Adding a SafeAssignment

Overview

Today plagiarism is a greater problem for educational institutions than it has been in the past. Modern students’ widespread access to information via the Internet and electronic document databases has resulted in significant improvements in teaching and learning, but it has also made it easier to submit unoriginal work. The plethora of sources on the Internet makes it almost impossible to catch a student plagiarizing. However, with SafeAssignment™ technology, your educational institution can be plagiarism free. SafeAssignment works as a plug-in in conjunction with Blackboard™ Learning System. SafeAssignment enhances your Blackboard experience by complementing educational features of Blackboard with plagiarism detection.

With SafeAssignment working on the backstage, every student’s paper submitted to Blackboard undergoes a thorough search through the Internet and a number of internal and external document databases for any signs of plagiarism.

What do I need to be able to use SafeAssignment?

Only the use of Blackboard is required. There is no need for any software installation or account creation procedures.

Creating a SafeAssignment

To create an assignment using the SafeAssignment plagiarism detection system, please follow the steps below:

1. From within a Content Area, hover over Create Assessment, then click on SafeAssignment.

2. Enter a Name for the assignment; include Points Possible, and Instructions as needed.

3. Set assignment Availability and determine if you want to Track the Number of Views.
• **Draft** – Allows students to validate their paper without submitting it to the institutional database. Useful as an instructive tool to help students learn how to attribute papers properly.

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| Urgent Checking |   |
|                |   |

| Student Viewable | Yes | No |

• **Urgent Checking** – Sets papers to high priority in the “to be graded” queue.

• **Student Viewable** – Determines whether students can see the report generated when their papers are submitted.

4. You may want to add an **Announcement** letting students know the assignment is available.

5. Click **Submit** when finished.

**IMPORTANT NOTE! (When copying courses with SafeAssignments.)**

When copying courses with SafeAssignments, you will need to complete one additional step so that you can “associate” the copied SafeAssignment with the correct course. Here is how: 1) Access the Destination Course, 2) Click Control Panel, 3) Click Course Tools, 4) Click “SafeAssign”, 5) Click “SafeAssignment”, 6) Click “Synchronize this course”.

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Revised: 7/1/11

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Checking the Plagiarism Score

Viewing and Grading Submitted Assignments

- To see the list of available Safe Assignments, go to the Control Panel of the corresponding course and click the Safe Assign link located in the Course Tools menu block.

- Click SafeAssignments

- To list all documents submitted to a particular Safe Assignment, click the View Submissions link. A new page will open and you will see a table listing all students in the course with links to all submitted documents and plagiarism reports on these documents. The Plagiarism Score in the second column should be interpreted as the probability that the corresponding document contains plagiarized material.

- Please note that the Plagiarism Score and Checked Content link are unavailable for the papers that have not been processed yet. Also, you can use the Clear Attempt button to delete the content submitted by a particular student, and give the student another chance to complete the assignment. Clicking on the triangles in the green header of the table you can sort the list by the student name or plagiarism score columns.

You can grade Safe Assignments just like standard Blackboard Assignments in the Grade Book, which can be accessed from the Control Panel of the corresponding course by clicking the Grade Book link in the Assessment menu block. You can view the student's submission by clicking on its mark in the Grade Book and pressing the View button.
Interpreting Scores

- **Sentence Matching Scores:**
  Sentence matching scores are the percentage probability that two sentences have the same meaning. This number can also be interpreted as the reciprocal to the probability that these two sentences are similar by chance. For example, a score of 90% means that there is 90% probability that these two sentences are the same, and about 10% probability that they are similar by chance (not because of plagiarism).

- **Overall Matching Score:**
  Overall matching score is basically an average of all sentence scores, weighted by a) the length of the sentence; b) the "commonness" of the sentence (calculated based on the average typical frequency of usage of the words from the sentence). This score does not have a simple statistical definition. It is just very highly correlated with a) the probability that there is some text matching other documents in the paper; b) the amount of matching text in the document. Please note that matching (highlighted) text should not be considered plagiarism by default.

In general, this score should be treated as a warning indicator. We strongly recommend reviewing all reports with high Overall Matching Scores. For analysis of matching scores, the following interpretation scale should be used:

**Scores below 15%** - usually papers with such scores contain some quotes and few "typical" phrases that match other documents. In most cases, they do not require any further analysis, and there is no evidence of plagiarism in the report.

**Scores between 15% and 40%** - papers with such scores can contain plagiarism or can have just too much quoted material. We usually recommend reviewing the reports with such scores before making any judgments about the papers.

**Scores over 40%** - with such scores, there is almost 100% probability that the papers contains some text copied from elsewhere, and, even if this text is properly cited, such amount of cited material is considered excessive in most cases. Therefore, such scores give a clear warning to instructors. However, there are few cases when such scores can be given to authentic papers, for example, when the paper was legitimately published online before it was sent for processing (instructors have just to "Delete" the source pointing to the legitimate copy), or when the same student has already submitted this paper or a similar paper to another class (it is not plagiarism, but such practice is not allowed in some institutions).

**Recommended Syllabus Policy (This text is from Blackboard – use is optional)**
Students agree that their papers or other assignments submitted for credit may be submitted to SafeAssignment.com to review and evaluate for originality and intellectual integrity. Students further understand that if the results of such a review support a question of academic dishonesty, that further action may be required. All content submitted to SafeAssignment is stored in a secure database for plagiarism checking.