

CPSC 313 — Assignment Do's and Don'ts

When working on assignments in this course, . . .

Please do the following things:

- Take the time to ***read these rules*** carefully.
- ***Ask the instructor for clarification of these rules*** if they are not clear.
- Please free to ***discuss the problems on an assignment with the instructor of this course***. This is a good way to make use of the course's office hours.
- Feel free to ***discuss the problems on an assignment with other students in the class — provided that you are not taking recordings or notes during these conversations***. The goal here is to allow you to help each understand *how* a problem is to be solved, but not to allow you to complete a solution for it with anyone except another student in your assignment group.
- ***Use the library*** and online material that is already available online... ***but***
- ***Cite*** all references and mention any conversations with other students that you had about this assignment that was helpful. ***You must also cite all course material that you relied on when creating your submission*** — especially if you used this material to figure out how to organize and write a solution for a problem!¹
- ***Ask the instructor to comment on your work before you submit it***. But please don't wait until the day the assignment is due for this — because there might be too many requests like this for the instructor to handle, otherwise.²

¹When these rules are not followed, otherwise acceptable uses of reference material can be mistaken for academic misconduct.

²The number of students who take advantage of this is usually small enough for the instructor to be able to give feedback — but this cannot be guaranteed.

- **Start work early.** You might need to think for a while about assigned problems and even make multiple attempts to solve problems (using multiple approaches) before solutions for problems are discovered.
- **Make sure that everyone in your group has seen the entire submission** and has been allowed to question or comment on it. Each member of your group will be expected to understand the entire submission and considered to be “responsible” for all of it.
- **Allow time to revise and rewrite** your written answers. Writing gets easier with practice, but it is not necessarily easy for you, right now.

On the other hand, . . .

Please note that various things are not allowed!

- **Do not ask anyone besides the instructor to interpret these rules for you.** If you ask somebody else and get information that the instructor disagrees with then you will be out of luck!
- **Do not discuss an assignment with anyone not associated with this course, in any way that could lead to their helping you complete it** — including paid tutors³, parents, friends, other students, etc.: **That is academic misconduct.**
- **Do not use material produced in discussions with students outside your group as part of your assignment submission.**
- **Do not show your written work (including drafts of your submission) to anyone besides the instructor or other students in your group.** You are either supplying, or receiving, more help than is allowed if you do this! Once again, **that is academic misconduct.**

Please, note as well, that **you are committing academic misconduct too** if you break the above rule by sharing your work with other students, before an assignment is due, even if you think you are helping them by doing so.

³Tutors can help to you learn by helping you with similar problems, like problems in the course’s tutorial exercises. They should not be discussing problems on any assignment in this course with you.

Furthermore, you should **inform the instructor**, by email, as soon as possible if you share this material with other students **after** the assignment due date, in case other students have received an extension, and will use your work to commit academic misconduct, without your realizing it! If you fail to do so, and an academic misconduct investigation is required, then **everyone in your group will get investigated too**.

- **Do not ask (or, worse yet, pay) anyone to help you complete this assignment for you. Once again, that is academic misconduct** — indeed, arguably, a more serious form of academic misconduct than the above.
- **Do not ask for clarification about this — or assignment requirements — with the TA's:** They are not paid for this and have been instructed to encourage you to go to the instructor for clarifications, hints, and so on, if these things are needed.
- **Do not split up an assignment** among members of your group, with the expectation that you can simply merge your answers together immediately before a submission deadline: That rarely results in a submission receiving high marks, leaves students unprepared for tests and future assignments, and increases the risk that an “academic misconduct” investigation, involving **every** group member, may be required.