Martin Luther Christian University

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The Light of Truth

III/DRech/Ntfn-Rech/29/2017

March 10, 2021

Notification No: 09/Research/MLCU
Policy on Plagiarism

In terms of Section 20, sub section 4(a) and Section 22, sub section (2) of the Martin Luther Christian University Act 2019 and as recommended and approved by the Board of Governors meetings held on August 26, 2015 and March 2, 2021 the following amendments to the Policy on Plagiarism are hereby notified.

The University Policy on Plagiarism is aligned with the Promotion of Academic Integrity and Prevention of Plagiarism in Higher Educational Institutions Regulations 2018 of the UGC and is applicable to students, doctoral scholars and faculty of the University[1].

With a view to strengthening the standards of research and academic writing in the University, has articulated this policy to enhance awareness of inappropriate writing practices and plagiarism, and to promote and regulate academic integrity among students, doctoral scholars and faculty members.

"Plagiarism" means presenting someone else's work or ideas as one's own, with or without their consent, by incorporating it into one's work without full acknowledgement. All published and unpublished material, whether in manuscript, raw data, figures, printed or electronic form, is covered under this definition.

1. The different forms of plagiarism are as follows:
   a. Cut-copy-paste without due acknowledgement
   b. Copying research ideas, research projects or assignments
   c. Paraphrasing the work of others without due acknowledgement
   d. Incorrect citations
   e. Not giving due acknowledge of assistance received from different individuals, groups, communities and organizations
   f. Submitting one's work when it has already been submitted earlier
   g. Use of a commercial service for academic work

[1 - Amended vide BOG, March 2, 2021]

It is essential to prevent plagiarism as it is a breach of academic integrity and reveals dishonesty in the work.

2. Objectives[1]

1. To create awareness about responsible conduct of and writing up of research, thesis, dissertation, and the promotion of academic integrity and prevention of misconduct including plagiarism in academic writing among students, faculty and researchers.

2. To establish an institutional mechanism through education and training to facilitate responsible conduct of and writing up of research, thesis, dissertation, promotion of academic integrity and deterrence from plagiarism.

3. To develop systems to detect plagiarism and to set up mechanisms to prevent plagiarism.

3. For Students[1]

In addition to the above, all faculty members shall ensure that correct citations are given by students in all types of academic work (assignments, dissertations, project reports, etc.). Every such document will be submitted with an honour code i.e. a statement that secondary sources have been duly acknowledged and the work is original in nature to the best of their knowledge.

If an undergraduate or postgraduate student is found to have plagiarized or suspected to have plagiarized his/her academic work, the faculty member should bring it to the notice of the Head of Department and necessary action may be taken.

4. For Doctoral Scholars[1]

For doctoral scholars, all research proposals and theses will be checked for plagiarism. If plagiarism beyond the accepted level is found, the scholar will be asked to rework on the research proposal/thesis again. For doctoral students, their research works will go through three stages of plagiarism check.

1. On submission of the final Research Proposal
2. Prior to the pre-submission presentation of the thesis
3. Before it is sent to the external examiners for final evaluation

[1 - Amended vide BOG, March 2, 2021]
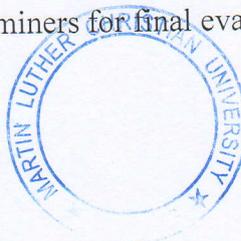
Note: The three stages will be done only after approval by the Supervisor/Co-Supervisor (s).

5. **For the Faculty**[1]

A faculty member who wishes to publish his/her research work, articles, book chapters, book or any other academic works shall submit their work in soft copy to the Department of Doctoral Studies and Research for plagiarism check before it is submitted for publication or printing. The department will also advise about suitability of journals for submitted work and about predator journals.

6. **Levels of Plagiarism**[1]

Plagiarism would be quantified into following levels in ascending order of severity for the purpose of its definition:

a. Level 0: Similarities up to 10%

b. Level 1: Similarities above 10% to 40%

c. Level 2: Similarities above 40% to 60%

d. Level 3: Similarities above 60%

7. **Penalties**[1]

Penalties in the cases of plagiarism shall be imposed on all students, doctoral scholars and faculty only after academic misconduct on the part of the individual has been established without doubt, when all avenues of appeal have been exhausted and individual in question has been provided enough opportunity to defend himself or herself in a fair or transparent manner.

a. Level 0: Similarities upto 10% - Minor similarities, no penalty.

b. Level 1: Similarities above 10% to 40% - Such student shall be asked to submit a revised script within a stipulated time period not exceeding 6 months.

c. Level 2: Similarities above 40% to 60% - Such student shall be debarred from submitting a revised script for a period of one year.

d. Level 3: Similarities above 60% -Such student registration for that programme shall be cancelled.

Note 1: Penalty on repeated plagiarism- Such student shall be penalised for the plagiarism of one level higher than the previous level committed by him/her. In case

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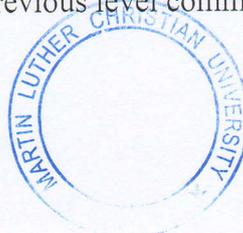
where plagiarism of highest level is committed then the penalty for the same shall be operative.

Note 2: Penalty in case where the degree/credit has already been obtained - If plagiarism is proved on a date later than the date of award of degree or credit as the case may be then his/her degree or credit shall be put in abeyance for a period recommended by the Head of the Department.

The similarity checks for plagiarism shall exclude the following:

i. All quoted work reproduced with all necessary permission and/or attribution.

ii. All references, bibliography, table of content, preface and acknowledgements.

iii. All generic terms, laws, standard symbols, standard equations and formal instruments

such as questionnaires which are used verbatim so as to ensure viability.

Note: The research work carried out by the student, faculty, doctoral scholars shall be based on original ideas, which shall include abstract, summary, hypothesis, observations, results, conclusions and recommendations only and shall not have any similarities. It shall exclude a common knowledge or coincidental terms, up to fourteen (14) consecutive words.

8. Awareness Programmes and Trainings[1]

The University will create awareness and teach good citing practices to all students, doctoral scholars and faculty members by incorporation into research methods, ethics modules, PhD and other coursework. The training will include:

a. Academic integrity for all undergraduate and postgraduate students

b. Responsible conduct of research and publication ethics as a compulsory course work/module for master's and other research Scholars.

c. Responsible conduct of research and publication ethics in faculty development programmes

d. Train students, researchers and faculty members in using plagiarism detection tools and reference management tools.

[1 - Amended vide BOG, March 2, 2021]

9. **Curbing Plagiarism[1]**

   a. The University shall declare and use appropriate software so as to ensure that documents such as theses, dissertations, and other academic works are free of plagiarism at the time of their submission.

   b. Every student submitting a thesis, dissertation, or any other such document to the University shall submit an undertaking indicating that the document has been prepared by him or her and that the document is his/her original work and free of any plagiarism.

   c. The Department of Doctoral Studies and Research will maintain records of plagiarism check for each scholar as per the format approved by the University.
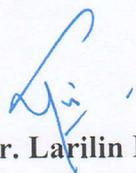
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