

Academic Honesty

While WPI has no formal honor code, the expectation is that WPI students will adhere to the rules of honesty normally expected in an academic setting. Cheating and plagiarism are two forms of academic dishonesty that will not be tolerated.

Cheating can occur on programming assignments, homework and on exams. In this course, students are permitted to discuss programming assignments and possible approaches to solving these problems, but the expectation is that the programs turned in are the work of only the individual programming teams. In this course, it is acceptable to base your solution on algorithms or code from publicly available sources such as textbooks or public Web sites. However, you are **required** to document the source clearly in your code and in your documentation. Failure to do this will be treated as plagiarism.

Some students have difficulty understanding the difference between paraphrasing an another author's argument and copying directly from a source. If you are uncertain please discuss this with me. It is always better to be conservative. Namely, directly copying from another source **must be quoted and be referenced**. Failure to give proper credit to a source is a serious mistake. **Cutting and pasting directly from the Web** is plagiarism unless it is in quotes.

I am **required to report each incident** of academic dishonesty to the Dean of Student Affairs. If a student accepts my judgment of the situation and my punishment, then an incident report is filed. For a first time offense, the matter ends there. If a student disputes my judgment, then a formal campus judicial board hearing will be required.

In a WPI seven-week undergraduate course, my penalty for academic dishonesty is an **NR in the course**. Given the shortness of the course and no public record of the grade, this punishment is reasonable.

Graduate courses are different because a single F can get a student expelled. Frankly, I expect less dishonesty from graduate students due to higher level of maturity, but I have dealt sternly with the cases that I have encountered.

At the graduate level, the penalty for academic dishonesty is to set **the highest possible grade attainable by the student to C**. When a graduate student is caught plagiarizing a graduate course project, the **whole** project will be invalidated. The student will be required to do a completely new course project. This usually ends up with the student taking an Incomplete in the course and eventually receiving a C or lower.

Bob Kinicki