

Academic Principles and Honor Guidance
“Always give credit for work that is not your own.”

1. It is imperative that faculty and cadets uphold the Cadet Wing Honor Code, as well as the highest standards of academic integrity, at all times. Faculty and cadets must be sensitive to possible violations of the Code and must take appropriate actions in the event a violation is suspected. If in doubt about the honor of a particular act in the academic arena, cadets should ask their instructor and take a course of action known to be honorable.
2. Academic integrity comprises two key elements: academic excellence and academic disclosure.
 - a. Academic excellence entails doing one's best on every assignment and ensuring that all work is done properly. Giving oneself enough time to review all work for mistakes, omissions, and proper citations is an important aspect of this concept. Too many penalties for violating academic standards, in addition to Honor Code violations, have stemmed from a cadet's failure to manage his or her time properly.
 - b. Academic disclosure requires that one fully document – in writing – all resources (both authorized and unauthorized) used in completing graded work. Documentation is required on all academic work submitted, except random, no-notice homework collections and personal journals. In addition, individual instructors may require a cadet to identify the contributions of others in drafts submitted for review. The bottom line is to “Always give credit for work that is not your own.”
 - c. Academic disclosure also requires that one correctly identify which words, thoughts, or ideas are his or hers and which are those of someone else. Unintentional misattribution of sources may be the result of sloppy scholarship or laziness, or failing to uphold the standards of academic excellence, and will likely result in an academic penalty. The attribution standard for all papers in all core courses is the Modern Language Association (MLA) standard. The MLA standard is encouraged for papers in other courses, but Department Heads may specify other subject-specific standards or style manuals. For homework other than papers, Department Heads will establish an attribution standard that will be specified in writing in the syllabus or particular assignment.
3. Plagiarism is the intentional, knowing, reckless, or negligent failure to document or correctly attribute the words, ideas, key terms, research, or information of another in a work submitted for credit. Plagiarism is a violation of academic integrity and may also result in the case being referred through the Honor System in accordance with applicable procedures if the plagiarism is committed with the intent to deceive, gain an unfair advantage, or receive undeserved credit. The appropriate authorities in the Honor System must still determine independently whether the requisite act and intent is present to find a cadet in violation of the Honor Code.
4. Missing and vague documentation (e.g., I got "help" from ...) is academically unacceptable and may be an Honor Code violation if done with the intent to deceive. Documentation must be made to such a degree of specificity and accuracy that the reader of the documentation statement knows clearly who gave the assistance, what assistance was given, and where in the assignment the assistance was given. In describing what assistance was given, cadets will be as specific as possible (e.g., Cadet Smith helped me with problem #5 by explaining the equation for the theory of relativity. He explained that the E stands for energy and the m stands for mass).
5. Instructors may decide to award reduced academic credit to a cadet who relies excessively on another's work to accomplish the assignment. For example, extensive use of a problem solution from a published solution manual, a theorem proof from a published text, a literature critique from Cliffs Notes®, or disproportionate assistance from another cadet, even if properly documented, may deserve little or no academic credit. Using unauthorized resources, even though documented, will also receive an academic penalty.
6. To positively assist cadets in achieving these academic outcomes, instructors are encouraged, before collecting assignments, to remind cadets to document all help received and provide them an opportunity to correct or modify their documentation statement without a significant academic penalty. If assignments are turned in electronically or otherwise outside of class, instructors may provide cadets this reminder and opportunity to correct or modify at the beginning of the following class period. For each assignment, authorized and/or unauthorized resources will be made clear to cadets via syllabi, individual assignment instructions, and appropriate course director/instructor reminders throughout the semester.

7. Other service academies and institutions of higher learning have provided excellent guidelines to follow to prevent poor documentation, misattribution, and even plagiarism.¹ Their approach, which is listed below in modified form, reflects the guiding principles on academic disclosure for cadets to follow in all academic courses.

a. **Budget your time to avoid last-minute mistakes.** Failure to manage your time properly in regard to academic assignments may result in poor documentation, misattribution, or possibly plagiarism. Saying "I forgot to put in my citations" or "I gave you my draft rather than my real paper" because you are printing or forwarding the assignment at the last minute are not valid reasons for violating standards.

b. **Document and cite as you work.** The practice of large-scale referencing with the intent of later returning to put in citations is problematic. This has led to many academic integrity violations and may also violate the Honor Code if done with the requisite intent.

c. **Unless specifically excepted by this policy, give the appropriate credit and citation for everything used or borrowed from others, including their thoughts and ideas.** In the academic setting, cadets will inevitably use the concepts, words, diagrams, and work of others. Cadets should take these resources and develop them but should not compromise their academic integrity by failing to indicate clearly where their work, ideas, or words end and those of someone else begin. Citations must guide the reader clearly and explicitly to the sources used, whether published or unpublished, hard-copy or electronic. A source must be cited each time a cadet borrows from it. A single citation, concluding or followed by extended borrowing is inadequate and misleading. All use of another's words, even if constituting only part of a sentence, must be clearly noted with quotation marks (or in block quotation form) and specific citation.

d. **Paraphrase properly.** Paraphrasing is a tool for conveying or explaining a source's ideas and requires a citation to the original source. A paraphrase captures the source's meaning and tone in one's own words and sentence structure. In a paraphrase, the words might be those of a cadet, but the ideas are not. Paraphrasing should not be used to create the impression of originality, and proper attribution to the original source must be given.

e. **Extreme caution should be used when using web-based sources, including internet sites and electronic journals.** Web-based information, even if anonymous, must be appropriately cited.

f. **Do not submit your previously used work for credit, unless specifically authorized to do so.** Previously submitted work has been reviewed by an instructor, with feedback given, even if only a grade. You should not receive credit more than once for the same work. Certain courses may allow you to build upon work you have previously done, such as a computer program, lab report, or draft of a paper. If you have questions about what is allowed in a particular course, you should check with your instructor.

g. **When in doubt, always document.** Always err on the side of caution.

8. No policy or guideline can cover every potential academic integrity situation that may arise. The spirit of academic integrity, however, is doing one's best in completing a task and always giving credit for work that is not your own.

¹ Key ideas and language taken from The United States Naval Academy's Plebe Academic Handbook for the Class of 2022, with modifications, available on-line at: <https://www.usna.edu/Academics/Faculty-Information/Academic-Advising/2022%20Plebe%20Academic%20Handbook%202.pdf>.