Case Study: Panic Attack

Frank was behind in his programming assignment. He approached Martin to see if he could get some help. But he was so far behind and so confused that Martin just gave him his code with the intent that he would "just look at it to get some ideas." Frank copied much of the code and turned it in as his own.

In the paraphrased words of Frank: "I started the assignment three days after you put it up. But then other assignments came in and I started on them too. I felt like I was chasing rabbits and began to panic. It was already past the due date and I got really scared. That's when I went to Martin to see if he could help."

Questions (7.5 min)   Start time:

1. Which, if any, of the students were at fault? Why?

Both students are at fault, assuming the assignment was supposed to be done individually. It's not okay to look at someone else's code and/or give your code to someone else.

2. Which specific Honor Code violations occurred?

[Frank] Collaborating in an unauthorized manner with one or more students on any work submitted for academic credit.

[Martin] Rendering unauthorized assistance to another student by knowingly permitting him to see a portion of work to be submitted for academic credit.

3. What should Martin have done in this situation?

This type of situation often occurs when students feel pressure before a deadline. Martin should have refused to show his code to Frank and reminded him to get help from the instructor and/or a TA.

4. What options did Frank have besides cheating?

Frank could have asked the instructor for help during office hours, met with a TA during lab hours, posted a question on Piazza, or asked a question during class. It's much easier to get help when it's not the night before.

Case Study: A Friend Indeed

Jeffrey was having trouble with one of the last programming assignments. He didn't even know where to begin and it was already late. Another student, Stephen, lived in his hall and Jeff was pretty friendly with him. Jeff went to Stephen's room and told him that his computer was acting flaky. He asked if could he borrow Stephen's laptop to finish up the program? Stephen was on his way out to dinner and told him okay. When he got back Jeffrey was gone.

While Stephen was out, Jeffrey searched for and located the code for the assignment on Stephen's machine. Jeffrey copied it onto his flash drive and took it back to his room, where he modified the code a bit before submitting it for a grade.

Questions (10 min)   **Start time:**

1. Which, if any, of the students were at fault? Why?

2. Which specific Honor Code violations occurred?

3. What should Stephen have done in this situation?

4. What options did Jeffrey have besides cheating?

Case Study: Oops!

Emily was working in the lab on her programming assignment. She finished the program, submitted it, and went on to do some other work. Shortly thereafter, she left the lab.

Another student, Kyle, was working nearby. He knew that Emily had successfully submitted the assignment, and he had not been able to get his to work properly. When Emily left, he noticed that she had not logged out of her computer. He moved to her workstation, found the work under her Documents directory, and copied it onto his flash drive. He then logged out, logged in as himself, and copied the code onto his Desktop where he modified the program a bit, then successfully submitted it.

Questions (7.5 min)   Start time:

1. Which, if any, of the students were at fault? Why?

Kyle is certainly at fault, and depending on the lab policy, Emily may also be penalized. But in general, students are not held accountable when files are stolen without their knowledge.

2. Which specific Honor Code violations occurred?

[Kyle] Committing the act of plagiarism: copying information, ideas, or phrasing of another person without proper acknowledgment of the true source.

[Kyle] Using computing facilities in an academically dishonest manner.

3. What should Emily have done in this situation?

To avoid this situation, Emily should have logged out or at least locked her screen when leaving the room.

4. What options did Kyle have besides cheating?

Kyle could have asked the instructor for help during class or office hours, met with a TA during lab hours, or posted a question on Piazza.

Case Study: Too Close for Comfort

Bill and Jeff were two freshman rooming together in the fall semester and were taking CS 139. Bill was an excellent student for whom the work in CS 139 seemed to come easily. Jeff seemed to struggle a bit more, but was able to do the work and turned most labs and programs in on time.

Both programs came in looking virtually the same. When confronted, Jeff claimed the work as his own and stated that he did not know how the code from the roommates was the same. Later Bill told the professor that while programming was easy for him, he had struggled with another class and then got behind with this program. He didn't think the professor would find out and so stole his roommate's code and turned that in.

Questions (10 min)   **Start time:**

1. Which, if any, of the students were at fault? Why?

2. Which specific Honor Code violations occurred?

3. What should Jeff have done in this situation?

4. What options did Bill have besides cheating?

Case Study: Let's Make a Deal

It was mid-semester and the pressure was on, not only in CS but in other classes. Jamie and Pat were each working on the programming assignment in the lab, but neither was having much success. Jamie had started several days ago, but he was having trouble debugging his current work. Pat had just started that day and knew that she would be turning it in late. Regardless, Pat offered to help Jamie work out the problems with his code.

Together, and after a couple of hours of work, they got the program to work. Pat said, "Now that yours is working, can you give me the code so that I can also get credit for this assignment?" When Jamie objected, Pat said, "Hey, you wouldn't have gotten it finished if it weren't for my help, and now mine will be even later!" So Jamie turned over a copy of the code. Pat made some changes to a few sections, and then turned in the final program.

Questions (10 min)   Start time:

1. Which, if any, of the students were at fault? Why?

2. Which specific Honor Code violations occurred?

3. What should Pat have done in this situation?

4. What should Jamie have done in this situation?

Case Study: A Friendly Assist

George was struggling with the programming assignment on the night it was due. He had gone home over the weekend before, thinking that it would be easy to do this assignment, but it turned out to be more difficult than he thought. After working on some parts of it and giving up in frustration, he turned to Shelley, a senior CS student who had taken the course several semesters before. He showed Shelley the assignment, and the two of them worked on it late into the night. They successfully submitted the program with a late penalty of only one day.

Questions (10 min)   **Start time:**

1. Which, if any, of the students were at fault? Why?

2. Which specific Honor Code violations occurred?

3. What should Shelley have done in this situation?

4. What options did George have besides cheating?

Case Study: A Team Effort

Stan, Jane, and Tom were part of a project team. At the start of the semester they all agreed to be responsible for everything that was submitted by their project. As the project got underway, they divided up the work and decided to complete and submit the three parts individually. Tom was behind on his work as the deadline approached, and so as not to be late he copied several pages from files of a roommate who had completed the same work last year. The team project was submitted on time, though only 2/3 of it was original work.

Questions (10 min)   **Start time:**

1. Which, if any, of the students were at fault? Why?

2. Which specific Honor Code violations occurred?

3. What options did Tom have besides cheating?

4. Should all three students be penalized? Why or why not?