Collaboration Expectations

Collaborating with others

A good argument convinces all members of the CS22 community that something is true or gets all members to understand something. It is therefore encouraged that you collaborate with other folks in the class on homework assignments.

Please keep in mind:

1) We are not all coming to this class with the same privileges, resources, time, experiences, or knowledge.

2) When choosing who to work with, keep in mind that you will probably get more out of working with people who are not just like you. Your scores will likely be better too: your assignments are graded by many different TAs, not just one.

3) Give other people room to contribute, and listen to what they have to say.

Some of us try to speak up but are talked over by other people. Oftentimes, the people who talk over others are just excited and want to share their ideas with others immediately. When you’re excited about something, we certainly want you to share it with others! But wait your turn. And don’t just wait thinking about what you have to say: truly listen to whoever’s speaking in the meantime. Perhaps they have something to say that makes your exciting idea even better.

It’s also harder for some of us to speak up in the first place. When you’re talking, try to check in with everyone else about what you’re saying. Checking in means listening to what everyone thinks. If there’s someone who is confused by what you’re saying, don’t sweep it aside.

4) Be sure to appreciate everyone’s contributions to the group. When working in groups, an idea might pop into your head and you may think it’s yours and yours alone, but perhaps you only arrived there because of something else that someone already said.

Course policy

As we mentioned, writing good proofs usually requires collaborating with other members of the 22 community. However, you must write up your final solution INDEPENDENTLY, and you may not share your write-up with anyone. Your ability to reconstruct what you have developed with your classmates is evidence that you understand it.

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1 Many of these ideas were adapted from Professor Tarik Aougab’s syllabus for MATH 0350.
You may not copy solutions from any source, including (but not limited to) your classmates or fellow students, textbooks, or any online resource. To be clear, you should not seek the answers to homework problems from the web. If you inadvertently find the answer to a homework problem in an outside source, you should state in your write-up where you found the answer; it’s important to give credit where credit is due. You must still write up the solution independently in your own words. Copying solutions from any source is a violation of the academic code.

CS22 uses Piazza, an online academic forum where students can ask questions to the course staff and other students. You may publically ask or answer clarification questions about course materials, including assignments, so long as they are not revealing of your solution to an assignment. If you have a question that is specific to your solution, you must ask this privately.

**TA Hours are not exempt from the policies in this document.** During TA hours, you may not write anything while collaborating with other students: whiteboards will be available as temporary workspace. You may not take pictures of whiteboards at hours, or walk away with any materials from any collaboration sessions (including ones in non-22 spaces). Your time at hours is meant to provide you with an understanding of the problem: you should then show us that understanding by doing your write-up individually.

At recitations, you are fully allowed to solve the problems on paper and take written work away from the space. However, specific homework problems should not be discussed in recitation; recitation is not a space for working on homework assignments.

**Brown Academic Code**

The following is an excerpt from “The Academic Code at Brown University.” Academic achievement is ordinarily evaluated on the basis of work that a student produces independently. Infringement of the Academic Code entails penalties ranging from reprimand to suspension, dismissal or expulsion from the University.

A student’s name on any exercise is regarded as assurance that that exercise is the result of the student’s own thoughts and study. Where collaboration is authorized, students should be very clear as to which parts of any assignment must be performed independently. In writing examinations and quizzes, the student is required to respond entirely on the basis of their own memory and capacity, without any assistance whatsoever except such as is specifically authorized by the instructor. Cheating on examinations and quizzes can take at least the following forms: using another individual to take an examination in one’s place; bringing into the exam room unauthorized materials from which one gains unfair assistance; improper collaboration or unauthorized assistance on take-home examinations.