

Commitment to Original Work

The AAU School of Web Design + New Media is dedicated to the creative process, including the ideation and formation of original concepts, images and code.

This Commitment to Original Work is our pledge to do our best work, build original portfolios, continue to improve our already strong reputation as a school for design thinking and trust that our graduates will always have the skills needed to succeed.

Original Content Guidelines

In WNM, we believe in being creators and innovators. As part of this goal, we expect our students to learn all the skills necessary to create a project from start to finish and demonstrate this with completely original work.

This means:

- Third-party images, content, templates, and code cannot be used without instructor permission, or as assigned by instructor.
- All third-party images, content, or code must be credited with a citation or code comment.
- Any non-attributed (or non-commented) image, content, or code must be the student's original work.

Any non-original work is an exception and at the direction of you instructor and must be cited. For example, many assignments are written with specific instructions to include the jQuery library or Google Maps API. Not sure if an assignment qualifies as an exception? Here are some guidelines:

- Read the assignment and make sure you understand.
- Review the following section defining plagiarism—what is OK and NOT ok.
- Consider the intent of the assignment. What are you being asked to design? Are you designing it? If not, scrap your work and start over.
- Still not sure? Ask your instructor!

Plagiarism Policy

What is Plagiarism?

Plagiarism (the appropriation of someone else's work as your own--i.e., stealing) will not be tolerated and may result in your expulsion from the department or the Academy. You may not use any other person's work, be it content (including images), code, templates, etc. You may not turn in unaltered assignments from one course in another course—even if it is your own work!

It's OK to:

- Look at another student's work to gain insight into your own design problems
- Be inspired by other students' and designers' visual & interaction design
- Work together to solve problems, provided you hand in unique projects

It's NOT OK to:

- Download another student's work to use as a "starting point"
- Hand in files not authored 100% start-to-finish by you
- Download templates or tutorials from the internet and submit them—even partially—as your own work or projects

More about understanding Plagiarism

[AAU Student Code of Conduct](#)

[Types of Plagiarism](#)

[Academy Resource Center \(ARC\)](#)

Reporting Plagiarism

If you suspect another student is plagiarizing your work, you can fill out [this anonymous form](#) and submit to the department for investigation.



Best Practices for Attributing and Citing Your Sources

Attribution vs. Citation

Attributing a source, such as where an image is from, is a way to acknowledge the use of someone else's work. Attributing a source is required for projects where third-party images and code are allowed.

Citations are a more specific and more formal type of attribution, required for papers and important projects like case studies and thesis books.

Attribution examples

A simple image attribution:



Grace Hopper with UNIVAC 1, computerhistory.org

For background images, etc used in coding projects, see the example for attributing an image in a code comment.

Here are some interesting quotes on plagiarism, attributed in different ways:

"[The School of Web Design + New Media] takes the [Code of Conduct] very seriously and expects students to do the same. The good news is that the vast majority of students will do so. The bad news is that all historical evidence indicates that some students in computer science will submit work that is not their own, shortchanging not only their own learning but undermining the atmosphere of trust and individual achievement that characterizes [our] academic community."
-slightly altered excerpt from "Computer Science and the Honor Code", Stanford University

"Students are not guilty of plagiarism when they try in good faith to acknowledge others' work but fail to do so accurately or fully." - WPA Council of Writing Program Administrators

Here are some tips from our friends at UC Davis:

- Use your own words and ideas
- Give credit for copied, adapted, or paraphrased material.
- Avoid using others work with minor "cosmetic" changes.
- There are no "freebies."
- Beware of "common knowledge."
- When in doubt, cite.

Citation examples

For examples and more information about creating citations in MLA Format, [see the guidelines and video on the AAU Library website.](#)

More about Citing and Attribution

[How to cite your work](#)



Best Practices for Commenting Code

NEW FOR FALL 2014: Please comment all your code.

Learn and use the proper marks for single-line and multi-line comments in HTML, CSS, PHP, Javascript and any other language, mime-type or protocol you might be using. Keep your comments clear and concise.

When you use someone else's content or code (with instructor permission), make sure to give credit to the creator, including a link to the site where you found it.

Code commenting examples

Attributing an image in a multi-line HTML comment:

```
<!-- Grace Hopper with UNIVAC 1, image from http://  
www.computerhistory.org/timeline/?year=1952 -->
```

Another multi-line HTML comment:

```
<!-- My instructor Ben Hulan helped me figure out this  
custom script for jQuery datepicker, lines 32 - 46. I had  
the original idea but Ben helped me get it to work. -->
```

A single line comment in JavaScript:

```
// Lines 16 - 48 revised from the Google Maps  
API tutorials
```

Credit for part of a CSS document:

```
/*  
Lines 5 - 42 are reset script from Eric Meyer  
http://meyerweb.com/eric/tools/css/reset/  
*/
```

Referencing a book in a PHP comment:

```
/*  
The php code snippet on lines 12 - 16 is altered  
from an example <a href="http://www.amazon.  
com/Absolute-Beginners-Experts-Voice-Source/  
dp/1430224738/ref=pd_sim_b_2?ie=UTF8&re-  
fRID=1C106JDA56A85PHF5YAP" target="_new">PHP  
for Absolute Beginners, by Jason Lengstorf</a>,  
page 36.  
*/
```

More about Commenting

[HTML Commenting Tutorial](#)

[The Importance of Correct HTML Commenting](#)

Guidelines for Directory Structure

NEW FOR FALL 2014: For web-based projects in on-site classes and online classes that don't specify otherwise, please structure your assignments on your server as follows, and leave them there for the duration of your tenure at AAU.

Create a folder named "aau" (i.e. yourdomainname.com/aau). Within this folder, each class with web projects gets it's own folder. Example:

Index of /aau

- [Parent Directory](#)
- [wnm600/](#)
- [wnm606/](#)
- [wnm608/](#)
- [wnm617/](#)
- [wnm618/](#)
- [wnm642/](#)
- [wnm643/](#)
- [wnm661/](#)

Inside a class folder, assignments are organized by module:

Index of /aau/wnm617

- [Parent Directory](#)
- [m10/](#)
- [m12/](#)
- [m13/](#)
- [m2/](#)
- [m3/](#)
- [m4/](#)
- [m5/](#)
- [m6/](#)
- [m9/](#)
- [midterm/](#)

This will allow your instructors to review your work to-date and better assess your skills and progress. We also hope this will encourage students to do their best work, always.

