DEPARTMENT OF COMPUTER SCIENCE

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We follow the Colorado School of Mines Student Honor Code and Policy on Academic Integrity. Work submitted for grading should not be derived from work of others. The programming assignments are an integral part of the Computer Science learning experience. These projects will be fun, challenging, illuminating, time consuming, frustrating, and rewarding. Your sense of pride upon finishing is well deserved and your efforts earn your powerful skills and deep understanding. Don't cheat yourself out of this opportunity!

The Honor Code is a powerful community statement that asserts our shared values of integrity. This is a community we are committed to be a part of – please join us! Below are some additional guidelines that apply to CS courses. However, in every course, the instructor has the final say about expectations of academic honesty.

There are various ways to use a resource for assigned work and we distinguish them in two ways:
- **What kind of source is it?** Is it a general resource that you are drawing on to do the assigned work, or is it a solution to the assigned work? Does the resource trivialize the assigned task?
- **How is the source used?** Do you consult the source, or do you copy from it more or less verbatim?

For homework assignments and projects, the following policy is fairly common (but should not be assumed as the default, be sure to consult with your instructor for the course specific policy):

	Resources	Solutions
Consulting	Cite	Not Allowed
Copying	Consult with instructor & Cite	Not Allowed

For example, if your assignment is to write a function that implements selection sort:

	Resources	Solutions
Consulting	You discuss selection sort with other students and leave the conversation with "empty hands" – without an artifact of your discussion. You then implement the solution discussed. You add a comment listing the students you consulted with and the content of your discussion. You forget how to swap two variables and the TA reminds you. You add a comment listing the TA's name that assisted you.	You Google "selection sort" and find a pseudocode implementation of selection sort. You model your solution on this implementation. You look at another student's pseudocode or implementation. You model your solution on the other student's solution.
Copying	You forget how to swap two variables. After asking your instructor if online resources are allowable for this task, you look on StackOverflow and reuse code you find there. You add a comment to your code giving a citation and link to the original source.	You Google "selection sort", find an implementation of selection sort, and retype it in your source file. You look at another student's implementation and retype it in your source file.

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Assistance that is allowed for consultation but must be cited

These activities are encouraged and allowed for all students:

- Asking/answering questions about general course topics, programming languages, libraries, and tools.
  - For example: "Does strcmp compare strings case insensitively?"
- Clarifying the assignment specifications.
  - For example: "Do the results have to be sorted?" "What is the expected response if the input is empty?"
- Sharing generic advice and techniques for coding or debugging.
  - For example: "When my program crashes, I first look at the stack trace in the debugger."

Whereas the general background assistance above is freely allowed, if you receive assistance that is assignment-specific or that influences your submitted work, it must be cited. Some examples:

- Discussing the design of an assignment.
  - Design is a crucial part of the programming process. You should only compare and contrast with a peer after you both have completed your own independently conceived designs. You both must cite this discussion and note any ideas taken away from it.
- Advising another student's assignment debugging.
  - A student could describe symptoms to a peer who helps analyze the situation and offers recommendations. This collaboration must be cited. Debugging aid should not involve sharing code.

How to make a proper citation

A citation must be specific, complete, and truthful. It should

1. Identify the source (name of person, book title, URL, etc.)
2. Describe the nature and extent of assistance (what information was given/received, how it was communicated)
3. Indicate the influence on your work

A misleading, incomplete, or untruthful citation can be considered an aggravating factor when a case is referred to the Dean of Students. Failing to make a necessary citation can be charged as an Honor Code violation. Some former students have acknowledged they were unsure about the appropriateness of the assistance and chose not to cite to avoid drawing scrutiny. If in doubt, cite. If the assistance you cite was in fact impermissible, your honest representation of it allows us to adjust the potential Honor Code violation.

Assistance that is NOT allowed

These activities are never allowed for any student:

- Submitting or copying solutions from other students.
  - For example (not allowed): When I get stuck on a problem, I ask another student to provide me with their solution as a reference to compare against my solution.
- Sharing your solution with other students.
  - For example (not allowed): I took the class in the Spring and passed my code to another student who will take the class in the Fall.
  - For example (not allowed): I took the class in the Spring and publicly broadcasted the solution on a website.
- Using public resources for assignment-specific code.
  - For example (not allowed): I found code on a website that directly solves a problem in the assignment, and I used the full or partial code in my solution.