

When in doubt, ask!

It may not be entirely clear how much you and your fellow students are allowed to work together on an assignment or project. If you have been told that it must be completed individually, then working together is not allowed. However, if you are not sure whether or not collaboration is allowed, or to what extent, be sure to ask your professor for guidance.

Find out:

Is collaboration allowed?

If so, to what extent?

How should you acknowledge the work of others on your assignment?



For further information, see the links to the Code of Student Behaviour and the Research and Scholarship Integrity Policy at:

www.ualberta.ca/tie

Office of Student Judicial Affairs

1-04 Triffo Hall
 University of Alberta
 Edmonton, AB T6G 2E1
 Phone: 780-492-0777
 Fax: 780-492-1974
 E-mail: osja@ualberta.ca



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TIE Integrity into Learning



**COLLABORATING
 ON ASSIGNMENTS**



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Honesty • Fairness • Trust • Responsibility • Respect

APPROPRIATE COLLABORATION

The University of Alberta recognizes collaboration as an important part of intellectual and academic development. Collaboration can produce creative and innovative ideas and research; however, if students engage in inappropriate collaboration, it gives them unfair academic advantage and is a violation of the Code of Student Behaviour.

Much like citing your sources in a paper, it's all about being transparent. When assigning you a grade, your professors need to know how much of the work was your own and to what extent you received help. Each professor may have different expectations, so be sure you know exactly how each professor prefers you to work. Ask the questions —are you allowed to work together? If so, to what extent? How should that collaboration be acknowledged?

GROUP PROJECTS

Group projects are one way to capitalize on the benefits of collaboration. In this context, the whole is certainly greater than the sum of its parts. It takes creativity for a group of individual students to learn how to work together effectively. Students working on group projects should be aware of the following guidelines:

- If your name is on the assignment, you are responsible for everything in that assignment, whether or not you participated in every section. Carefully review all the material submitted by other students in your group.
- Ask questions of the professor if your group is confused about expectations.
- It may be helpful to include a section describing the role of each student within the group, if appropriate for that project.
- Understand that everyone has different approaches to their work. Your group, whether you were assigned or chose to work together, will likely have to negotiate your process before you even begin the assignment.
- It is helpful for the group to agree upon a mechanism to deal with any conflict that arises as you work together.
- If your professor did not identify the assignment as a group project, assume you are expected to generate your own ideas and written work.

INAPPROPRIATE COLLABORATION

There is a difference between participating in scholarly discussions or debates with your colleagues and engaging in inappropriate collaboration on assignments intended to be completed individually. When two or more students submit identical or nearly identical work claiming it is their own, it is a clear sign of inappropriate collaboration.

Remember:

- Using another student's ideas or words without acknowledgment amounts to Plagiarism [Code of Student Behaviour 30.3.2(1)];
- Having someone write, rewrite, extensively edit or correct your work for you is Cheating [Code of Student Behaviour 30.3.2(2)b and 30.3.2(2)c]; and
- Helping someone else in those ways is Participation in an Offence [Code of Student Behaviour 30.3.6(5)].

One way to work appropriately with your colleagues is to discuss concepts, research and ideas together and then go your separate ways to write your individual assignments.