

Academic Integrity: Collaboration

Hi, my name is Leeanne Romane, liaison librarian at the University of Waterloo.

This video will discuss some of the issues related to collaboration and the penalties for this academic misconduct.

Collaboration is defined as working with another person, or receiving some sort of assistance from someone else.

Collaboration may include conducting research with your supervisor, working in a group on a lab assignment, writing a paper with someone else, inventing a product or concept as a group project, or even debugging someone else's computer program.

Students may only collaborate with the explicit permission of their instructor or supervisor.

And as these permissions may vary from course to course, faculty to faculty, it's important to ask if you are allowed to collaborate or not.

Results from the 2006 University of Waterloo's Academic Integrity survey reveal that half of the graduate student respondents replied that working with others when asked for individual work is not serious cheating.

If you fall into this group, think again.

One of the most common and misunderstood forms of cheating is inappropriate collaboration.

Inappropriate collaboration occurs when a student works with someone else in spite of the instructions to work individually, or when permission to collaborate has not been given.

This rule applies to all academic situations.

Here at the University of Waterloo comprehensive exams are unique to each student.

The exam is tailored to that student's area of research and expertise.

So while you may be able to study in a group, there may be limited usefulness of the process.

Additionally, you must be careful that your answers are your own; not an answer provided by someone else during discussions.

Ask your supervisor and/or the department head if you are permitted to form a study group.

If your department requires a comprehensive exam proposal, this must be unique and prepared on your own without assistance.

It is quite likely that you will collaborate on research and/or research paper or article, especially with your supervisor.

You may also work with someone with someone from outside your department, or in another academic institution.

As with other collaboration issues, you must have permission to work with someone, and all authors, investigators must be credited.

A tutor can help you understand the assignment, the organization of your paper, issues around the analysis argument, and general problems with writing and/or the paper.

If a problem is being turned in for grade, you should never turn in the tutor's solution as if it were your own.

Graduate students at University of Waterloo have access to the writing center services, which provide assistance with constructive criticism for grant applications, reports, letters of applications, etc., and workshops on grammar, sentence structure, punctuation, and other topics.

By engaging in inappropriate collaboration imposed penalties may include, letter of reprimand, disciplinary probation, grade penalty on the assignment and the final grade, removal of university and library privileges, loss of funding or grants, suspension, removal from university housing, and expulsion.

I'll leave you with these questions for self-reflection.

Contemplate your response, as academic misconducts affect all people around you, and the risks are high.