Academic honesty, plagiarism and collaboration
Anders Berglund

Today's topics
1. What is plagiarism?
2. Consequences of cheating
3. Helping vs. Cheating
4. Students’ values

Everyone is against cheating
Everyone is against plagiarism

But what does "cheating" actually mean?
And what is "plagiarism"?

Thin line separating plagiarism and collaboration.

What is fair and what is unfair?

- We demand that you work in teams
- We demand that you do not "hide" in a group
- We encourage you to help each other
- We say that your results must be your own
- We refer to material from Internet and tell you to do your own background research
- We demand that you do an original work

Why these values and norms?

- Western values dominate science and technology
  - Science (as we know it today) stems from the Western culture
  - Science (as we know it today) is shared by different cultures
- Culture matters

Unfair copying

...but...
The thinking on what plagiarism means varies from culture to culture.
The thinking is culturally situated.
What is plagiarism?

It would be interesting to see if people actually copied quiz answers on plagiarism from each other. That would be really nasty wouldn’t it?

Master 2017
What is plagiarism?

Your answers (in my summary)
1. Definition
2. Something complex
3. A moral issue
4. Prevents the aim

Definition

I think that use of others work without saying is plagiarism.

Something complex

Plagiarism is nowadays a hot topic, and I guess is kind of hard to spot in some cases

Moral issue

Plagiarism is not good
Plagiarism is stealing.
Being aware of plagiarism must not be confused with being less empathic or even being inhuman. (2016)

Prevents the aim

I think plagiarism doesn’t take you anywhere.
I would say the most important thing is that a student learns something about the subject
Master 2017
What is plagiarism?

Your answers (in my summary)
1. Definition
2. Something complex
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Compared to previous years:
• More moral discussions
• Less discussions on community and consequences

What is plagiarism?
Important underlying values on texts in the Western academic world

- Transparency
- Originality

Something that you can look through is transparent. For example, a (clean) window is transparent.

Transparency
1. Your achievement and the achievement of others should be possible to separate
2. It should be possible to trace all claims in a report back, through references, to the original author.
3. The reader should have a chance to judge herself/himself what to trust and whom to trust.
4. It is better to make references too clear than not clear enough.

Originality
1. The text should be yours and should demonstrate your skills and your own thinking
2. How to do this:
   1. You write almost all text (code, diagrams …)
   2. Any text (…) not written by you
      • is clearly identified as not written by you
      • is given a proper reference to its source
   3. Be brave – state your own conclusions and make claims!

Why is this important?
Recognition
- The original author or researcher is acknowledged.
- Your part should be visible, so that you really get the honour for your own thoughts.

Advancement of science
- Helps the reader to find out more
- Helps the reader to check and evaluate your claims

For the researchers
For science
For life?

Why is this important?
This is complex
- Making things public, but still "owning them", is a part of a Western tradition. Intellectual ownership.
- Plagiarism, originality etc. is often discussed among researchers.
- Learn here, not later when working in a university or industry.
Plagiarism and collaboration

Today’s topics

1. What is plagiarism?
2. Consequences of cheating at Uppsala University?
3. Helping vs. Cheating
4. Students’ values

What is – by our rules – cheating?

- Attempt to cheat is to cheat
  - Whether it succeeds or not
- All situations where a study result is examined.
  Examples:
  - Cheat-sheets at an exam
  - Copying from the Internet without reference
  - Copying from paper sources without reference
  - Copying from other students
  - Allowing other students to copy from you
    (actively or passively)
  - Collaborating with other teams during labs/assessments without clearly indicating that you did so
  - Signing up students who are not present during obligatory education

What is – by our rules – cheating?

Material from the Internet

- Never a substitute for your own work
- Does not have a value in itself.
  - No control over quality of sources
  - Information is taken out of its content, and might be useless
- Can be useful
  - To get ideas
  - To find examples

Advices

- Copy only small fragments – with a reference
  (at most a paragraph or a diagram)
- Summarize in your own words and refer to anything larger (Internet or paper) without copying it.

How do we detect plagiarism?

In Uppsala

- Experience
- Google
- Purpose-made tools
  - Urkund (http://www.urkund.se/)

The consequences of cheating (Uppsala)

1. The teacher must (by law) report.
2. The teacher collects the evidence,
3. Possibly he/she has an interview with you to verify circumstances
4. Submits the evidence to the disciplinary board.

The case is now outside the hands of the teacher.
The Disciplinary board (Uppsala)

- A trial, documented and transparent
- Decision taken on evidence
  - Collected data (example: two similar lab reports)
  - Your statement
  - The teacher’s statement
- Decisions and arguments are publicly available
- Members:
  - Vice-Chancellor
  - Legal expert
  - Lecturer
  - Students

The consequences of cheating (Uppsala)

- Punishment
  - An official warning or
  - Suspension upp to 6 months (often one month)

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Master 2017 Scenario 1

You are working in the computer lab with a complicated lab that should be done individually and that should be ready the following day. You are doing well. Another student asks for your help. He/she says:

"Could you help me with this lab? If I fail, the Swedish Migration Board might say that my results are too poor, and I risk not get a visa for the next year. I will help you next time."

What do you answer?

A. I will help in my full capacity.
B. I will help you, but I will not do your work
C. I'll try to explain the unclear part but you need to work on your self
D. I will help you understand the lab assignments
E. I am sorry, we need to work on this individually.

This is an interesting answer
If it is really critical I might help a little bit more than I should
Avoid (suspicion of) cheating

Know the rules that apply
- They may differ from course to course
- All questions are good question
- If in doubt: Write down your worries in the report

Give the source of anything that is not your own work
- Receiving help from or helping other students
- Material from the Internet
- Text from a (course) book
- Code from code libraries

Your studies are your own responsibility

How to write references

Many, many reference systems

IEEE

Knuth [1] argues [...]

References


APA

Knuth (1974) argues [...]

References


ACM

Knuth [1] argues [...]

References


ACM references, examples


Hints

- A reference system "is" a set of rules
  - For example: http://www.acm.org/publications/proceedings-template

- There can be different versions of one reference systems

- Many tools can help
  - BibTex
  - EndNote
Helping vs. Cheating

- Help each other to learn!
- The goal of an assignment
  - Understand how things work!
  - Not a working implementation
- "Poor" labs are (normally) not failed
  - You may have to do something more to pass.
- When a team hands in its work
  - each team member has done her/his share
  - each team member is responsible for the whole work
  - each team member can be questioned about any part of the work
- If in doubt!
  - Tell us that you cooperated (then it’s not cheating)
  - Avoid to make collaboration look like cheating

Plagiarism and collaboration

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Why do students not cheat?

Statistical study, based on surveys

- Which factors do students indicate may prevent cheating?
- 602 (of 1189) survey answers
- Students from Australia

(Sheard, Markham & Dick, 2003)

A. Why do students not cheat?

Results

Five top answers
1. Want to know what the work is worth
2. Pride of your work
3. Can get good marks without cheating
4. Against moral values
5. Penalties if caught are high

Plagiarism, summary

- Think about
  - Originality
  - Transparency
- The topic
  - Difficult
  - Important
- Advice
  - Be careful
  - Use many and complete references
  - Tell in your report if you have got help from someone

Acknowledgement

- My warmest thanks to Roland Bol for insightful comments on earlier versions of these slides and for letting me use his ideas from his earlier lectures.
The old city in Stockholm, seen from the Town Hall

The Town hall of Stockholm

The old city of Stockholm, from a helicopter

Master 2017
Qualities of a report

When you hand in a report, what are the most important qualities of it?

1. Completeness 3.2
2. Correctness 3.4
3. Expertise 3.6
4. Language 3.7
5. Originality 3.8
6. References 3.9

1 = most important, 7 = least important

Master 2016
Qualities of a report

When you hand in a report, what are the most important qualities of it?

1. References 2.1
2. Completeness 2.4
3. Language 2.5
4. Originality 2.6
5. Correctness 2.7
6. Expertise 3.2

1 = most important, 7 = least important

Other students

Complete 2017
Correct 2017
Expertise 2017
Language 2017
Originality 2017
References 2017

2017
Language
Complete
Correct
Expertise
Originality
References

2016
Language
Complete
Correct
Expertise
Originality
References

2015
Language
Complete
Correct
Expertise
Originality
References

2014
Language
Complete
Correct
Expertise
Originality
References

2013
Language
Complete
Correct
Expertise
Originality
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2012
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2008
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Language
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1 = most important, 7 = least important
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