Academic Honesty Guide

For classes taught by Michael Shindler

The purpose of graded assignments is to provide students with the opportunity to do guided practice (in the case of homework exercises) or to evaluate students' understanding of the material (in the case of exams). At no point, for any of these artifacts, am I asking students to *find* someone else's answer to a problem. Unless I explicitly and in writing indicate otherwise, I am always asking you to provide evidence that ***YOU*** can, independently, solve a problem presented, such as developing an algorithm or producing working software.

When producing an artifact that will be submitted for a grade, seeking any help outside of established course resources undermines this purpose. Any action that a reasonably prudent person would view as undermining the purpose of the assignment or to be otherwise an academically dishonest action will be treated as academic dishonesty.

You are expected to know and follow the academic integrity expectations of both the Bren School and of the University as a whole. Please take the time to review them at https://www.ics.uci.edu/ugrad/policies/#03 . You are responsible for understanding what is allowed, and what is not. It is possible to violate these guidelines without being malicious, and we still are required to report this to the Office of Academic Integrity & Student Conduct.

Allowable resources: it is always acceptable to use any material from the assigned textbook(s) for this class, anything covered during scheduled lecture or discussion, or during scheduled office hours with the professor, TA, or course tutor. These do not need to be cited. Similarly, any material from *prerequisite courses* may be used without citation. Other courses you have taken that are not prerequisites *do* require citation.

You should never need to get a solution elsewhere. There are plenty of allowable course resources to help you reach your own solution. Furthermore, academic dishonesty carries a penalty of F in the class, with potentially worse consequences; it isn't worth the risk!

If you do get help from another resource, you must cite it *clearly* in your submission. **Any time** you use a resource towards solving a problem other than the assigned textbook(s), lecture material, discussion material, or conversations with TAs, course tutors, or the professor *during scheduled office hours*, ***you must cite it clearly***. Your citation must be sufficiently clear that the instructor can easily consult the resource you used. "I watched a YouTube video on dynamic programming" is not a citation, while including a link to the video *and a description of where within the video* (such as timestamps) would be. If the help is from a person, you must clearly state "help from, " and the person's **full** name. Any citation must include both the source and a clear description of what help was obtained from the source. Your submission must still be in your own words; you are not allowed to quote (implicitly or explicitly) from any source. In the event help is cited properly, the instructor may determine your score based on the proportion of the response that is deemed your work.

You must still follow other regulations here, but as long as you do this and still follow the Kenny Loggins rule, you won't get in trouble for reasonable help appropriately cited. Note that all three pieces are vital: the help must be reasonable, described clearly, and appropriately cited.

The "Kenny Loggins" rule: For items we collect to grade, it is still important to be able to seek out helpful information, but it is clearly wrong to pass off work by others as your own. Navigating these two principles can be tricky, as it is possible to enter the danger zone between them unintentionally. To help guide you, follow this principle:

> You may discuss high-level ideas, and give hints to other students regarding how to solve homework problems. Any time you seek help on, or discuss with someone else, a homework question that you have yet to solve, or any aspect of a programming assignment you have not yet finished, do not keep any written record of the discussion. Afterwards, take a 30-minute break and do something unrelated to the course (watching a 30-minute episode of your favorite cartoon show, for example). You may now return to your assignment.

This is less an ironclad rule as a guideline. It is a guideline to help you determine what is and is not appropriate collaboration and to avoid trouble from the "danger zone." Flouting the spirit of the Rule while following its letter does not excuse cases of cheating which arise. For example, it is clearly not ok to study and memorize your friend's solution, watch a cartoon for half an hour, and then write out your friend's answer from memory and submit it. The spirit of the rule includes that what you write and submit for take-home assignments must reflect your work and your understanding at the time of submission. Do not submit anything that does not reflect your understanding of the material, no matter its origin.

Academically dishonest behavior: You should never do any of the following actions; this is not an exhaustive list.

- Show your assignment to someone else in the class or allow it to be accessed by them.
- Write your solutions from notes taken outside of lecture, reading, or discussion section.
    - This includes solutions from previous quarters or from videos or tutorials online.
    - If you are confused or want more information about some course material, you should first ask course staff before seeking help outside of course resources.
- Submit any response that you could not explain to an instructor or TA, or answer a simplified version of in a short period of time. The instructor reserves the right to ask students to answer questions based on suspect homework solutions and make inferences about academic honesty from how, or if, the student responds.
    - In particular, if your homework submission is very different from what we did in class, such as introducing a formula we did not cover and you were not asked to derive, you should expect that we will ask you about it.
- Seek help on a required assignment from any source where not all respondents are subject to UC Irvine's academic honesty policy.
    - This *especially* includes, but is not limited to, websites like Chegg or CourseHero.
    - This also includes anywhere else that you might find code, algorithms, or a formula that solves the problem, such as supposedly tutorial websites.
- Tell another student specifically how to solve part of a problem.
- Submit anything that you did not play an active role in creating. Note that this applies to the intellectual creation of what you submit, not merely copying it from another source.
- Never look outside of course resources to "get ideas" of how to solve an assignment.

If someone copies your work, both of you are culpable! Remember: friends that pressure you for unreasonable help are not really friends. If other students in the class can have access to your materials, such as your computer, it is your responsibility to ensure they do not copy from you. Similarly, do not post your solutions in an open space online, even after the due date.

In general, it has been the experience of many professors that students who violate the academic integrity policy fell behind and had a moment of panic. If that describes you at some point this quarter, please go see Professor Shindler. We can find a way to get you back on track and find out why you're falling behind.

The Remorse Rule: if you violate the rules of academic integrity, you may elect to email Professor Shindler within 48 hours of the infraction. If you do this, there will be a lighter penalty than if we have to bring the issue to your attention. This will still involve a report to OAISC.

Academic dishonesty during exams: during exams, you must follow all rules in the syllabus portions regarding such. Disallowed material or disruptive behavior during exams may be treated as academic dishonesty, as may other infractions listed in such.

Academic dishonesty in programming assignments: if your programming assignment is written in such a way that it attempts to circumvent the automated grading mechanism, this shall be interpreted as academic dishonesty. For example, if you are assigned to implement a queue data structure, and your code works by providing a wrapper to an STL queue (or equivalent behaving structure), this shall be deemed to be academic dishonesty and treated accordingly.

Students who have taken this course before: while you are permitted to reuse *your* work from past quarters, be aware that requirements may have changed; you are responsible for the current term's requirements. Similarly, rubrics and test cases may have changed and you are not guaranteed the same grade on any given artifact, and disparities with previous terms will not constitute a valid regrade request. Do not reuse any projects that were not your own and do not use previous term's solution sets, even if you had access to them by enrollment. If you submit a plagiarized assignment, you are culpable, *even if you submitted it without it being noticed as such in a previous quarter*. Be sure that everything you submit reflects your current understanding of the material.

Document History

Created to reflect common policies in effect, and taken from, various syllabi in anticipation of Spring 2021.
Reasonable citation rule clarified in anticipation of Fall 2021.
Material reorganized in anticipation of Winter 2022. The purpose preamble was added, as was the section on explicitly allowable resources. Explicit listing of academic dishonesty during exams and in programming assignments was added as well.
In anticipation of Spring 2022, we added a clearer warning about the use of external resources to "get ideas" for an assignment.