Collaboration and Resource Policy

This document is meant to clarify a topic that can often feel ambiguous and difficult to interpret - when can I collaborate and what can I collaborate on? Refer to this sheet whenever you have questions about resources or collaborations in CSCI 204. While we have tried to make this document as clear and complete as possible, if you have any questions, please email the professor.

Warning about Public Space

Takeaway: Don’t put any of your work in your public space

If a file is in your public space, any student can copy it. It is possible that you could be brought up on academic misconduct charges for letting others copy your work. Go to your public space and remove anything that resembles course work. It is better to be safe than sorry. If you need to share assignments, public space has a feature which allows you to share documents with a specific list of people.

Internet and Beyond-Texbook Policy

You are allowed to use the internet or any other resource (e.g., books) to gain a deeper understanding of a topic. However, this should be a conceptual understanding of the topic, and not copy-and-paste solutions. In rare cases, when you need to reuse content by copy-paste, you must put them between quotation marks if you are writing a natural English document. If the copy-pasted content is source code excerpt, you must mention the sources in comments.

Practically, this means that you are encouraged to look for (and share!) videos, images, or explanations that clarify the topic of your work. You are not allowed to search or, or ask about, the problem you are working on. For example, you can look up explanations and examples about recursion, but you cannot look for solutions or attempted solutions to the recursive problem in your homework (or a problem that is very close).

While it’s impossible to perfectly capture the do’s and the don’ts of internet searching, abide by the spirit of this policy - we want you to take advantage of the internet to develop a stronger conceptual understanding of the material without using it to find the answers to your work. Remember, all sources must be cited in your work. You do not need to cite the course textbook for your work in the course.

Open Study Sheet Exams

This situation could occur in an in-class exam or a final exam. The exam will specify whether your whole notebook is allowed or only a single page study sheet. You are the only person on the planet while taking the exam. Do not talk to any other humans besides the professor about the exam from the time it begins until after it is over. Do not bring electronic devices to the exam. If your notes or study sheet contain information from the internet or other outside references, you may only use them if specifically allowed by the exam AND you can cite your source.

For example: During the term, you surfed the web and found this cool code example and copied it or paraphrased it into your notebook. If the exam is closed web, do not use this info. If the exam is open web, use it but remember to cite where you got it. If you cannot cite it, you cannot use it. If you are uncertain, ask me and I may allow you to use it.

Individual Work

You are the only person on the planet. Do not talk to any other humans besides the professor about the assignment. Do not email anyone the assignment. Do not post it on public space. Do not email, talk, aim, etc about the assignment with anyone. Do not share references such as textbook chapters that were useful to you during the assignment. Do not surf the internet except as specifically stated in the assignment. If the assignment does not mention the internet or other references then the answer is no. Do not show your writeup to other people at all.

For example: You are thinking about the assignment and Fred mentions he either knows the answer or needs help with it. Say "I’m sorry, we can’t collaborate” and let that be it.
Individual Writeup

This situation may occur in projects. The point of these assignments is to apply some technique to a real situation. Therefore, you may discuss the assignment with others so that you understand it. You may talk/text/email with others about this assignment. Do all of the writeup yourself. Do not email or give your writeup to anyone. Do not post it on public space even for 5 minutes. **Do not show your writeup to other people at all.** Cite which people you discussed the assignment with.

**For example:** You are thinking about the assignment and you talk to Fred. Fred says “oh I used a for loop to solve that” and explains how. Fred **may not** show you his writeup. You **may not** show Fred your writeup. Cite that Fred helped you. If he didn’t help with the whole thing, make it clear which parts he did collaborate on.

Collaborative Work (Labs)

*Labs encourage collaboration. Differing from homework and projects, you may even share your work (or code) with your classmates. However, it must be done on a temporary basis. Your own work must be completed without anyone else’s in front of you.* Cite uses of the references and people in your work where appropriate. You may temporarily show your write-up to other people. Do not email it, post it on public space, or give it to anyone.

**For example:** You are thinking about the assignment and you talk to Fred. Fred says “oh I used a for loop to solve that” and explains how. Fred **may** show you his writeup if it helps. Then **stop** looking at Fred’s solution. Take notes while **not** looking at Fred’s solution. Use your notes in your writeup. Cite that Fred helped you. If he didn’t help with the whole thing, make it clear which parts he did collaborate on.