TURNITIN: PLAGIARISM DETECTION TOOL

UNIVERSITIES OF WISCONSIN

OFFICE OF ONLINE & PROFESSIONAL LEARNING RESOURCES

INTRODUCTION

Whether teaching in the classroom or online, instructors are rightfully concerned with the potential for students to plagiarize the work of others. One way to combat this is to design the course activities to discourage plagiarism (e.g., instruct students to write essays based on the info they provided in an earlier activity that had asked them details about their individual background). Even with well-designed activities, however, students may still be tempted to take shortcuts, and instructors would benefit from ways of sniffing out plagiarism, whether the intent is to penalize students for their misconduct or to guide them toward more virtuous approaches to the work they submit as their own.

Fortunately, there is a tool available to instructors in Canvas called **Turnitin**, which is designed to detect plagiarism in papers students submit.
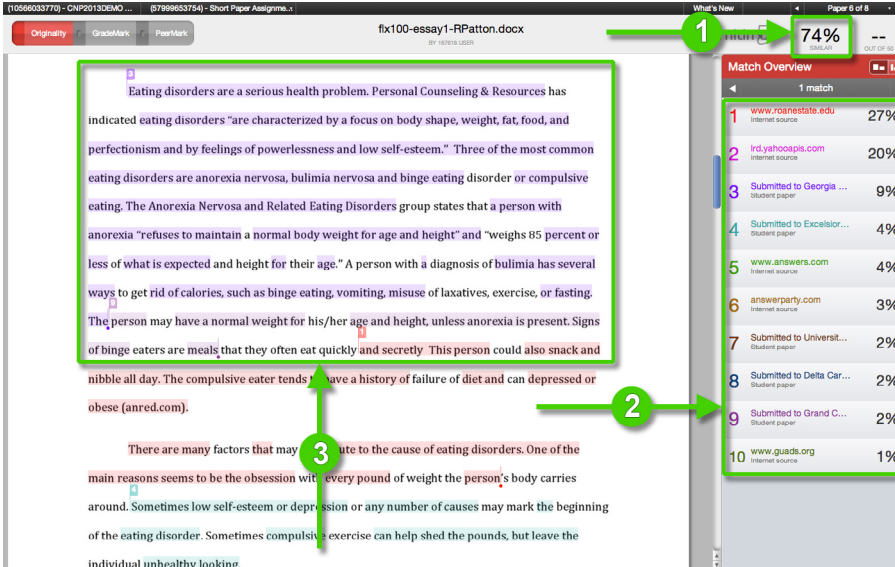
Turnitin Supports:

- .doc and .docx
- .html
- .txt
- .rtf
- .wpd, .ps, and .hwp
- .pdf

A CLOSER LOOK

In the most common configurations, Turnitin will monitor submissions to an assignment page and will automatically take a student's submitted work and compare it with existing content online, in professional publications, and in Turnitin's own database. Turnitin then produces an **Originality Report**, which provides a breakdown of any matching content along with direct links to the sources of existing content. The Originality Report includes:

1. In the top-right corner, the overall percentage of unoriginal content in the student's submission.

2. Just below that percentage is a Match Overview section that has a list of links to the source of each piece of unoriginal content and the percentage of the total submission that came from each source.

3. In the main panel, highlighted content in the student's submission that reflects the content found in the external sources (with the highlight color and the small number that appears above each highlighted section corresponding to the Match Overview link with the same color and number).

How to Access Originality Reports

In each assignment that has Turnitin enabled, an originality score will appear in SpeedGrader. Once a student's submission has been evaluated for plagiarism, you will see next to the link to the student's work a percentage that corresponds to the amount of the submission that is unoriginal content, along with a color associated with that percentage. *Note:* If a report is pending, you will see "In-progress" instead of the percentage and colored box.

To view the detailed report shown on the first page of this info sheet, click the block of color next to the percentage. The report will open in a page on the Turnitin site.

Submitted: Jul 19 at 1:45pm

Submitted Files: (click to load)

`0%` TestStudent_Paper_1.docx

Turning on Turnitin
If you do decide to use Turnitin, you will need to enable the **Plagiarism Review** feature, which is relatively simple. When setting up an assignment, you simply go to the Plagiarism Review section while editing and select **Turnitin** from the dropdown menu, as shown in the screenshot.

Advanced Features
Once you enable Turnitin as the Plagiarism Review, many setting options will appear. As shown in the screenshot, you will have the following options:

1. Upload your students' work to the Turnitin user paper database to help you and other instructors detect plagiarism in all of the courses that use the Turnitin Originality Check.

2. Decide what kind of documents to compare. *Note:* The fewer comparisons, the less likely plagiarism will be detected.

3. Customize the similarity report to exclude references, exclude quoted material, or include grammar checks.

4. Decide when to make the similarity report available to students: immediately, after the assignment is graded, after the due date, or never.
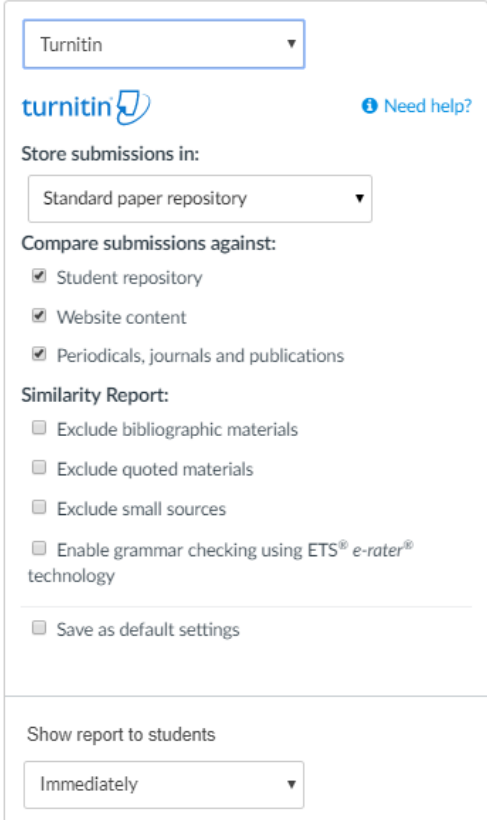
Recommendation: Use the Originality Reports as a method of raising flags for potential suspicious activity and not as a definitive indication of plagiarism. Like any automated tool, it has the potential to make mistakes.

Plagiarism Review

Turnitin ▾

turnitin 🔵   ⓘ Need help?

Store submissions in:

Standard paper repository ▾

Compare submissions against:
☑ Student repository
☑ Website content
☑ Periodicals, journals and publications

Similarity Report:
☐ Exclude bibliographic materials
☐ Exclude quoted materials
☐ Exclude small sources
☐ Enable grammar checking using ETS® e-rater® technology

☐ Save as default settings

Show report to students

Immediately ▾

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Chapter UWS 14: Student Academic Disciplinary Procedures by University of Wisconsin System

- Instructor Quick Start Guide by Turnitin

- Administrator Quick Start Guide by Turnitin

- WISC Online Writing Lab (OWL) by University of Wisconsin Board of Regents