



Academic Integrity at UMBC CSEE

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Some slides drawn from:
health.oregonstate.edu/sites/health.oregonstate.edu/files/graduate/ppt/Academic-Integrity-Presentation-for-Graduate-Assistants-2011.pptx
Previous lectures by Dr. Cynthia Matuszek
Previous lectures by Dr. Marie desJardins

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Academic integrity at UMBC

- May not be what you are used to
 - What counts as “cheating” is **cultural**
 - You may need to internalize new rules
- May be **more serious** than you are used to
 - Students can fail a class, be suspended, or leave the university
 - For grad students, this happens at 1 or 2 offenses
- Any upheld violations make you ineligible for funding
 - You will remain ineligible for TA or grader positions

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Academic integrity at a high level

- Instructor's responsibilities:
 - Be respectful
 - Be fair
 - Be available
 - Tell the students what they need to know and how they will be graded
- Students' responsibilities:
 - Be respectful
 - Do not cheat, plagiarize, or lie, or help anyone else do so
 - Do not interfere with other students' academic activities

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Why?

- Academic dishonesty leads to poor education
 - Can't teach effectively without knowing what people really understand
 - Can't grade fairly if some people cheat and some don't
 - Can't learn what you're supposed to learn without doing the work
- Plagiarism and dishonesty aren't okay in the workforce
 - You are likely to be fired for the same behaviors
 - Doing difficult work is part of your professional preparation
- **You are paying for an education, not just a degree**

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UMBC's academic integrity policy

- “By enrolling in this course, each student assumes the responsibilities of an active participant in UMBC’s scholarly community, in which everyone’s academic work and behavior are held to the highest standards of honesty. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and helping others to commit these acts are all forms of academic dishonesty, and they are wrong. Academic misconduct could result in disciplinary action that may include, but is not limited to, suspension or dismissal.”
 - [Statement adopted by UMBC Provost’s Office]

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What is academic dishonesty?

- Plagiarism
 - Cheating
 - Abetting
 - Fabrication
- These are the most common, so we'll discuss examples

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Cheating

- Use or attempted use of unauthorized materials, information or study aids
- Any act of deceit by which a Student attempts to misrepresent mastery of academic effort or information
- Includes but is not limited to:
 - Unauthorized copying or collaboration on a test or assignment
 - Using prohibited materials and texts
 - Any misuse of an electronic device
 - Using any deceptive means to gain academic credit

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Examples

- Communicating during an exam
- Turning in homework after the answers have been released
- Sneaking notes into an exam
- Receiving unauthorized help on assignments

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Fabrication

- Falsification or invention of **any** information, including but not limited to:
 - Falsifying research
 - Inventing or exaggerating data
 - Listing incorrect or fictitious references

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Plagiarism

- Representing the words or ideas of another person or presenting someone else's words, ideas, artistry or data as one's own
- Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:
 - Copying any other work work (including unpublished material) without appropriate references
 - Presenting someone else's opinions and theories as your own
 - Working jointly on a project and then submitting it as your own
 - Using one's own previously submitted work without acknowledgement

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Plagiarism examples

- **The reference is in the bibliography.**
 - If you didn't explicitly quote the text you used and cite the source where you used the text, it is plagiarism.
- **I only used some of the words/a couple of sentences.**
 - Scattering some of your own words and rephrasing isn't enough. If the ideas are not restated entirely in your own words, it is plagiarism.
- **The introduction or background material are borrowed but the research is original.**
 - If somebody else's words appear in any document that you claim is written by you, it is plagiarism.

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Plagiarism examples

- **It was a draft or not an official assignment**
 - If you represented somebody else's words as your own, even in an informal context, it is plagiarism.
- **“But the professor told me to use that source!”**
 - Unless you are explicitly told to copy a quote from a source, you must write your answers in your own words.
- **I didn't write that section.**
 - If your name is on a document, you are fully responsible for the content. Working with a partner/group who cheats can affect you, so take responsibility for the whole document!

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Plagiarism examples

- **I wrote this for a previous class.**
 - Self-plagiarism is still plagiarism. Check with the instructor first.
- **It's just a small piece of the code.**
 - Anything not properly cited and referenced is plagiarism.
- **But I found it on (stack exchange/chegg/etc.)**
 - It's still plagiarism, no matter how widespread it is. Check with your instructor, or cite it.

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Plagiarism summary

- Plagiarism is intellectually dishonest.
- Things that may have worked in past will not work here.
- **As a rule, if you are copying and pasting anything without clear references, you are likely committing plagiarism.**
- A final note:
 - The statement: “There are only limited ways to write {this code|this text}” is **factually incorrect**.

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Abetting / assisting

- Helping another commit any act of academic dishonesty
- Assisting someone with an assignment, exam, etc.
- Letting someone see your answers or code for reference
- Putting someone's name on a task they didn't help with
- Posting your answer online somewhere (e.g., stack exchange)
- Providing an exam, assignment, exam question, or similar to others

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Abetting / assisting

- You are probably just trying to help.
- You may not think classmates will find it.
- **It is still academically dishonest.**
- Usually, helping another student to cheat, falsify, or plagiarize will result in you receiving **the same penalty.**
 - If you let someone else help you cheat, you're setting them up to be punished.

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Why does academic dishonesty happen?

- Time Management
 - Deadlines come around more quickly than expected
 - Procrastination
- Stressed and overwhelmed
- “Big Test Pressure”
- Confusion and difficulty with material
- Competition
- “It’s okay to cheat” mentality

Takeaway: *it is not okay to cheat.*



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Consequences for dishonesty

- Assignment penalty (zero grade for the assignment)
- Academic penalty for the course (lower grade)
- F grade for the course with no option to drop
- Suspension
- Expulsion from the program
- Expulsion from the university



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Okay, that's the bad stuff, but...

- **It's very easy to not commit academic integrity violations.**
- Don't cheat
- Don't copy text or code from others
- Don't help other people do these things
- If you're having trouble, talk to your instructor
- **Take integrity seriously and you'll be fine**



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Other Questions?

- Reach out to the grad program director, Dr. Matuszek, at cmat@umbc.edu.

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