




## Plagiarism and collaboration

Anders Berglund  
*first part*  
Ivan Christoff  
*second part part*



## Plagiarism, collaboration and writing with references

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Today

- Plagiarism and collaboration (*Anders*) (13-15)
- Writing references (*Ivan*) (15-17)

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- Lab: writing a paper with references

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## Everyone is against cheating

## Everyone is against plagiarism

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

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## What is fair and what is unfair?

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

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## Plagiarism and collaboration

### Today's topics

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

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## What is fair and what is unfair?

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- Everyone is against cheating
- Everyone is against plagiarism

...but ...

- The thinking about what cheating means varies from culture to culture.
- The thinking is *culturally situated*.

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## Master2008

### What is plagiarism?

*Plagiarism is a kind of stealing. You use another person's words, ideas, or work as they were your own.*

*Plagiarism does not only mean to cheat others but also ourselves.*



## Master2008

### What is plagiarism?

- Plagiarism is a kind of stealing. You use another person's words, ideas, or work as they were your own.
- Plagiarism does not only mean to cheat others but also ourselves.
- Every one has the right to work out something new based on others' result. This is not plagiarism. Plagiarism is that someone use other's result directly as his/her own point of view. So when you refer to or quote some information from other paper or books, every references should be clearly identified. It not only shows respect to others' effort, but also makes the report much better with some own point of views in that readers of the report can easily find more valuable information from one report.
- Plagiarism might help short term, but in the long run it does more harm than good to person who tries it. As old saying tells us: "You can fool some people all time, all people some time, but you can not fool all people all time."
- Although I do think that it's important to know what plagiarism is, and the rules around it; I reckon it's more important to know what are the consequences of it. I mean the consequences for your own future (like not learning properly). Scores or later you'll say to yourself that you shouldn't have done what you did. In fact, you'll regret it, because you'll have to do the work you didn't do before.
- I think it is very hard to define what is plagiarism. Because probably all the things we know and many things we take for granted are from the outside world. But just to take about it in this field, I think plagiarism is something I hates. Because I want myself to learn and think.
- Plagiarism seems very clear when it comes to writing reports, but less so when it comes to computer code. When is it OK to reuse other people's code for an assignment? So many problems have solutions that are so standardized, the code is virtually boiler-plate—do I need to cite a source for that code when I use it?
- As far as I can tell, plagiarism should not be accepted anywhere in the field. However, people should be aware of differences between collaboration and plagiarism. And the most important thing is how to avoid making mistake. In reality, people sometimes do wrong things just because of awareness.
- Plagiarism is not good especially when someone is cheating without owner's permission. But if someone is in trouble about dealing with reports or questions, discussing with others is a good way to make it work.



## What is plagiarism? Important underlying values

*Values on a text in the Western academic world*

- Transparency
- Originality

*You are responsible for your own studies → You are responsible for avoiding plagiarism*



## Transparency

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



## Originality

- The text should be *yours* and should demonstrate your skills and your own thinking
- How to do this:
  - You write almost all text (code, diagrams ...)
  - Any text (...) not written by you
    - is clearly identified as not written by you
    - is given a proper reference to its source
  - Be brave – state opinions!



## Why is this important?

### Recognition

- The original author/researcher is acknowledged.
- Your parts should be visible, so that *you* really get the honour for your own thoughts.

### Advances science

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

### This is complex

- Making things public, but still "owning them", is a part of a Western tradition. This tradition has conquered science.
- Plagiarism, originality etc. is often discussed among researchers.
- Learn here, not when working in a university or industry.

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## What is – by our rules – cheating?

Attempts to cheat is handled as cheating

- Exams, examples
  - Cheat-sheets at an exam
- Reports, examples
  - Copying from the Internet without reference
  - Copying from paper sources without reference (an unspecified list of references by the end is not enough)
  - Copying from other students
  - Allowing other students to copy from you (actively or passively)
- Labs/Assignments, examples
  - 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.*

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## How do we detect plagiarism?

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

The screenshot shows the Urkund plagiarism detection software interface. It displays a document being analyzed and compares it with a database. A specific match is highlighted with a yellow box, showing a 94% similarity. A callout bubble points to this match with the text "Screen dump from Urkund". Another callout bubble points to the same match with the text "The student was not cheating. Check reference!". The interface also shows a list of documents and their similarity percentages.

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## The consequences of cheating

- Punishment
  - An official warning or
  - A suspension up to 6 months (often one month)

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## The Disciplinary board

- 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 publically available
- Members:
  - Vice-Chancellor
  - Legal expert
  - Lecturer
  - Students

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### 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 students 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?*

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## Master 2008

### Scenario 1

*"I will help him because next time he will help me."*

*"Sure I can help you. But you shouldn't copy my work. Just tell me where you don't understand and I will try to explain it to you."*

*"No, I can not help you!"*

*"Well, my suggestion is the first thing is to ask the assistant to prolong the deadline for you."*

*"Even if I realize that help him/her is against the rules of the course and possibly going to be deleterious for his/her education, I would very likely still help him/her out because I consider it a personal choice of the other student whether to do his/her lab according to the rules or not [...] An exceptional situation [...]"*

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## 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

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## 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

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## Why do students not cheat?

### Statistic study, based on surveys

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

(Sheard, Markham & Dick, 2003)

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## A. Why do students not cheat? 2(3)

### 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

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### Qualities of a report

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

■ Completeness	1. Expertise 4,48	<u>2007</u> 3,52
■ Correctness	2. Correctness 4	3,41
■ Expertise	3. References 3,9	3,79
■ Language	4. Completeness 3,58	2,14
■ Originality	5. Language 3,55	3,24
■ References	6. Originality 2,29	2,62

1 = most important, 7 = least important

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