What is SafeAssign?

SafeAssign compares submitted assignments against a set of academic papers to identify areas of overlap between the submitted assignment and existing works. SafeAssign is effective as both a deterrent and an educational tool. Use SafeAssign to review assignment submissions for originality and create opportunities to help students identify how to properly attribute sources rather than paraphrase. SafeAssign is based on a unique text matching algorithm capable of detecting exact and inexact matching between a paper and source material. Submissions are compared against several databases:

- *Global Reference Database:* - Contains over 15 million papers volunteered by students from Blackboard client institutions to help prevent cross-institutional plagiarism.

- *Institutional document archives* - Contains all papers submitted to SafeAssign by users at the University of Mississippi.

- *Internet* - SafeAssign searches across the broader internet for matching text using an internal search service.

- *ProQuest ABI/Inform Journal Database* - More than 3,000 publication titles, 4.5 million documents, and over 200 topical categories from the 1970s to present time and covering topics from Advertising to Women's Studies.

SafeAssign then generates an Originality Report that rates the assignments based on the amount of material drawn from other sources and provides links to the original source material.

Using SafeAssign in Your Course

SafeAssign is integrated into regular Blackboard Assignments. This means that almost all of the regular assignment features, such as Inline Grading, are now available with the SafeAssign service.

Creating an Assignment that Uses SafeAssign

- Navigate to the area of your course in which you'd like to place the Assignment.

- From the **Assessments** drop-down menu, choose **Assignment**. (see image at right)

- Enter a name for the assignment and any instructions your students will
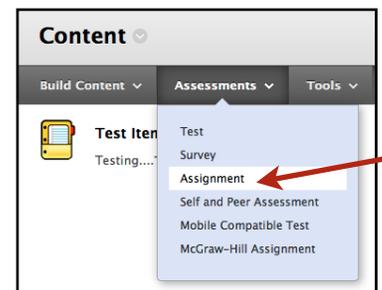
need to complete the assignment. It's good idea to mention that the papers will be checked for plagiarism and that students should upload Word (.docx, .doc), Open Office (.odt), Text (.txt), Rich Text (.rtf), or Acrobat (.pdf) files only. If you also plan to grade the papers online using Inline Grading, you you should tell your students that you will only accept Word (.doc, .docx) or PDF files.

- Enter an appropriate Due Date for the Assignment. This Due Date will be listed on the course Calendar, and students will receive push notifications as the due date approaches.

- In the Grading section, enter the number of Points Possible for this assignment. You may also choose to add a Rubric to use for grading the assignment and/or for student guidance.

Grading

✴ Points Possible

Associated Rubrics   Add Rubric ⌄

Name   Type   Date Last Edited   Show Rubric to Students

Submission Details

If any students are enrolled in more than one group receiving the same assignment they will submit more than one attempt for this assignment. It may be necessary to provide these students with an overall grade for the assignment.

Assignment Type   ◉ Individual Submission
                   ○ Group Submission

Number of Attempts   Single Attempt ⌄

Plagiarism Tools   ☐ Check submissions for plagiarism using SafeAssign
SafeAssign only supports English-language submissions. See Blackboard Help for more details.
If SafeAssign is enabled with Anonymous Grading, SafeAssign Originality Reports will be hidden from Instructors until Anonymous Grading is disabled. However, Students may still be able to see SafeAssign Originality Reports depending on the state of the "Allow students to view SafeAssign originality report for their attempts" setting.

☐ Allow students to view SafeAssign originality report for their attempts
☐ Exclude submissions from the Institutional and Global References Databases

- Choose **Submission Details** to display additional options. It is here that you will set up the **Plagiarism Detection Tools** via SafeAssign.

- Select **Check submissions for plagiarism using SafeAssign** to turn on SafeAssign for this assignment.

- Choose whether or not you want your students to see their own SafeAssign Originality Report.

- By default, all papers submitted through SafeAssign are stored in the UM SafeAssign database. If you do not want the submissions for this assignment to be stored in the database, then select Exclude Submissions.

- You can also review the Grading Options and Display of Grades sections for this assignment.

- Finally, you should choose to **Make the Assignment Available** and set the **Dates of Availability**.

- Once you have finished making the appropriate selections for this Assignment, click **Submit**.

Supported Files

SafeAssign only supports file types that are convertible to plain text. This includes the following file types: DOCX, DOC, PDF, TXT, ODT, RTF, HTML, and HTM. PowerPoint and spreadsheet files are not supported. *SafeAssign only processes and creates originality reports for attachments that match the supported file types. For unsupported file types, the SafeAssign originality report omits a matching score.*
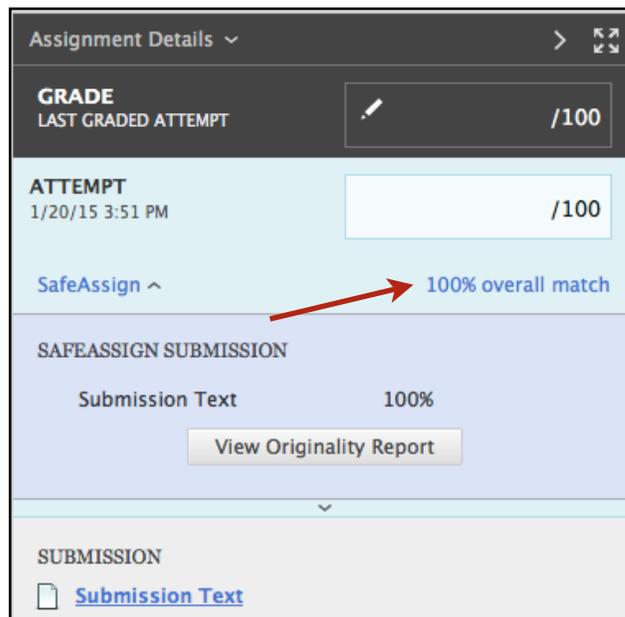
Locating Originality Reports

You can view SafeAssign Originality Reports in two ways – via the SafeAssign option under the course Control Panel, or via the Grade Center–View Attempt for an individual student.

To view all SafeAssign Originality scores at once for a particular assignment, from the Control Panel, select **SafeAssign** under **Course Tools**. Choose **SafeAssign Items.** Then locate the specific SafeAssignment in the list and click **View Submissions** from the drop-down menu for that assignment. You will be presented with a page listing all of the students who submitted a file for the assignment, along with the SafeAssign matching score, SafeAssign Originality Report, and date submitted. You can click on the **SA Report** ✅ icon to open the originality report. Paper information, matching score, and URLs of suspected sources are shown in the right-hand section of the report. The paper text is shown in the left-hand section of the report. The matching portions of the student's paper are highlighted.

You can also view the SafeAssign Originality score for a particular student via the **Grade Center**. Once in the Grade Center, locate the assignment column. You should see a needs grading icon for the student. Click the drop-down menu beside the needs grading icon and choose to view the **Attempt**.

You will see the SafeAssign percent matching score in the Grade Attempt box on the right-hand side of the page. (see image at right) You can click the SafeAssign link to expand that box to view the Originality Report.

SafeAssign Originality Reports

After a paper is processed, a report is generated detailing the percentage of text in the submitted paper that matches existing sources. The report shows the suspected sources for each section of the submitted paper that returns a match. You can delete matching sources from the report and process it again if necessary. This is useful if the paper is a continuation of a previously submitted work by the same student.

The SafeAssign Originality Report is divided into three areas:

- **Report Summary** - The Report Summary appears in the top panel of the report. Select *Access Report Summary* to view the *Overall Risk* of improper citations in the paper, including the percent of matching or similar text. If the student included multiple attachments, they appear with the report information.

- **All Sources** - The new originality report lists all matches in the right-hand panel. It groups all matches by the database in which SafeAssign stores the source file. A user can expand or collapse each source group title to reveal the group's matches in probability order. Select the source type to learn more about the match. For each source, a number appears that corresponds with the highlighted text in the submission. Next to the source, you can select *Highlight match* to toggle highlighting. If available, you can also select Open match source to visit the matching source text in a new window.

- **Submission** - The submission appears in the left panel of the report. All matching blocks of text are identified. Each source has a color specific to the source—up to 30 unique colors for 30 different sources. Text matching a source is highlighted in the source color and identified with a number. In the Sources panel, you can select Highlight match to turn source highlighting off and on for
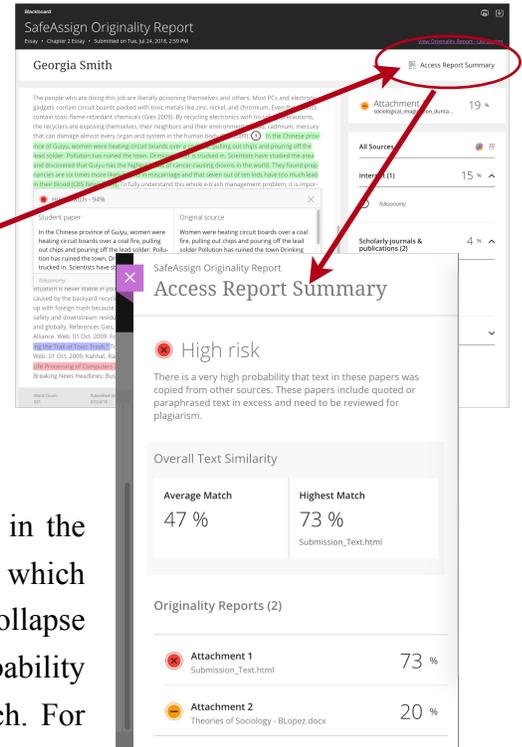
one or more sources. You can select Dismiss Match to reprocess the paper excluding that particular source. Select a matching block of text to display information about the original source and the probability that the block or sentence was copied from the source.

- **Additional Options and Information** - Below the Submission, you can find details such as Word Count, submission date, and the unique identifiers for the submission and attachment. In the upper right-hand corner, you can view a printable version of the Originality Report. This printable version is the most effective view of the report for users who rely on assistive technology. You can also choose to Download this report.

Interpreting Originality Reports

SafeAssign provides **guidelines for interpreting the Matching Score** as follows:

- **Scores below 15%** - Usually papers with such scores contain some quotes and a 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 just have too much quoted material. We recommend reviewing the reports with such scores before making any judgments about the papers.

- **Scores over 40%** - With such scores, there is a very high probability that the paper 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, or when the same student has already submitted this paper or a similar paper to another class.

Inline Grading and SafeAssign

If you want to use **Inline Grading** annotation with SafeAssign, students need to submit the following file types for their assignments: DOC, DOCX, PDF. While SafeAssign will accept ODT, TXT, RTF, and HTML files, Inline Grading does not currently support these file types.

SafeAssign   Inline Grading

.odt
.txt
.rtf
.html
Content
Editor text

.doc
.docx
.pdf

.ppt
.pptx
.xls
.xlsx
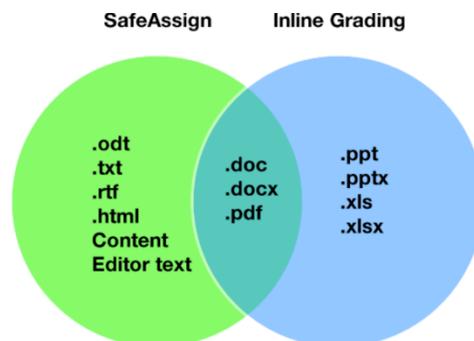
Direct Submit

You can use the SafeAssign Direct Submit option in several ways:

- To check a paper that was not submitted by a student to a SafeAssignment.

- To upload a zip file of papers from a previous semester or from another course that were not checked by SafeAssign and save to the database for future checking.

- To check your own work for inadvertent use of sources.

To use Direct Submit, go to the SafeAssign area of the course Control Panel and choose the Direct Submit option.

Suggest URL

You can suggest to SafeAssign additional webpages and websites that haven't been flagged or referenced in Originality Reports with the Suggest URL tool, which is accessible to instructors through: Course Tools – SafeAssign – Suggest URL.

If a user suggests a specific webpage, SafeAssign attempts to include all webpages available under the base website URL. For example, suggesting http://www.blackboard.com/about-us/index.aspx will attempt to find all webpages associated with the http://www.blackboard.com base website URL.

Any URLs included with the Suggest URL tool are available to all SafeAssign users and institutions, meaning that suggesting URLs can benefit the entire SafeAssign community.