Academic Honesty in the Faculty of Engineering

Faculty of Engineering
Why Academic Honesty?

- University trains intellectuals and promotes creativity, therefore **CUHK will not tolerate**
  - Plagiarism (i.e. “copying”) assignments or course works
  - Cheating and/or misbehaving in tests and exams

- What is plagiarism?
  - “an attempt to pass off the works”
    (i.e. take some else’s work as yours)
  - e.g. creative ideas, report, course work, writing or computer program of others (or even your own previous works, i.e. self-plagiarism), as your own
General Principles

- Do not look at solutions that are not your own
- Do not share your solution with others
- Give proper acknowledgement to any help you received

Bottom Line: Discussion of ideas are encouraged, but each student must work out their own submission and give credits where they are due
Common mistake #1 – Direct Copying

Assignments, Laboratory and Project reports

- Professors and tutors perform routine spot checks
- Do not copy classmate’s assignment solution or computer program lines – *tell your classmate politely that copying is against CUHK regulation if such request arises*
- Do not copy classmate’s data
  - Redo experiment or information search if necessary
  - Write your own report even you take the data with your classmates unless it is a group report
- Discussions between classmates are good, but direct copying of analysis is not acceptable
- If a case of plagiarism is established, **BOTH PARTIES (source student and copying student) will get the same penalty**
Common mistake #2 – Direct Copying without quotation

A case of plagiarism on a General Education term paper: Direct copying from internet

Use quotations “…” to denote text copied from internet, then cite the source in reference list.
Proper use of source materials

- Mark relevant text by **quotation marks**
  e.g. .....”To be, or not to be” [1]

- **A reference to the original source**
  e.g. An effective motion control strategy based on video image feedback [2]......

- **A bibliography, giving the list of references**
  This is usually given at the end of the article/paper, or at the end of each page.
  
  Example:
  
  [1] D. Davids, Journal of Nanotechnology, vol..., page..., year...
  [2] Y. Smith, Electronic Letters, vol..., page..., year...
  
  ......
Common mistake #3 – Computer program

**Computer programming assignments**

```c
int findLargest(int size, int a[]) {  
    int i, tmp = 0;  
    for (i = 1; i < size; ++i)  
        if (a[i] > a[tmp])  
            tmp = i;  
    return(tmp);  
}
```

Direct copying: X

Change of variable names: X

Superficial changes: X

Slight structural changes:

- FOR loop ➔ WHILE loop

Common mistakes:
- Direct copying
- Change of variable names
- Superficial changes
- "a" ➔ "b"
- "(a[i] > a[tmp])" ➔ "a[tmp] < a[i]"
Handling of Cases in the Faculty

- Teachers and tutors will carry out checking on assignments and course works; sometimes using anti-plagiarism software such as VeriGuide.

- Teachers/Tutors will collect evidences of suspected cases and report to Faculty Disciplinary Committee (FDC).
Handling of Cases in the Faculty

- FDC will interview the student(s) in question, look into case details, and decide on the penalty if the case is established.

- The penalty scheme adopted by FDC is clearly stated in Faculty Guidelines.
Handling of Plagiarism Cases in the Faculty

- Minimum penalty: one demerit (may be removed at graduation if no further offence committed), zero mark for the work concerned and completion of relevant training in academic honesty.

- For severe cases, the penalty could be a fail grade for the whole course, AND permanent demerit(s) to be recorded in transcripts.
Handling of Plagiarism Cases in the Faculty

- Repeated (e.g. second time) offenders will be given at least two demerits (at least one will be a permanent record) and a fail grade for the whole course.

- Students who have received three demerits may be asked to suspend/discontinue studies.
Role of Faculty Disciplinary Committee

- We are not the “Judge” or “Prosecutor”

- We aim to ensure that students appreciate the value of academic integrity

(one of the most valuable aspects of university education)
Important Websites

Faculty Guidelines

University Guidelines
Questions
Most information can be found on the Faculty of Engineering website: https://www.erg.cuhk.edu.hk/
Have a fruitful academic year ahead!