



**COLLEGE OF  
LIBERAL ARTS & SCIENCES**

**Academic Programs and Services**

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To: Departmental Executive Officers, Directors of Undergraduate Studies,  
Instructors, and Academic Advisors

From: Helena Dettmer, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs and Curriculum

RE: Academic Misconduct and the Role of Student Collaboration

Instructors have widely divergent policies on students "working together" and the relation of such collaborations to academic misconduct. These differences often confuse our undergraduates.

In response to a complaint about collaboration and academic fraud, Associate Provost Beth Ingram has requested that courses offered by the UI undergraduate colleges clarify the role of collaboration on the course syllabus and/or on any related assignments.

- Instructors should specify in writing if collaboration is allowed and, if so, the expectation for a student's individual performance.
- If collaboration is not allowed or is considered academic misconduct, this too should be emphasized.
- Instructors should stress the student's responsibility for understanding these boundaries and for asking for any needed clarification.

We hope that clear expectations and guidelines about collaboration will help CLAS to handle incidents related to academic misconduct fairly and swiftly.

We appreciate you forwarding this memo to the director of undergraduate studies in your department as well as to all instructors. Thank you.

We have included some sample statements about the role of collaboration below that might appear on assignments or the syllabus; we hope instructors find these helpful.

1. "The final take-home exam for this course is not a collaborative project and must be completed by the student without help from others. Exams showing strong similarities and/or duplication will be considered the result of academic dishonesty and will be failed and the students involved reported to the College. Do not share your final exam with others in the class. If you have questions about this policy, it is your responsibility to ask them."
2. "In this class, students are not allowed to collaborate with others on homework, labs, and other graded assignments. Do not share your work with others or ask others to see their completed assignments since both are considered academic misconduct. If you need help, please meet with the TAs during the course's many review sessions or stop by during my office hours. Students are responsible for understanding this policy; if you have questions, ask for clarification."

3. "The homework for this course is designed to help you master your knowledge related to the topics covered during lecture. As such, you may work on the homework problems with others or use online resources. However, please be aware that to master the skills needed for this class, practice is required and that to do well on the final exam you will need to work many of these problems multiple times without help. Be sure to test your knowledge by doing much of the homework on your own."
4. "Your final research project is collaborative. Each student on a research team is expected to complete a similar amount of work and to contribute equally to the final project. Each student will complete a self-evaluation and a group evaluation, describing this equality or the lack of it during the group's work. For more information, see the assignment sheet, the grading rubric, and the self-evaluation form for the project. Students who misrepresent themselves as equal partners in this collaborative project but who are actually letting others do the bulk of the work will be reported to the College for academic dishonesty. If you have questions, it is your responsibility to ask them."

If you have questions, please do contact me.

Thank you.