Academic Honesty

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Why Academic Dishonesty is Bad

• It’s dishonest!
  – Misrepresents your effort
  – Disrespectful of the original authors
  – Disrespectful of students who do their work honestly

• It’s a feckless and unproductive use of your time – time spent cheating is time you could be spending learning

• It wastes instructor/TA time (even if you’re not caught!)
Why Academic Dishonesty in Graduate School Shows Especially Poor Judgment

• Grades aren’t that important
• Ignoring the ethical issues, the risk/reward equation doesn’t make sense

• Unlike undergraduate education, most classes you take are on topics that are aligned with your interests and future plans
• You’re cheating yourself!

• Forget any bad habits or ideas about “acceptable” cheating that you had as an undergrad. Put that part of your life in the past, and leave it there.

Why Academic Dishonesty in Graduate Students Sends a Chill Down the Spine of Professors

• If you cheat in classes, why wouldn’t you cheat in research?

• The academic publication mechanism is strongly based upon trust
  – Reviewers might catch suspicious looking results
  – Impossible for reviewers to reproduce all experiments or search all archives to check for plagiarism
  – Authors usually enjoy an implicit assumption of honesty
• When trust is violated, editors, reviewers and readers are outraged

• Advisor-student relationships are strongly based upon trust
  (same as arguments for reviewers)

• A dishonest result in a paper doesn’t just bring one person down; it brings down every author
What Happens if You’re Caught Cheating in Class

- You will be in the center of a sh*tstorm
- Undergrads: Duke honor code takes precedence
- Grads:
  - Your grade in the class will take a big hit (least of your concerns)
  - Your DGS will be contacted, the administration will be informed, and you will have a black mark on your record
  - Your advisor (if you have one) will be contacted
  - You may be thrown out of graduate school
  - If you have an advisor he/she may disown you
  - If you don’t have an advisor, you may have trouble finding one

Rules of Thumb
Both for Class and Research

- If you are unsure about what is permitted ASK!

- Always look for opportunities to give credit/thanks for the ideas that have inspired you
  - Giving credit earns friends
  - Failing to give credit earns enemies