CS1951V Collaboration Policy

Fall 2023

Overview

CS1951V is intended to provide a rigorous (and fun!) overview of hypertext/hypermedia. Grades in this class are based on participation (in and out of class), coding projects, responses on papers you read, and a small-group final project – there are no exams or quizzes (except for in-class TopHat questions), and there is no curving of grades. Thus, it is imperative for us to be sure that your work is entirely your own. This document summarizes what is and what is not acceptable collaboration for CS1951V. Please note that claiming ignorance of the collaboration policy is *not* a valid excuse for violating it. For any questions, please reach out to a TA.

Motivation

Every year, a number of violations are caught and prosecuted with the university's Standing Academic Code Committee, nearly always resulting in convictions. A conviction typically results in a permanent directed No Credit notation on your transcript, parental notification for a first offense, and usually a semester suspension for a second offense (i.e., two or more programs)). In addition, Brown is obligated to disclose the existence of a violation when professional schools (Law, Medical, Business, etc.) request this information.

Acceptable Forms of Collaboration

You may discuss lecture material, general concept questions, syntax questions freely, so long as these concepts are not discussed in the context of any project. Discussing any material (lectures, NodeJS documentation, etc.) on or linked to from the course website is acceptable. TA / conceptual hours operate with "supervised collaboration", i.e., they are fully collaborative since TAs are present to ensure that all conversations, group work, discussion, etc., fall within the bounds of the collaboration policy. Whenever a TA is not present, however, any and all discussion or collaboration regarding project design is prohibited, with the exception of discussing elements of the final project *only* with the other members of your group. You are allowed to collaborate with classmates when working on a lab, in fact, we encourage discussion and collaboration for labs.

Unacceptable Forms of Collaboration

You are never allowed to discuss any aspect of a project or homework including but not limited to architecture choices, implementation details, perceived difficulty level of the assignment, general programming approach, etc., with anyone other than the current course staff. You are never allowed to look at another student's code or share code with another student, with the exception of the final small-group project. If another student uses your code, you are *both* in violation of the collaboration policy.

Using documentation of packages to incorporate them, and things like StackOverflow to search if you are stuck on something is ok, but using somebody else's design, logic, or solution to implement an assignment is not acceptable. If you are ever in doubt, ask a TA. It is also against the collaboration policy to publicly post any CS1951V material on any such site. If you post homework solutions or project implementations publicly, course staff reserves the right to ask you to take it down. For students wishing to show their CS19151V project implementations to potential employers, we ask that you only make your code available upon request, and share it privately with the requestor, not publicly.

Asking Questions

Feel free to post questions that you think would be helpful to the entire group to public Slack channels. If you are unsure if a question is in violation of the Collaboration Policy, write a private message to a TA -- if we think the entire class should know about the question and the answer, we will post both to a public Slack channel.

Regret Policy

We understand that, in times of significant stress, it is possible that a student may yield to temptation and deliberately violate the collaboration policy in an attempt to finish an assignment. If you violate the collaboration policy but bring it to the attention of the TAs within 72 hours of the submission of the project which occasioned the violation, you will only face internal course sanctions (including but not limited to NCing the assignment) and CS1951V will not refer your case to Brown's Standing Committee on the Academic Code. Please note that this is a **one-time** option. Repeatedly violating the collaboration policy can and will result in your case being brought to the Standing Committee on the Academic Code as a repeat case, which, if you are found guilty, will result in a significantly harsher penalty than a first offense. We sincerely hope that you never use the Regret Policy but it sure is a better option than violating the collaboration contract.