

Policies on Safe Assignment Implementation and Use at UNL

Approved by the Faculty Senate on September 11, 2007

Paper Archiving Policies

Papers will be removed from the system six years after the semester in which they were submitted. Faculty members are discouraged from adding papers to the database that were produced outside of the current term.

Use by Students:

Students should have access to safe assignment for submitting drafts of original academic work for draft screening, and to help them learn about proper citation and attribution of external resources. The draft review installation of Safe Assignment will be established independently from the SA software use in academic courses, and should be available to all UNL undergraduate and graduate students. The draft instance of Safe Assignment will be configured to exclude checking against the local (UNL specific) submitted paper database, and will be managed to exclude submitted draft documents from entering our UNL local paper database. The University Libraries will host a service that allows students to check drafts of papers. Library faculty will help students interpret Safe Assignment analyses of papers submitted to the draft review service and assist them with proper citations. Once a student has been trained on the use of Safe Assignment in the Libraries, the student may use this access to the Safe Assignment system **from any computer that can access Blackboard whenever the student wishes, without help from the librarian.**

Use by Faculty and Other Instructional Staff:

A faculty member who uses Safe Assignment for a course is responsible for deciding whether or not to allow submission of drafts by the students through the Blackboard page for that specific course. It is the responsibility of instructors to be knowledgeable about, and to conform to the procedures in the Student Code of Conduct in taking actions based upon evidence produced by Safe Assignment or any other means. Safe Assignment reports that negatively impact a student's grade must be shared with the student as specified in the Student Code of Conduct, section 4.2. {See section 4.2 of the Student Code of Conduct}. Faculty using Safe Assignment are strongly encouraged to notify students that papers will be submitted to the Safe Assignment system. Notification to students can appear in appropriate written documents such as the course syllabus, Blackboard course announcements, and other systems faculty use to communicate with their classes. If a faculty member uses Safe Assignment without notifying the student, the faculty member is not to deposit the paper in the local database. If a paper is inadvertently added to the database, the faculty member is expected to remove the paper or contact Information Services to have the paper removed.

Exceptions for Topics of a Personal Nature:

Safe Assignment is a plagiarism detection system that compares student papers with external sources, and a protected local database of previously submitted student papers. It is the default option of the software to automatically add screened papers to this local database. This leads to the possibility that student papers containing sensitive personal information could be stored within this local archive. **Both students and instructors** should be aware that there is an option for **excluding a screened paper from being placed in the local database**. Instructors should use the option of database exclusion for assignments they have reason to believe to contain sensitive personal information, based on their knowledge of the assignment, knowledge of the content of a specific paper, or on the request of a student for database exclusion based upon personal sensitivity issues.

Use for Academic Assignments not associated with formal “Class” or Instructor:

The use of Safe Assignment for “non-course” academic assignments will be determined by the faculty member or members responsible for supervising the academic experience. For example, the advisor would be responsible for making the decision to submit an honors thesis, masters thesis, or doctoral dissertation to Safe Assignment. The advisor or the graduate committee chair is responsible for determining whether to submit qualifying or comprehensive examination papers to Safe Assignment. Student appeals related to the use of Safe Assignment for non-course academic assignments will follow the department, college, Graduate College, or Student Judicial Affairs appeals processes already in place for other academic matters (e.g. Grade appeals).

Technical Support for Safe Assignment

Information Services and the Libraries will support Safe Assignment software. Currently Heath Tuttle in IS and Scott Childers in the Libraries answer questions on the mechanics of using Safe Assignment. Online manuals and a brief online tutorial on the mechanics of using the software are available through Blackboard.