WOFFORD COLLEGE HONOR CODE AND COMPUTER SCIENCE

Many activities associated with computer science are collaborative. Consequently, there might be some confusion as to what is or is not appropriate with respect to Wofford's Honor Code as it applies to computer science courses. Considering the severe penalties associated with Honor Code violations, the department has prepared this document to clarify the Honor Code with respect to computer science courses.

You must understand that what might be acceptable for one class might constitute a violation of the Honor Code in another. Typically, academic integrity will be discussed on the first day of classes. *Keep in mind, however, that you are responsible for the integrity of your work. When in doubt, follow a strict interpretation of the Honor Code or seek guidance from your instructor.*

STRICT INTERPRETATION OF THE HONOR CODE

The Honor Code lists a number of acts of academic dishonesty. It defines plagiarism using four points. We clarify each of these points in the context of computer programming.

1. *Verbatim copying or using intellectual content of another person, without acknowledgement.*

   Copying code, algorithms, or documentation from a book, an Internet site, another student, or any source without proper citation is plagiarism.

2. *Borrowing or using information developed by another without acknowledging the source.*

   Presenting portions of the work of others as your own includes not only using portions of text, but also using portions of code, algorithms, designs, images, or sound files. For example, if you are creating a Web page and you want to include an image, you must acknowledge the source of that image if you did not create it yourself. (Clip art is usually excluded from this rule.)

3. *Paraphrasing the work or thought of another writer without acknowledgment.*

   Copying code or portions of code written by another programmer and then making modifications that do not change that code in substantive ways is plagiarism. Nonsubstantive modifications include changes to identifier names, formatting, statement sequencing, and comments. The same applies to algorithms and program designs.

4. *Allowing any other person or organization to prepare work which one then submits as his/her own.*

   Asking or paying someone to write (or help you write) all or part of a program, a program's documentation, or a Web page for you is plagiarism.

Unless your instructor states otherwise, your using sources outside of course textbooks, class notes and handouts, and designated teammates is forbidden, even if those sources are correctly cited. Keep in mind that although something might not be an Honor Code violation, your instructor still might not permit it. For example, turning in someone else's work with the source properly acknowledged is still unacceptable. While this is not an Honor Code violation, don't expect to receive any credit for the work of others.

Plagiarism will be assumed for work that is essentially the same as that of another student, particularly identically incorrect, off-the-wall, and highly unusual duplicate works where the probability of a sheer coincidence is highly unlikely. All parties to this kind of collaboration will be referred to the Honor Council

RELAXED INTERPRETATION OF THE HONOR CODE

For some assignments, your instructor might explicitly relax a strict interpretation of the Honor Code. The list below enumerates some activities that could be allowed under a relaxed interpretation. Note: Your instructor must explicitly allow an activity in this list for it *not* to be an Honor Code violation.

1. Discussing the meaning and expectations of an assignment, e.g., what the assignment calls for, the purpose of an assignment, or what is to be turned in. This concerns not *how* to do an assignment, but rather *what* is to be done.

2. Discussing how software tools are used, e.g., how a program is compiled using CodeWarrior.

3. Discussing general concepts or programming language concepts, e.g., what a *variable* is or how a variable is declared in C++.

4. Using sources outside the course textbook(s), resources on reserve in the library for use by students in the course, or your own class notes.

5. Having someone help you debug your code.

    Note: When you get help debugging, acknowledge that help in the program documentation and include a description of the extent of the help. When getting help, edit your own code. Let your helper point out errors and explain the nature of the errors. You should correct the errors. You must be able to explain any changes that someone suggests you make to your code!

6. Discussing algorithm design.

    During such a discussion, each participant should take his or her own notes. Discussion of algorithms should not extend to actual writing of code. Acknowledge such discussions and the participants in the program documentation.

7. Working as part of a team.

    With a team assignment, you are expected to work together and are free to use each other's work. (In some instances you may be expected to document your contributions to the effort.) However, groups should be considered as individuals for the purposes of the Honor Code. That is, you should not use the work, in whole or in part, of a person or resource outside those of your own group.

POINTS TO REMEMBER

*   You should always be able to explain your work.

*   Allowing your work to be copied or providing inappropriate assistance is also an Honor Code violation. It is your responsibility to ensure the security of your work. Do not leave your work where it can be copied. Make sure you log out of lab computers when you leave and dispose of hard copies of your work carefully.

*   If you need help with a program and are not sure what kind of help you can ask another person to give you, contact your instructor. If you have any doubts or questions about whether a particular activity constitutes academic dishonesty, discuss it with your instructor.

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