to identify them in writing. Another possible reason for the difference might be rooted in the notion that many students who enroll in ENGL106 in the AU15 semester have greater familiarity with certain writing conventions and a greater degree of comfort with writing conventions.

**Differences Between Fall and Spring ENGL106 Students**

Differences in student populations enrolled in ENGL106 in the Fall and Spring semesters at The University of Findlay could have influenced some of the differences in results between the Fall and Spring surveys. UF professor and Director of the Writing Program, Nicole Diederich, offered insights into some of the differences in student populations in the Fall and Spring. Diederich (2016) noted that many Fall ENGL106 students are in very intense programs of study, including physical therapy and pharmacy. These student populations are often very driven and work hard to ensure that prerequisites are successfully completed early in their college careers so that unnecessary work doesn’t have to be repeated. Many ENGL106 students enrolled in the Fall are exempt from taking ENGL104, a lower-level composition course which many students enrolled in ENGL106 in the Fall were exempt from taking either through high test scores or completion of the prerequisite coursework before college. This combination of highly
motivated, often stronger students enrolled in ENGL106 in the Fall semester suggests that many students in this population entered the class with a greater understanding of plagiarism, stronger writing ability, or both (Diederich, 2016).

Spring ENGL106 students were often required to take ENGL104, the lower-level writing course in the UF composition sequence, as a prerequisite. Some Spring ENGL106 students also dropped the course in a previous Spring semester and are retaking it later in their college career. While Fall ENGL106 have the most true freshmen, Spring ENGL106 courses have more sophomores, juniors, and seniors enrolled. Also, more students enrolled in ENGL106 in the Spring are repeating the course after failing it at some point in the past.

This general trend of having slightly stronger ENGL106 students enrolled in the Fall and slightly weaker students enrolled in the Spring may have been another factor in addition to different videos that influenced the study’s results. Students who are slightly weaker writers are likely less confident at citing sources and maintaining strong authorial voice in writing. As such, they might assess different forms of originality infractions to be more problematic than more confident writers.

**Study Implications**

Given that participants ranked different types of originality infractions hierarchically, this suggests that writers are already mentally organizing the different types of infractions by degree of severity. The next obvious step is to provide students and instructors with a widely accepted range of terms which can be used to describe the variety of infractions found in student writing. The implications of a new set of terms used to describe different writing infractions is significant. One of the benefits of this type of shift is that instructors and writers might begin to move away from viewing all types of plagiarism as an unethical act which amounts to stealing
the ideas of another. Rather, the term plagiarism would be reserved only for the most obvious cases where a writer has removed a section of text from another author’s work and inserted it into his or her own writing without attribution of the original source. All other types of infractions would fall under the category of originality infractions; lesser infractions which are more associated with the writer’s lack of understanding of correct writing conventions than a willful attempt to deceive the reader or steal another’s ideas.

When instructors and students have a range of terms defining the types of infractions found in student writing, they would also have at their disposal a wealth of additional language from which to frame class discussion, grading of written work, and comprehension of the types of practices which erode writing quality. This process would not ameliorate the term plagiarism: those writers who choose to take the writing of others without proper attribution should still remain subject to harsh punishment including failure of the paper and possibly the course. Similarly, there should also be points deducted when other types of originality infractions are found in student writing. However, those practices should at the very least have names which help instructors and writers define what types of infractions are found in student writing and suggest strategies for avoiding them.

**Application and Implications**

The next question for consideration is: why does this study has value? How does the data collected support the idea that instructors and students need to have at their disposal a wider range of terms to describe plagiarism and other originality infractions? While the survey data collected did not conclusively show that instructional videos changed the way that students perceived plagiarism and other forms of originality infractions, it did serve the important purpose of generating inquiry into revised methods of bringing plagiarism and originality instruction into
our classrooms. The videos shown to participants in this study did not directly instruct participants about different forms of plagiarism and the difference between plagiarism and originality infractions, but future studies might. This hypothesis-generating study has attempted to lay the groundwork for future studies in which participants could be shown videos that specifically reference the types of infractions shown on the Ryder Originality Scale. Participants in future studies could also be provided with specific instruction about reasons why some types of infractions are more problematic than others and how some infraction types undermine authorial voice to a greater degree than others.

The results of the study are also important to furthering our understanding of plagiarism and originality infractions because it shows that writers do not consider all types ofinfractions as equally problematic. The time is now to provide instructors and writers with the tools necessary to discuss and examine a range of topics related to plagiarism and originality infractions. The first step will be to propose a Position Statement to the Executive Committee of the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC). CCCC position statements have served the valuable purpose of opening up questions or viewpoints about a range of disciplines to many individuals. As more scholars begin to examine the role that the language used to describe a range of infractions plays on our understanding of student writing, the faster members of our discipline will strengthen its ability to teach a range of concepts to others.

Other studies might also examine the effectiveness of videos over a much longer period of time as well. Instead of showing students two videos during one class session, they could be shown at multiple times throughout the semester to see how more than one instructional video intervention could influence student perception.
New Ideas

The study led to three ideas. First, instructional videos are a valuable tool that can supplement writing instruction. Second, the focus of composition classrooms should be teaching writing techniques which improve student ability to paraphrase properly and utilize one or more citation styles effectively. Third, students do not consider all types of plagiarism and originality infraction as equally problematic. This necessitates a new meta-language to describe and discuss the range of infractions found in student writing which goes beyond one all-encompassing term such as plagiarism.

Research Question 1/Hypothesis 1. Videos provide composition instructors with a valuable tool to supplement in-class instruction about plagiarism. Stetter (2013) learned from her study of a web-based module about plagiarism that “perhaps the essential message to be taken from the study area groups was that [students] liked the module and believed they had learned from it. This calls for more instruction at the university level concerning paraphrasing, plagiarism, and citation” (p. 689). The same was found in this study. While it was inconclusive whether or not the videos shown to experimental groups resulted in a change in perception, they did provide students with an instructional modality which differs from classroom lecture or in-class writing activities.

Interviews with study participants found that videos can provide a valuable alternative to other instructional methods. To protect student identities, pseudonyms were used in the place of actual student names. One student, “Christine,” observed, “Videos can be even more helpful than class instruction [at reducing plagiarism]. Instead of listening to an instructor drone on, a video might be more captivating.” Another student, “Jamie,” noted,
I think the videos do help. Listening to people talk about different forms of plagiarism only does so much. It’s like, cool when instructors tell you not to plagiarize, but seeing visually if there is something that you might be doing wrong and being able to say “that’s something I’ve done before” or “I’ve never done that before” can be helpful when writing.

“Christine” and “Jamie’s” observation support the idea that many students prefer to learn through a variety of instructional modalities, and videos provide some of that essential variety to make instruction interesting and engaging for students.

The study did not conclusively support Hypothesis 1. Study participants did not consistently record a measurable change in perception about plagiarism and originality infractions between the pre- and post-survey. To conclusively determine that videos are a valuable tool for changing student perception about different types of infractions and reducing plagiarism among writers, results would have had to have consistently showed that participants ranked infractions as more problematic after watching the video interventions than before. It was not anticipated that student responses would align to some degree with the Ryder Scale of Originality Infraction. While the scale was created with the understanding that some types of infractions are more problematic than others, and that students already recognize this, it was not known which infractions students would consider more problematic. While this study serves as a valuable hypothesis-driving study which could lead to future studies of the role video interventions can play in increased awareness and understanding of plagiarism and other originality infractions, it did not conclusively show that videos increase awareness or change student perception about different forms of plagiarism and originality infractions.
Research Question 2/Hypothesis 2. Students organize different forms of plagiarism and originality infraction into a hierarchy. The survey instrument used in this study did not attempt to measure whether or not the way participants organized infractions into a hierarchy was a result of the instructional videos shown or not. However, the fact that control groups ranked infractions similarly to experimental groups suggests that the ordering of infractions was based on an internal sense of ethics the students possessed or information they had acquired about plagiarism in previous courses. In this study, cut-and-paste plagiarism and patchwriting were considered the most serious infractions, and other infractions were considered less problematic. The study led to the conclusion that students do not consider all types of plagiarism and originality infraction as equally problematic and they will organize infractions into a hierarchy which places more problematic issues such as cutting and pasting writing or improperly paraphrasing the ideas of others by swapping out synonyms at the upper end of the hierarchy and less problematic issues resulting from poor understanding of citation rules or laziness on the part of the writer at the lower end of the hierarchy.

The study shows that there needs to be a concerted effort on the part of academia to bring a far broader meta-language about plagiarism and originality infractions into composition classrooms. This study took a first step in this direction by assigning the name plagiarism only to writing in which sections of another writer’s work was cut-and-pasted into his or her writing without attribution. Plagiarism should also be used in cases where a writer downloaded an entire paper or paid someone else to write a paper. In this study, all other types of infractions were referred to as originality infractions. The terms plagiarism and originality infractions were not provided to students. Rather, instructions on the surveys advised participants that all of the examples presented to them were “writing errors which ranged from very minor to very major.”
Thus, it is possible that participants were considering all of the errors as different types of plagiarism or all of the errors as different types of originality infractions. Participants ranked all infractions by the degree to which they problematized writing and the next step is to create a widely-accepted range of terms to describe different types of infractions. Instead, students were asked to rank how severe they believed that each type. Within this category fall a range of infractions which often do not represent a willful attempt to deceive the reader, but rather are the result of laziness on the part of the writer or a lack of understanding of proper paraphrasing techniques or citation guidelines. Assigning a wider range of terms to infractions means that instructors will be able to discard a broad, nebulous term such as plagiarism and replace it with a range of different terms which are more representative of the range of different infractions that students might make in writing.

This study also suggests that students seem to assign the greatest degree of severity to infractions which are intentional on the part of the writer. Cut-and-paste plagiarism and patchwriting are both writing practices which are often intentional and the writer does knowingly to lengthen a piece of writing or produce a written text within a tight deadline (often because of procrastination low confidence at producing one’s own original work). Writing infractions which are highly intentional such as cut and paste plagiarism and patchwriting will be considered major infractions by writers. Conversely, other types of infractions which are less intentional generally are considered less serious.

Interview responses about the hierarchical organization of infractions from minor to major and intentionality seem to be supported by Christine and Jamie’s interview responses. When asked whether she believes if many students begin a writing project intending to plagiarize, Christine noted, “I’m pretty optimistic. I think that people are generally good and that
they don’t go out with the intent to plagiarize. I think that in instances where students do plagiarize it’s because their research is ingrained in their mind, and after getting really involved in their research they forget that it’s not their own work.” It is likely that Christine would not consider an infraction in which a writer has simply forgotten to utilize standard writing conventions when writing as less problematic than a willful attempt to steal the ideas of another and weave them into one’s own writing. Similarly, Jamie suggested that very few students intentionally attempt to deceive their reader into believing that a passage of writing reflects his or her own ideas. She notes, “[Plagiarism] is more unintentional. I think it’s more of a mistake that students can make. Oftentimes, a student might have read something and remember the way that the author said it. When you write about it in your paper you remember the way that the author said it. When a student says something very similar to how the author said it that can be unintentional. The student thinks of a way to phrase it just like [the original author] said it, but it can be difficult.” Like Christine, Jamie might place instances where a writer has unintentionally produced a passage of writing too similar to the original as far less problematic than issues resulting from a wilful attempt to steal the writing of another and deceive the reader.

The study supported Hypothesis 2. All groups of study participants consistently recorded some types of infraction as more problematic than others. Participants considered two infraction types in particular, cut and paste plagiarism and patchwriting, as the most problematic. While none of the infractions in the study were considered minor, many were considered much less problematic than cut and paste plagiarism and patchwriting. It is interesting to note that cut and paste plagiarism and patchwriting also appear to be more intentional writing practices than some of the other types of infractions. A writer usually knows that when she or he is cutting a section of text from an outside source and dropping it into their own work without attribution they are
diluting their own authorial voice and attempting to pass off the ideas of another as their own. Similarly, a writer usually knows that patchwriting, which involves swapping out synonyms and key words from another writer’s work without attributing the original source, is also not fully representative of the author’s own ideas. The fact that study participants consistently ranked cut and paste plagiarism and patchwriting as the most severe infractions suggest that students are cognizant of the correlation between intentionality and infraction severity, as other types of originality infractions can often be unintentional.

**Re-envisioning Plagiarism and Originality Infractions**

Perhaps the reason that participants ranked cut-and-paste plagiarism as the most problematic of the infraction types is rooted in the notion that these writing practices most closely resemble stealing the ideas of others. As Porter (1986) describes, “Examining texts ‘intertextually’ means looking for ‘traces,’ the bits and pieces of Text which writers or speakers borrow and sew together to create new discourse” (p. 34). The intertextual connection between the texts that a writer has read or otherwise been exposed to contributes significantly to what she or he writes. However, when one omits the essential step of analyzing and grappling with a text and simply cuts-and-pastes the work of another into his or her writing without attributing the original source, the practice is very problematic.

So herein lies the problem. In many cases, writers do not begin the writing process intending to plagiarize or use the ideas of other writers without proper attribution. Instead, they make errors in how they go about weaving the ideas of others into their own work. Even patchwriting, which many instructors consider a highly problematic writing practice, can often be attributed to a problem in technique rather than an ethical transgression on the part of the writer. Howard (1992) describes patchwriting as “a composing phenomenon that may signal
neither a willing violation of academic ethics nor ignorance of them, but rather a healthy effort to gain membership in a new culture” (p. 236). The fact that writers are attempting to gain entrance into what seems a formidable and intimidating intellectual culture should come as a relief to many instructors who think that students are simply trying to steal the ideas of others and pass them off as their own.

The results of this study show that while it cannot be conclusively determined that video interventions change the way that writers think about plagiarism, writers do organize different types of infractions into a hierarchy. Given that writers organize infractions as such, having different terms to define each different infraction type could remind writers that plagiarism can, but isn’t always an issue of “stealing” the ideas of another.

**Overall Conclusions about Best Teaching Practices Regarding Plagiarism**

Instruction about plagiarism and the development of time-management skills are essential for developing writers. While there will be some students who still choose to plagiarize, many will see the value of the instruction and develop ways to avoid plagiarizing. Perhaps the greatest way to teach students ways to avoid plagiarizing is to teach them ways to paraphrase and cite sources more effectively. Teaching these key skills in composition classrooms, combined with instructional video use which reinforces writing concepts, give students the greatest opportunity to strengthen and grow skills at writing original text with strong authorial identity.

The students interviewed for the study suggested that at The University of Findlay (UF), they are frequently told about the honor code and reminded about the consequences of plagiarizing. “Christine” noted, “At UF, they really drill it into our heads about plagiarism, the honor code, and the consequences of breaking it. We are also reminded that we need to always write in our own words, and that if we’re not sure, to ask.” “Christine’s” observation suggested
that as with at most other institutions, students are advised not to plagiarize and are reminded of
the consequences plagiarizing, but didn’t provide examples of instructional strategies they have
been taught to show them how to avoid plagiarizing. “Jamie” also noted, “[My instructors] have
talked about plagiarism, but they haven’t gone into great depth. It’s usually not more than one
sentence reminding us not to do it, along with a reminder that there is a checker on Blackboard
that looks for plagiarism in student writing.” “Christine” and “Jamie’s” observations suggest
that instructors must place emphasis on specific strategies and techniques which ensure that
students are paraphrasing and utilizing the ideas of others correctly into daily instruction. This,
combined with videos which introduce students to the range of different types of infraction that
can be found in student work and ways to avoid it, ensure students have every opportunity
available to strengthen writing and keep their work original and plagiarism-free.

Along with instruction about how to paraphrase and utilize sources properly, specific
instruction in time management skills can aid in reducing plagiarism and originality infractions
found in student writing. Teaching time management strategies for tackling a large writing
project may be as important to reducing plagiarism as any other form of instruction. While the
study data did not lead to conclusive findings that that video-delivered instruction can change in
student perception of plagiarism, interview responses about some of the key reasons students
choose to plagiarize suggest that poor time management is often a contributing factor. Both
Christine and Jamie did not suggest that lack of instruction or understanding of different forms of
plagiarism were to blame for student plagiarism, but poor time management was. When asked
what she thought the biggest reason students plagiarize is, “Christine” responded, “Because they
run out of time, or maybe they feel like no one will catch them and they feel invincible.” Jamie
made a similar observation when she noted, “procrastination is the biggest reason people
plagiarize. If someone waits until the last minute to write a 20-page paper, there will probably be plagiarism in the paper. It’s not the instructor’s fault, it’s just a time management issue.”

When instructors incorporate the development of time-management skills into writing instruction which is supplemented with instructional videos, instructors are affording their students every opportunity to not only know the correct ways to paraphrase and cite sources, but also to allow themselves the time needed to produce quality work which is reflective of a time investment commensurate for the assignment.

**Conclusion**

This study concludes that video interventions are an effective pedagogical tool to supplement face-to-face instruction about correct writing techniques and ways of avoiding plagiarism. This study also concludes that students do not consider all types of plagiarism and originality infractions as equally problematic. As such, they organize plagiarism and other forms of originality infractions into a hierarchy which labels some infractions as major and others as minor. With the widespread utilization of online coursework by many academic institutions, videos about plagiarism could serve as effective teaching tools to introduce students to different types of plagiarism and originality infractions and ways to avoid them. Incorporating links to videos about plagiarism and originality infractions within a course’s learning management systems (LMS) could permit instructors to quickly and easily share information about plagiarism to get students to think about ways to avoid it within their writing. Discussion board prompts about videos could be incorporated into coursework to get students thinking about different forms of plagiarism and how the concept is a nuanced one which problematize writing to varying degrees.
Recommendations

The following recommendations resulted from this study:

1. Writing instructors should incorporate a great deal of writing practice into classroom instruction and supplement this practice with instructional videos which examine topics about plagiarism and ways to avoid it when writing.

2. The academic community must increase the breadth of meta-language used to describe plagiarism and originality infractions. Widespread acceptance of a range of terms to define different forms of plagiarism and originality infractions will help students better understand the nuanced concept of plagiarism and be better equipped to avoid it in their writing.

3. With the rapid advance of online instruction, an advance in ways to present students with writing activities designed to teach correct methods of source usage and paraphrasing must also be adopted to ensure that students have sufficient writing practice in composition classrooms. Many modern-day learning management systems (LMSs) allow instructors to embed links to programs such as Turnitin.com which check for plagiarism, but there must also be sufficient opportunity for students to learn correct writing strategies whether completing coursework in face-to-face, online, or hybrid classrooms.

Future Research Opportunities

This study opens up a wide range of future areas of study. One area of future study might incorporate a sustained use of instructional videos and other electronically-delivered instructional materials such as podcasts that are shared with students throughout an entire semester. At the end of the semester, researchers could examining the degree of perceptual change among study participants. Other studies might incorporate a different pre- and post-survey administered to
participants before and after video intervention. A revised survey might go beyond asking participants how minor or major different forms of plagiarism or originality infraction are and instead ask students to record whether they believe the examples are intentional or unintentional.

Another area of future study might entail examining the data collected in this and other studies in additional ways. This study focused on looking at data from the perspective of average participant response. This method was selected for ease of analysis and because it fit within the researcher’s relatively limited understanding of statistical analysis. An interesting possible area of future study might go beyond simply examining respondent averages and instead look at data through other analytical lenses such as standard deviation. The standard deviation of responses could enhance understanding of collected data by revealing the degree to which responses deviated from the average response. If, for example, a researcher could show that there is a greater variance of responses in the pre-survey/s conducted than in post-surveys, this data could help demonstrate whether more respondents perceive different types of plagiarism and originality infraction in a similar way after video intervention than before. While it would be ideal to collect a new data set for standard deviation analysis, it could be conducted on the data collected from this study as well.

Additional research might examine the difference in how participants perceive their change in understanding of plagiarism before and after video interventions are shown. This study asked participants to respond to one question which asked them about their degree of familiarity with different forms of plagiarism before watching the instructional videos. It could be interesting to ask participants to rank their familiarity plagiarism and originality infractions to see if respondents self-report a different degree of understanding about plagiarism after watching the video interventions.
The study has provided a useful glimpse into the way that first year composition (FYC) students perceive the seriousness of plagiarism and other forms of originality infraction. While a great deal of further study is needed to fully understand how students perceive original authorship and the types of writing practices that problematize it, this study makes a preliminary attempt to understand the ways that videos might shape student understanding and perception of plagiarism.
References


ENGL106 College Writing II: Academic Writing and Research [Course description]. Retrieved from http://catalog.findlay.edu/en/current/Undergraduate-Catalog/Courses/ENGL-English/100/ENGL-106


WriteCheckVideos. (2012, November 12). 10 types of plagiarism. [Video webcast]. Webcast retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EF5eFeJMplA
# APPENDIX A

## IRB Approval

### Institutional Review Board

**Investigator’s Summary Description of Research Involving the Use of Human Subjects**

**Project Title:** The Role Instructional Videos Play in Influencing Student Attitudes Toward Plagiarism

- **Submission Date:** 8/15/15
- **Proposed Start-up Date:** 9/15/15

**College/Department:** Arts and Sciences/English

**Funding Agency:** NA

**Principal Investigator (PI): Dr. Elkie Burnside**

**PI Contact:**
- Phone: 419-434-5572
- E-mail: burnside@findlay.edu
- The University of Findlay, 1116 Cory Street D, Findlay, OH 45840

**Student/Secondary Investigator(s) (SI): Robert Ryder**

**Student/SI Contact:**
- Phone: 614-569-6917
- E-mail: ryderr@findlay.edu
- 345 Park Blvd., Worthington, OH 43085

### Types of Data (Choose All That Apply)

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**Note:** Before applying for human subjects review, masters project, thesis or dissertation proposal must be formally approved by the project advisor or thesis committee, and a copy of the informed consent must accompany this form to the Institutional Review Board (IRB).

### Research Design (Choose One)

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**Research Involves External Organization**

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I hereby certify that upon approval of this proposal by the IRB, no changes will be made without approval of the IRB, and that any problems, adverse reaction, or unforeseen conditions encountered in the use of human subjects will be immediately reported to the Chair of the IRB. I further agree to supply the IRB with all requested reports and a Certificate of Compliance upon completion of the project.

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Principal Investigator’s Signature __________________________ Date __________________________

Student Researcher’s Signature __________________________ Date __________________________
The IRB approval of the research project is for a period of one year.
1. Project Introduction/Overview

This project seeks to determine whether video intervention influences student attitude towards plagiarism. Plagiarism is often unintentional and the result of students not knowing how to prevent it in their writing. Plagiarism is an issue for students—honor codes don’t do much, but intervention might. Therefore, this study seeks to use web-based videos to investigate if intervention can change student attitudes towards plagiarism. Howard and Davies (2009) cited a 2007 study in which Rodrigue, Serviss, and Howard “studied papers written by 18 college sophomores in a required research writing course, reading not only the 18 papers but also all the sources cited in them. The researchers discovered that all the papers included some mishandling of sources-absence of citation, absence of quotation marks, paraphrase too close to the source language—and some mishandling was extensive” (p. 67). Given the prevalence of a range of mistakes often found in student writing, this study also intends to shed light on student attitude towards such mistakes.

Additionally, research by DeGeeter et. al. (2014) found that “The effectiveness of honor codes and penalties on reducing the incidence of plagiarism have not been established in the literature; however, providing some form of concrete intervention, such as live or Web-based education programs specifically designed to educate students about plagiarism, can be effective” (p. 4). Therefore, this study seeks to use web-based videos to investigate how intervention can change student attitudes towards plagiarism.

References


2. Research Question and/or Research Hypothesis

The project seeks to answer whether the attitude that first year composition (FYC) students have about plagiarism changes after watching a video intervention which introduces viewers to different forms of plagiarism and/or ways to avoid plagiarism. It is hypothesized that watching videos which highlight key features of plagiarism will alter student attitude towards plagiarism, and that videos which describe different forms of plagiarism will have a greater influence on attitudes towards plagiarism than videos which describe ways of avoiding plagiarism.

3. Setting

Is the study conducted in, or recruited from the following categories?

- Private/Public P-12
- Hospital
- College
- General Public
- Other

Please describe setting used

English 106 classrooms at the University of Findlay

4. Subjects

a. Characteristics of Subject Group

- Pregnant
- Fetus
- Children
- Mentally Impaired
- Legally Restricted
- Other

Please describe subjects used

First year composition (FYC) students enrolled in English 106 at the University of Findlay.

b. Health of Subject Group

- Physical Health:
  - Poor
  - Good
  - Excellent
  - Unknown

- Mental Health:
  - Poor
  - Good
  - Excellent
  - Unknown

Please state the necessity of using these particular groups:

This group is chosen based on ENGL106 enrollment.

c. Subject Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria:
Please describe the population and provide concise and complete answers for inclusion and/or exclusion criteria:

Participants who complete the pre and post survey are included in the study. Any participants who do not complete both the pre and post survey are excluded from the study. Because grades can be seen as coercive, participants will be reminded that they can drop out of the study at any time without negatively impacting their grade.

Experimental and control groups are determined based on convenience. Sections of ENGL106 which meet twice per week and last approximately one hour and twenty minutes will be experimental groups, as the extra class time will allow videos to be viewed after the pre-survey with enough time remaining to complete the post survey. Classes which meet three times per week will serve as control groups as they meet for only 50 minutes, and class time will only be long enough to complete the pre and post surveys.

Interviewees will be selected based on change in perception between pre and post survey. The post survey includes a question to allow participants to indicate interest in a follow up interview. Participants who demonstrate a measurable change in perception after watching the video interventions (greater than 3%) will be selected.

Interviewees will be selected based on change in perception between pre and post survey. The post survey includes a question to allow participants to indicate interest in a follow up interview. Participants who demonstrate a measurable change in perception after watching the video interventions (greater than 3%) will be selected.

d. Recruitment of Subjects: Check which one applies to the recruitment of your subjects.

| X | Recruitment of UF class, students, or personnel |
| X | Outside agencies, schools, organizations, or data base |
| | Open call for participants (general public) |

Please describe how you will recruit participants and attach copies or script (if recruiting orally) of the recruitment material (e.g. flyers, advertisements, letters, etc.):

Instructors and Teaching Assistants at the University of Findlay will be asked if they would be willing to have the secondary investigator (Robert Ryder) visit one of their English 106 class sessions. Participants will be read and provided with a copy of an implied consent statement and will then be asked to complete a pre survey (See Attachment 2). Some participants will also be shown short videos about plagiarism (See Attachment 9). All participants will then be asked to complete a post survey (See Attachment 3).

Participants in the study will be read a script (See Attachment 7) regarding participation in the study.

e. Sampling Plan: Check which one applies.

| Random Sampling | Stratified Sampling | Convenience Sampling | Other |

Please provide a rationale for your sampling plan:

Convenience sampling will allow ease of access to subjects and the greatest possible number of participants.

f. Sample Size

Please provide the total number of expected participants and rationale.

A minimum of three classes will be surveyed with a total sample size of at least 30 participants. The study will include two experimental groups and one control group with at least 10 participants per group.

5. Instruments (Attach all instruments to be used)

Please briefly describe all means used to collect data and attach the instruments to be used (e.g. interview questions, surveys, assessments, etc.).

Instruments will consist of survey instructions (Attachment 1), pre-survey (Attachment 2) and post-survey (Attachment 3) administered to all participants. Additionally, 6-10 participants will also be asked interview questions (Attachment 4). Collection of data will follow the format of the attached experimental group visualization (Attachment 5).

6. Procedures

Please briefly describe the procedures used to collect data based on identified instruments and total time investment of the participant:

Professors will be contacted to inquire whether they would be willing to allow me to visit their classroom for a class period during the semester to conduct a pre and post survey of their students (Attachment 6). Students will be read a recruitment discussion to determine which students are willing to participate in the study (Attachment 7) and will be provided with a copy of the implied consent (Attachment 8). After the pre-survey (Attachment 2) is administered, videos will be shown to the two experimental groups (Attachment 9). A post-survey will follow for all participants (Attachment 3). Students who are willing to participate in an interview following the post survey will be forwarded an email to schedule a time which will work with their schedule, along with a full consent form (Attachment 10) and will be asked the interview questions (Attachment 4).

To ensure that the pre-survey and post-survey are linked to the same participant, each survey will be assigned a unique number associated with the class and survey number. For example, Survey #106-01 #1 will be given to participant #1 in Section 01 of English 106.
The survey process will take between 50 minutes to one hour and 10 minutes. Participants will already be present in the class session, which will result in less-than-minimal or minimal inconvenience to participants.

### 7. Analysis

**Please briefly describe how you will analyze the data collected:**

Percentages will be used to display Likert scale results. Percentages of participant responses will be analyzed for similarities or differences. When analyzing data, any change in attitude towards infraction will be considered a measurable change. However, greater changes in attitude (5% or greater) will be considered more significant than changes that are less than 5%.

After analysis, followup interviews will be conducted with 6 or more participants (not to exceed 10) and analyzed per qualitative best practices with a focus on the rationale for student responses.

### 8. Risk to the subjects

**Identify the following risk categories and your perception of the level of risk involved**

Please note that Health & Human Services (HHS) states that there is always risk to the subject and have defined the categories of risk as follows.

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<td>Physical</td>
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<td>Psychological</td>
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<td>Legal</td>
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<td>Economic</td>
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**Please describe the risk in detail:**

Some students may view the topic of plagiarism as stressful because of the negative connotation the concept carries. Perceived level of risk

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<th>Level of Risk</th>
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<td>Minimal</td>
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<td>Greater than Minimal</td>
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Because pre and post survey data will be required for the study, data will be kept anonymous by using numbers to identify pre and post surveys with one another. A study participant who has been assigned a pre-survey carrying the number 106.04, for example, will be given a post-survey that bears the same number. This will allow the pre and post surveys to be matched to one another without recording the student’s name. Should a student be willing to participate in a follow-up interview for the study, the participant will not remain anonymous. However, when writing about the interview as part of my thesis project, the previously assigned number will be used when referring to the participant.

### 9. Mitigation of Risk to the Subject

**a. Researcher Mitigation**

**Please describe how the researcher will try to mitigate the risk:**

Participants will have the option of self-excluding by not completing the pre survey or post survey. Student names will be kept anonymous through the use of assigned numbers (as described above) and will not be used when analyzing survey responses or responses to interview questions. Students will be advised that participation in the surveys or and/or interview will have no effect on course grade.

Additionally, within the recruitment discussion I will also advise students that the study only seeks to discover student attitude towards plagiarism and that responses will not be shared with their instructor. Keeping survey data anonymous and reminding participants that survey results will not be shared with their instructor will ensure that the risk mitigation plan is at an appropriate level.

**b. Research Gain**

**Please describe the importance of the information gained in relationship to the risk:**

Information obtained from the study may contribute useful information about student attitudes towards plagiarism to instructors and other members of the academic community. While obtaining this information poses less than minimal risk to student participants, the information gained from the research could aid in improving instructional methods and best practices regarding plagiarism instruction and prevention.

**c. Equity and Equality**

**Please describe how the researcher will ensure equity and equality for the participants:**

All participants contribute on a self-selection basis. No participants are required to or excluded from participation in the study as long as they meet the requirement of being enrolled in ENGL106 at The University of Findlay. No tracking of participation in the study is reported to The University of Findlay.

### 10. Compensations and Benefits

**a. Are you offering any compensations to individuals for participating in your study?**

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*If yes, please describe:
b. Benefits to individual
Outside of any compensation offered what are the benefits for the individual for participating?
Participants may learn more about plagiarism which could decrease the risk of unintentionally plagiarizing on written work. Participants may also gain a better understanding of personal attitudes towards plagiarism.

c. Benefits to society
How will participating in this study benefit society?
Society will have a better understanding of student attitudes towards ethical practices such as plagiarism.

11. Consent Procedures
Federal regulations require precautionary measures to be taken to insure the protection of human subjects on physical, psychological, social, economical and other issues. This includes the use of “informed consent” procedures.

a. Type of Consent

- Oral Consent
  (Script must be provided with short consent form)

- Written Consent
  (Long Consent forms must be provided)
  Used for interviews because students will be individually identifiable to reviewer, even though content will be used anonymously.

- X Waiver
  *Implied Consent
  (Consent description must be provided)
  Used for pre-/post-survey because information is anonymous and informed consent would link participant data. Passive implied consent will be given upon survey submission.

- Assent
  (In conjunction with parental consent for children 8-17)

  - Oral
  - Written

* If requesting a waiver please give rationale for waiver request.

b. Are your subject(s) minors or mentally impaired?

- Yes*
- No

If yes, Please describe how and by whom permission will be granted. *Subject Assent form must accompany legal guardian’s consent form.

c. Do subject(s) have a cognitive limitation/impairment and/or a language/literacy barrier?

- Yes
- No

Please describe the limitation/impairments and/or barrier and how you plan to ensure participants understanding for informed consent.

d. Will subject(s) be provided copies of all consent documentation including implied consent description?

- Yes
- No

If consent/assent documentation is not provided to participants please justify why.

12. Disclosure

Check which one applies.

- Full-disclosure
- Less than Full Disclosure
- Necessary Deception

Please describe how you will disclose the study to the participants. If less than full disclosure or necessary deception is chosen, please justify the need for such action. All studies using less than full disclosure or necessary deception must provide a debriefing script or handout explaining to the participants the true purpose of the study and need for deception.

13. Data Confidentiality

a. Does this data fall within:

- Public Domain
- Confidential Domain

b. Data Access
Please describe all parties who will have access to the data.
Please provide (in an attachment) evidence of human subject training/confidentiality agreement for those who have access.
Principle Investigator (PI) Dr. Elkie Burnside and Secondary Investigator (SI) Robert Ryder will have access to the data. Please see attached IRB Certification for PI.

c. **Subjects’ anonymity/confidentiality**

How do you plan to protect the individual subjects’ anonymity/confidentiality?

An ID number with class number and survey number will be assigned to each survey so that survey results will remain confidential and not be associated with student names. Pseudonyms will be given to interview participants so that student names will not be included in research results.

d. **Data Storage**

How, where and for how long will the data be stored? (Please not that for IRB purposes all data must be stored for a minimal of three years.)

Results of the survey will be password-protected and stored on the PI’s data encrypted laptop for 3 years.

e. **Data Deletion**

How will the data be destroyed? (Please address all data sources, e.g. video, audio-visual, interview, questionnaires, consent forms, electronic data, etc.)

After 3 years student responses will be deleted from PI’s laptop. Responses from participant interviews will be deleted from PI’s laptop after 3 years.

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<td>No</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

14. **HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability & Accountability Act)**

If you answer “Yes” to any of the following questions, your project is subject to HIPAA and you must complete the HIPAA Supplement (available Research and Grants Office and IRB CD) and attach it to the application.

- Will health information be obtained from a covered entity (a health plan, health care clearing house, or a health care provider who bills health insurers (e.g. hospitals, doctor’s offices, dentists, the UF Student Health Center, UF Counseling Services, etc.)?
- Will the study involve the provision of health care in a covered entity?
- If the study involves the provision of health care, will a health insurer or billing agency be contacted for billing or eligibility?

Upon completion of this form (including all documentation requested), please submit one proposal copy electronically to irb@findlay.edu and one hard copy to Heather Riffle, Academic Affairs.
Instructor Correspondence

September 2015

Dear ________, (Insert name of professor or teaching assistant)

I hope your semester is going well and you’re having a great week. As a part of my Master of Arts in Rhetoric and Writing (MARW) thesis, I am completing a study on changes in student perception of plagiarism after watching instructional videos on plagiarism.

I am interested in visiting one session of your ENGL106 class this semester to conduct surveys of your students. The entire process will take between 50 minutes to one hour and ten minutes. Your presence in the classroom while students are completing the surveys would be very appreciated, but if you would prefer to leave the classroom while the study is being conducted that is perfectly fine.

For the study, I’ll be handing out a pre-survey which asks students to offer their opinion about the seriousness of different forms of plagiarism. After completing the pre-survey, some classes participating in the study will be shown a series of short instructional videos on plagiarism, while other classes will serve as a control group and will not be shown videos. A post-survey will follow for all groups, asking similar questions presented in the pre-survey to see if student attitude has changed.

This study may help improve understanding of how first-year composition (FYC) students perceive different forms of plagiarism and whether intervention in the form of web-based instructional videos changes student perception of plagiarism.

It is asked that students not be taught about plagiarism in class before the survey is administered. Please let me know at your convenience if you would be willing to allow me to visit your class for a day. I will reach out to you to confirm a class day for me to visit.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration of my request to visit you and your class this semester.

Sincerely,

Rob Ryder
ryderr@findlay.edu
Master of Arts in Rhetoric and Writing (MARW) Candidate
APPENDIX C

Recruitment Discussion

Hello,

My name is Rob Ryder and I am a graduate student at The University of Findlay studying in the Master of Arts in Rhetoric and Writing (MARW) program. As a part of my degree, I am required to complete a thesis project.

For my thesis, I am completing a study of student perceptions of different forms of plagiarism. Your instructor has allowed me to visit your class to request volunteers to participate in my study with the goal of learning your perceptions about different forms of plagiarism. I am interested in your perceptions regarding different forms of plagiarism.

The surveys associated with this study will be conducted within today’s class period. Your answers are not shared with your instructor and have no bearing on your grade, but could be very beneficial to improving understanding of student perceptions towards different forms of plagiarism.

The study consists of completing a short pre-survey to determine your perception of different forms of plagiarism. Depending on whether class is control or intervention group, read:

1. We will then take a very brief break and I’ll distribute a post-survey with additional questions. Or . . .
2. We will then watch a series of short instructional videos about plagiarism. Following the videos I’ll distribute a post-survey which will ask you additional questions about your perception of different forms of plagiarism.

Please answer all of the questions. You are not required to participate in this study, I would really appreciate your participation. If you choose not to participate in the study, please sit quietly at your workspace while the surveys are conducted.

At this time, would those willing to participate in the study please raise your hand. I’ll distribute and read the disclaimer.

Thanks so much for your willingness to participate.
Informed Consent Form

APPENDIX D

September 2015

Dear UF English 106 Student,

You are invited to participate in a study of student attitudes towards plagiarism. I hope to learn without prejudice the degree of severity students assign to different forms of plagiarism. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because of your enrollment in English 106 and our interest in your opinions. If you decide to participate, you will complete both the pre and post surveys administered to the class in the order distributed. Your return of the surveys is implied consent. The survey is designed to increase understanding of the degree of severity student writers assign to different forms of plagiarism and originality infractions. It will take about 45 minutes to complete the survey. As a part of the study, you may be asked to watch several instructional videos which highlight some of the types of plagiarism and/or ways of avoiding plagiarism. No benefits accrue to you for answering the survey, but your responses will be used to improve instructional methods regarding plagiarism. Any discomfort or inconvenience to you derives only from the amount of time taken to complete the surveys.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will not be disclosed. Your decision whether or not to participate will not prejudice any future relationships with The University of Findlay. If you decide to participate, you are free to discontinue participation at any time without prejudice. You will be made aware of any information that varies from what has been provided to you and/or might affect your willingness to continue to participate in the project.

This survey and consent waiver have been approved by Institutional Review board at The University of Findlay which guarantees that research involving human subjects follows federal regulations. If you have any questions about your rights as a human subject please contact the IRB chair, Jennifer Fennama-Bloom; she can be reached at irb@findlay.edu.

We will submit the results of this study for publication in its entirety. The unprocessed data will be destroyed 3 years after publication. If you are interested in the project results please email us with for information on retrieving the data. Please keep a copy of this letter for your records.

If you have any questions regarding this project feel free to contact Robert Ryder at ryderr@findlay.edu or his research advisor, Dr. Elkie Burnside at burnside@findlay.edu or 419-434-5572.
Thank you for your time.

Dr. Elkie Burnside and Robert Ryder
APPENDIX E

Full Consent Form

DATE: October 2015

PROJECT TITLE: The Role of Video Interventions in Influencing Student Perceptions of Plagiarism

PRIMARY INVESTIGATOR(S) AND CO-INVESTIGATORS:

INTRODUCTION: This project seeks to determine whether video intervention influences student attitude towards plagiarism. Plagiarism is often unintentional and the result of students not knowing how to prevent it in their writing. Plagiarism is an issue for students—honor codes don’t do much, but intervention might. Therefore, this study seeks to use web-based videos to investigate if intervention can change student attitudes towards plagiarism.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY: The project seeks to answer whether the attitude that first year composition (FYC) students have about plagiarism changes after watching a video intervention which introduces viewers to different forms of plagiarism and/or ways to avoid plagiarism.

DESCRIPTION OF STUDY PROCEDURES: Professors will be contacted to inquire whether they would be willing to allow me to visit their classroom for a class period during the semester to conduct a pre and post survey of their students (Attachment 6). Students will be read a recruitment discussion to determine which students are willing to participate in the study (Attachment 7) and will be provided with a copy of the implied consent (Attachment 8). After the pre-survey (Attachment 2) is administered, videos will be shown to the two experimental groups (Attachment 9). A post-survey will follow for all participants (Attachment 3). Students who are willing to participate in an interview following the post survey will be forwarded an email to schedule a time which will work with their schedule (Attachment 10) and will be asked the interview questions (Attachment 4).

TIME ASSOCIATED WITH STUDY: In class 50-70 minutes to take surveys and/or watch videos. Optional follow up interview 30-60 minutes.

POTENTIAL RISKS: The time taking the survey and participating in the interview may infringe on your schedule.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS: Information obtained from the study may contribute useful information about student attitudes towards plagiarism to instructors and other members of the academic community.

PROJECT ALTERNATIVES TO PARTICIPATION IN THE STUDY: You may choose to discontinue participation at any time without effecting your relationship with UF.
CONFIDENTIALITY OF DATA: Data will only be available to the PI and SI and will be destroyed after 3 years. An ID number with class number and survey number will be assigned to each survey so that survey results will remain confidential and not be associated with student names. Pseudonyms will be given to interview participants so that student names will not be included in research results.

COSTS AND/OR COMPENSATION FOR PARTICIPATION: None

CIRCUMSTANCES FOR DISMISSAL FROM THE STUDY: None, participation may be discontinued at any time.

COMPENSATION FOR INJURY: None

CONTACT PERSONS: For more information concerning this research, please contact Dr. Elkie Burnside at (444) 444-4444. If you believe that you may have suffered a research related injury, contact Dr. Elkie Burnside at (444) 444-4444. If you have further questions about your rights as a research subject, you may contact:

Sue Stevens
IRB Chairperson
The University of Findlay
Findlay, OH 45840
419 434-5442
irb@findlay.edu

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION: Participation in this study is voluntary. You are free to participate or to withdraw at any time, for whatever reason. In the event that you do withdraw from this study, the information you have already provided will be kept in a confidential manner.

Note to investigators, please include if applicable
For medical studies, state that the subject does not risk loss of present or future care they would otherwise receive.

For studies with students, state that the subject does not jeopardize grades nor risk loss of present or future faculty/school/university relationships.

CONSENT: Federal regulations require precautionary measures to be taken to insure the protection of human subjects on physical, psychological, social, and other issues. This includes the use of “informed consent” procedures.

I, _________________________________ (PRINTED NAME OF SUBJECT) have been adequately informed regarding the risks and benefits of participating in this study. My signature also indicates that I can change my mind and withdraw my consent to participate at any time without penalty. Any and all questions I had about my participation in this study have been fully answered. I understand I will receive a copy of this consent form for my records.
SUBJECT SIGNATURE:___________________________________________________ DATE

I have witnessed the consent process and believe the subject has been fully informed, understands the research study, and has agreed to participate in the study.

WITNESS PRINTED NAME:____________________________________________________________________

WITNESS SIGNATURE:___________________________________________________ DATE
APPENDIX F

Survey Instructions

After reading the scenario, please rank how minor or major you would consider the error to be on the scale ranging from very minor to very major. Examples of very minor and very major issues are defined with examples below:

**very minor issue:** an issue that is minimally problematic. A minor driving issue might be parking in a faculty parking space which results in a $25 parking ticket.

**very major issue:** an issue that very problematic. A major driving issue might be running a red light and striking another vehicle, resulting in damage to another vehicle, injury to another driver and possible driver’s license suspension.

Remember, there are no right or wrong answers, and the study only seeks your perception of the how minor or major you perceive each of the errors to be.

**Refresher on Parts of a Quoted Passage:**

The below key is a refresher of what a lead-in, direct quote, and in-text citation look like. Several of the following questions reference these terms.

Example:
*Power (2009) reflects on the findings of her research when she notes, “For the students interviewed, plagiarism is sometimes a moral issue, but more often, they expressed it in terms of something that people in authority imposed on them” (p. 656).*

single-underlined information = lead-in
bolded information = direct quote
wave-underlined information = in-text citation

Please select only one answer for each question, and clearly mark by filling in the space or marking completely through the space as depicted below:

```
---0-------------------0-------------------0-------------------0-------------------0---
Very Minor Neutral: Neither Major Very Minor Minor nor Major Major
```

Or . . .

```
---0-------------------0-------------------0-------------------0-------------------0---
Very Minor Neutral: Neither Major Very Minor Minor nor Major Major
```
Please feel free to take notes on the videos watched if you choose. Space is provided below:

Video Notes: ______________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________
APPENDIX G

Pre-Survey

Please complete all 18 questions of the survey. For questions 1-5, please fill in the blanks:

1. Name: _________________________________________________

2. Please check your grade level below:
   ___ Freshman
   ___ Sophmore
   ___ Junior
   ___ Senior

3. Please check your gender:
   ___ Male
   ___ Female

4. How familiar are you with different forms of plagiarism that can impact student writing:

   ---------------0-------------------0-------------------0-------------------0-------------------
   Not very familiar Somewhat Familiar Very familiar Expert
   at all familiar

5. Please indicate the language you are most familiar with:

   _________________________________________________

For questions 6-18, each of the below scenarios describes a writing error ranging from very minor to very major. Select how minor or major each infraction is:
6. In writing her book *Axolotl Roadkill*, German author Helene Hegemann inserted entire pages from another book, *Strobo*, into her novel without attributing the original source. This error is:

---o-------------------o-------------------o-------------------o-------------------o---
Very Minor Neutral: Neither Major Very Minor Minor nor Major Major

7. When writing a paper for a biology class on jellyfish, the author found some great information from a website called jellywatch.org. Before she uses the information from the website, the author states to her reader that the information was from the site jellywatch.org, but she forgets to include quotation marks around the passage from the site. This error is:

---o-------------------o-------------------o-------------------o-------------------o---
Very Minor Neutral: Neither Major Very Minor Minor nor Major Major

8. When describing a UFO sighting that took place in 1965, a writer uses a quote from Jake Hopping’s article from page 42 of a 2012 article in *FATE* magazine about the sighting. The writer properly introduces the quote and includes the quoted material in quotation marks, but forgets to include an in-text citation (Hopping 42) at the end of quoted material. This error is:

---o-------------------o-------------------o-------------------o-------------------o---
Very Minor Neutral: Neither Major Very Minor Minor nor Major Major

9. When writing a paper about a subject he was not very familiar with, the author included three direct quotes in a row, two of which were over seven lines in length. Each direct quote was properly quoted and included an in-text citation. However, because the author has used other sources extensively, there are several pages in the paper where there is very little of the author’s own writing. This error is:

---o-------------------o-------------------o-------------------o-------------------o---
Very Minor Neutral: Neither Major Very Minor Minor nor Major Major
10. An author really liked the way that an author described the feminist undertones apparent in Mad Max: Fury Road. Instead of paraphrasing or using a direct quote, the author chose to use the original paragraph and swapping out synonyms such as the word dictator being exchanged for the word oppressor, the word wasteland being replaced with the word no-man’s-land, and the word slave being replaced with the word bondman. After making exchanges, the revised version was changed significantly from the original source. This error is:

---0-------------------o------------------------o---------------------o-------------------o---
Very   Minor       Neutral: Neither     Major          Very
Minor   Minor nor Major                     Major

11. When writing a paper, the author forgot to include a “lead-in” which introduces the author name and/or title of the work that was cited. The work was correctly placed in quotation marks and an in-text citation was included after the direct quote. This error is:

---0-------------------o------------------------o---------------------o-------------------o---
Very   Minor       Neutral: Neither     Major          Very
Minor   Minor nor Major                     Major

12. The author of a paper uses a lot of references to other sources. The other sources are all correctly cited, but the author’s own ideas only show through in several instances. Mostly, the author’s own ideas are overshadowed by extensive use of other sources which, although used correctly, dominate the content and flow of the paper to the point that the author’s own voice is rarely apparent. This error is:

---0-------------------o------------------------o---------------------o-------------------o---
Very   Minor       Neutral: Neither     Major          Very
Minor   Minor nor Major                     Major

13. The author forgets to include a lead-in to introduce the idea of another writer, but quotes and cites the writing from the outside source correctly. This error is:

---0-------------------o------------------------o---------------------o-------------------o---
Very   Minor       Neutral: Neither     Major          Very
Minor   Minor nor Major                     Major
14. A half-page of text was taken from an outside source and inserted into the author’s writing without giving credit to the outside source. This error is:

Very Minor Neutral: Neither Major Very Minor
Minor Minor nor Major Major

15. The author forgets to include quotation marks around a section of text from another source. This error is:

Very Minor Neutral: Neither Major Very Minor
Minor Minor nor Major Major

16. A correctly quoted passage is missing an in-text citation to show where the quoted passage came from. This error is:

Very Minor Neutral: Neither Major Very Minor
Minor Minor nor Major Major

17. The author uses the writing of another source, and instead of paraphrasing or quoting the passage, swaps out similar words for new works to create a “new,” original piece of writing. This error is:

Very Minor Neutral: Neither Major Very Minor
Minor Minor nor Major Major

18. Using SafeAssign, a plagiarism-checker, Amy found that 27% of her paper was identical to other papers found on SafeAssign. This error is:

Very Minor Cannot determine Major Very Minor
Minor with information provided Major
APPENDIX H

Post-Survey

Please complete all 18 questions of the survey:

1. The author of a paper on plant biology found a good source on the forests surrounding Hancock County. She provided a lead-in for the quote and followed with an in-text citation, but forgot to put quotation marks around the quoted passage. This error is:

   Very: Minor  Neutral: Neither  Major: Very  Minor: Minor nor Major  Very: Major

2. The author was running out of time to finish a paper about earthquakes for a geology class. The United States Geologic Survey (USGS) website had an excellent description of how earthquakes form which was about a page long. The author retyped the passage exactly as it appeared on the USGS website and inserted it into the center of his paper. The original source was not attributed and there was no in-text citation or Works Cited entry for the original source listed at the end of the paper. This error is:

   Very: Minor  Neutral: Neither  Major: Very  Minor: Minor nor Major  Very: Major

3. The author is really happy with how her writing is coming along this semester. In her paper she incorporated a lead-in to introduce her source and placed the passage in quotation marks; however, she forgot to include an in-text citation showing which page the passage came from. This error is:

   Very: Minor  Neutral: Neither  Major: Very  Minor: Minor nor Major  Very: Major
4. The author’s paper is a masterfully-written patchwork of different sources. All of her sources are correctly used with proper use of lead-ins, direct quotes, and in-text citations. However, few of her own ideas are incorporated into her writing. This error is:

---o---------------------------------------------------------------o---
Very Minor Neutral: Neither Major Very Minor
Minor Minor nor Major Major

5. The author is still a bit unsure about how to paraphrase a text, and it is required that he include at least one paraphrase in his paper. Using the original source, the author takes out certain words and replaces them with words that have the same meaning. In one case, he replaced the word “building” with “structure” and in another case he replaced the word “candy” with “confection.” Although the rewritten passage is not recognized on the plagiarism-checker software used in class, the only difference between the author’s “paraphrase” and the original source are the changed words. This error is:

---o---------------------------------------------------------------o---
Very Minor Neutral: Neither Major Very Minor
Minor Minor nor Major Major

6. The author is really excited about the paper he will be writing about sharks, and has done extensive research on the topic. To give credit to his many sources who have conducted extensive research on shark behavior and biology, the author fills his paper with quotes and paraphrases which are all correctly cited. At the end of his paper, the author realizes that he doesn’t really have a thesis and has not included many of his own ideas, but feels that since he is still learning about the topic and doesn’t have a lot of his own ideas to add, this won’t be a problem and hands in his paper as it is. This error is:

---o---------------------------------------------------------------o---
Very Minor Neutral: Neither Major Very Minor
Minor Minor nor Major Major
7. The author is writing a paper on the history of horseracing in America and found a really good source which she wants to include. The author introduces the name of the author and year the work was written followed by three sentences from her source exactly as they appear in her source and an in-text citation. The author forgets to include quotation marks around the section of text that is identical to her source. This error is:

---o-------------------o-------------------o-------------------o-------------------o---
Very Minor Neutral: Neither Major Very
Minor Minor nor Major Major

8. The author includes quotation marks around an interesting quoted passage in his paper. Afterwards, he follows that quoted passage up with interesting analysis to show his reader how the information in the quoted passage relates to his topic and why the passage is relevant. Despite using quotation marks correctly, the author forgets to include a lead-in which introduces the author of his source, and is also missing an in-text citation which shows the page number that the quoted passage came from. This error is:

---o-------------------o-------------------o-------------------o-------------------o---
Very Minor Neutral: Neither Major Very
Minor Minor nor Major Major

9. A quoted passage from a source has no lead-in to introduce who said a quoted passage so that the reader is introduced to who wrote the passage. This error is:

---o-------------------o-------------------o-------------------o-------------------o---
Very Minor Neutral: Neither Major Very
Minor Minor nor Major Major

10. The author is very tired after a tennis tournament and did not have the time to devote to a paper for a history class that is due on Monday. On Sunday night, she is working on her paper and finds a paper online that says exactly what she want to say in her paper. Knowing that the likelihood of being caught is low because it was a very difficult paper to find online, the author cuts and pastes two paragraphs and inserts them into her own paper without attributing the original source. This error is:

---o-------------------o-------------------o-------------------o-------------------o---
Very Minor Neutral: Neither Major Very
Minor Minor nor Major Major
11. The author forgets to include quotation marks around a section of text from another source. This error is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very</th>
<th>Minor</th>
<th>Neutral: Neither</th>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Very</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minor</td>
<td>Minor nor Major</td>
<td>Major</td>
<td>Major</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12. The author cites all of his/her sources correctly but only occasionally incorporates his own voice into the writing. This error is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very</th>
<th>Minor</th>
<th>Neutral: Neither</th>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Very</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minor</td>
<td>Minor nor Major</td>
<td>Major</td>
<td>Major</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13. The author left out the in-text citation after an otherwise correctly-quoted passage. This error is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very</th>
<th>Minor</th>
<th>Neutral: Neither</th>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Very</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minor</td>
<td>Minor nor Major</td>
<td>Major</td>
<td>Major</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14. The author exchanged similar words to slightly modify a section of text without truly rewriting (paraphrasing) the original text. This error is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very</th>
<th>Minor</th>
<th>Neutral: Neither</th>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Very</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minor</td>
<td>Minor nor Major</td>
<td>Major</td>
<td>Major</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15. Using Turnitin.com, a plagiarism checker, the author found that 12% of his paper was identical to a paper submitted at Ohio State University last year and 15% similar to a paper submitted at George Mason University. This error is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very</th>
<th>Minor</th>
<th>Cannot determine with information provided</th>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Very</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Major</td>
<td>Major</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
16. Would you be willing to be contacted after the study to answer some additional questions about your opinions about plagiarism? Please check one:

- Yes
  Email address you can be reached at: ________________________________

- No
APPENDIX I

Video Intervention Links

Video Group 1: Shown to Fall 2015 Experimental Groups
Rationale: These videos provide viewers with a description of different forms of plagiarism, which might empower writers to have a better understanding of the different forms of plagiarism that writers might commit.

10 Types of Plagiarism
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EF5eFeJMplA

A Quick Guide to Plagiarism
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VnTPv9PtOoo

Video Group 2: Shown to Spring 2016 Experimental Groups
Rationale: These videos provide viewers with a description of different forms of plagiarism, which might empower writers to have a better understanding of the different forms of plagiarism that writers might commit.

George Mason University Plagiarism
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HuxEGOudaGg

Episode 1: Plagiarism
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lydDvrcDBco
Video Descriptions

Different videos were shown the Fall 2015 and Spring 2016 semesters. The first video shown to Experimental Groups A and B in the Fall 2015 semester is titled *What is Plagiarism?* The video is 3 minutes and 58 seconds long and begins with a brief definition of plagiarism from the Webster Dictionary. Afterwards, the video presents 10 types of plagiarism: the clone, CTRL-C, Find-Replace, Remix, Recycle, Hybrid, Mashup, 404 Error, Aggregator, and Re-tweet plagiarism. Each plagiarism type is explained and viewers are reminded that plagiarism can carry serious consequences for one’s academic career. The second video shown to students surveyed in the Fall 2015 semester is titled *A Quick Guide to Plagiarism* and is 7 minutes and 31 seconds long. This video also begins with a definition of plagiarism. Afterwards, a series of short vignettes are presented to the viewer in which young speakers and writers are engaged in different forms of plagiarism. Like the other video, students are introduced to different types of plagiarism. This is the only video which presents the ghost writer, someone writing a paper for another individual, as a type of plagiarism. Other forms of plagiarism introduced in the video are the photocopy, in which a student cuts and pastes a large section of text, the remix, in which the writer makes small changes to words and phrases to pass off another’s ideas as one’s own. The video also introduces the individual to an individual called “the customer,” who seeks out an individual to purchase a paper from. The video concludes by reviewing different forms of plagiarism and briefly going over the consequences of engaging in plagiarism.

In the Spring 2016 semester, Experimental Groups A and B were shown a different set of videos. The first video was titled Understanding Plagiarism, and is 2 minutes and 50 seconds in length. The video begins by introducing the viewer to the idea that plagiarism is not just copying
the words of another individual, but also involves copying the ideas of another. The video reminds viewers that two types of citations, in-text and bibliographic citations are necessary to ensure that another individual’s ideas are credited. The video next provides viewers with tips to avoid plagiarizing and strengthen authorial voice. The video concludes by reminding viewers that plagiarism is a major offense with a range of consequences. The second video shown to students was titled Episode 1: Plagiarism. The video is 4 minutes and 59 seconds long and is animated. The video presents the ethical quandary that the video’s main character, Allison, encounters when a friend Jared invites her to get Thai food. While it doesn’t expressly state it, it implies that Allison has procrastinated on writing her paper for a psychology class and is cramming to get it complete. Jared tells Allison that he wrote a similar paper the previous year and that she is welcome to use his paper. Other friends enter the room and remind both Allison and Jared that it is a serious ethical transgression to use another’s work and present it as one’s own. While the video doesn’t present any specific examples of types of plagiarism or ways to avoid it, it does attempt to get the viewer to think about the implications of procrastinating and using another individual’s work to pass off as one’s own.

Allison falls asleep and dreams that she is meeting with her professor who has advised her that she failed the paper because she plagiarized on it. She dreams about being confronted by her instructor about the ethical implications of plagiarizing on her paper. The experience causes Allison to reflect on her writing and the decisions that she has made regarding time management which can influence her work.
APPENDIX K

Interview Questions

Interview Questions (Attitude Changed as a Result of Video Intervention):

1. Do you think that using videos or having lessons about different forms of plagiarism will change how students feel about plagiarism?

2. Do you think that plagiarism is a problem on college campuses like the University of Findlay?

3. Do you think that many students know when they’re plagiarizing or is it something that is unintentional?

4. Have many of your instructors at UF talked about how to avoid plagiarism?

5. What do you think is the biggest reason that writers plagiarize? Based on your response, what would be your suggestion as to the best way to reduce plagiarism on college campuses?

Interview Questions (Attitude Remained Same after Video Intervention):

1. In your opinion, what is the way for instructors to reduce plagiarism among students?

2. Do you think that plagiarism is a problem on college campuses like the University of Findlay?

3. Do you think that plagiarism occurs even when students have given examples of plagiarism and how to avoid it? If so, what do you think is the primary reason some students might still plagiarize?

4. Have many of your instructors at UF talked about how to avoid plagiarism?

5. In addition to things like lessons, in-class examples, and videos on plagiarism, can you think of any other ways that writers can be taught about plagiarism to reduce its appearance in student writing?
APPENDIX L

Interview Transcript: “Christine Bowers”

Q1: Definitely. It’s helpful to see the different types of plagiarism. It also makes you think “Oh, I might be doing that.” Videos can be even more helpful than [class instruction]. Instead of listening to an instructor drone on a video might be more captivating [and hold a students’ attention better].

Q2: I don’t think that it’s a problem. As adults [students] know there are lots of different types of problems that can arise when writing. At UF, they really drill it into our heads about plagiarism, the honor code, and the consequences of breaking it. We are also reminded that we need to always write in our own words, and that if we’re not sure, to ask.

Q3: I’m pretty optimistic. I think that people are generally good and that they don’t go out with the intent to plagiarize. I think that in instances where students do plagiarize it’s because their research is ingrained in their mind, and after getting really involved in their research forget that it’s not their own work. *Student suggested that this type of plagiarism is not intentional.

Q4: Plagiarism is really stressed in English classes. It wouldn’t be covered as much in a class such as math, but in English or any other course that really involve a lot of writing it is stressed.

Q5: Because they run out of time. Or maybe they feel like no one will catch them and they feel invincible. [One thing that can help prevent plagiarism] is professors being available to answer questions when students have them. The writing center [is also a great resource].

*When asked if Safe Assign is a good tool:
Definitely. It’s a good double-checker. It’s also a great way to make sure you’re doing things correct.
APPENDIX M

Interview Transcript-“Jamie Miller”

Q1: I think the videos do help. Listening to people talk about different forms of plagiarism only does so much. It’s like okay, cool, but seeing visually if there is something that you might be doing wrong and being able to say “that’s something I’ve done before” or “I’ve never done that before” can be helpful when writing.

Q2: No, I don’t think it is. Instructors talk about it every time [we turn in an assignment]. It is discussed with students and we are reminded to be aware of it.

Q3: It’s more unintentional. I think it’s more of a mistake that students can make. [Oftentimes a student might have] read something and remember the way that the author said it. When you write about it in your paper you remember the way that the author said it. When a student says something very similar to how the author said it that can be unintentional. The student thinks of a way to phrase it just like they said it, but it can be difficult.

Q4: They have talked about plagiarism, but they haven’t gone into great depth. It’s usually not more than one sentence reminding us not to do it, along with a reminder that there is a checker on Blackboard that looks for plagiarism in student writing.

Q5: Procrastination is the biggest reason. If someone waits until the last minute to write a 20-page paper, there will probably be plagiarism in the paper. It’s not the instructor’s fault, it’s just a time management issue.
I really have no idea [about ways to reduce plagiarism]. Our instructors already help us with time management and space out the papers. For example, they’ll have a certain number of pages due by a certain date and then more of the paper due later. When the assignment is spaced out like this I think it really helps.