



FYI Ruszkewicz

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN
AUSTIN, TEXAS 78712-1164

Department of English
PAR 110
(512) 471-1991

MEMORANDUM

TO: Instructors of E 306
FROM: Freshman English Office
RE: Plagiarism File

We hope you will continue helping us to build a file of E 306 papers which look suspiciously like essays students have either purchased from a term paper company or acquired from files set up in dormitories, sororities, fraternity houses, etc. We are also interested in essays you suspect might be added to such files in the future. We already have a small collection of papers and, with your cooperation, we expect to acquire many more.

When you come across a paper that seems like something a student might have purchased or copied (even when you don't have clear evidence of plagiarism), please bring it down to the freshman office (Parlin 16). We will duplicate the paper--removing the student's name so as not to violate his or her right to privacy--, date it, and enter it into our file by subject. Of course, if a version of the paper is already in the collection, you will have the evidence you need to support a charge of plagiarism.

We are not interested in papers that contain simple errors of documentation per se, but rather in essays that you suspect originated with or were illegally edited by a party other than the student.

An important resource for plagiarists seems to be papers which are dittoed and distributed to the classes for peer editing. Whenever possible, we would appreciate copies of these papers even though no plagiarism is suspected: such essays sometimes reappear under another student's name in a different class or in a different semester. We would suggest that whenever you ditto a student's paper, you leave one copy with us. The same privacy conditions apply here: we will make sure the student's name is not visible as we add the paper to the file.

Please note that essays contained in the "plagiarism file" are not NECESSARILY tainted by suspicions of plagiarism. The file is meant to be a resource to teachers who need to check on whether a student has actually written an essay. We hope it will serve as a deterrent to plagiarism once word is out that the freshman office keeps such a file.

We dislike having to resort to tactics of this kind to combat scholastic dishonesty, but recent incidents suggest the value of having a departmental repository for plagiarized, circulated, and suspicious material.