

Math, Science, and Engineering Division Policy on Academic Integrity

Statement of purpose

Academic integrity is not just a matter of “following the rules.” It is a matter of participating in an intellectual community in a way that fosters the values of that community. These values include the promotion of learning, the sharing of knowledge, and the honest acknowledgment of the various sources of information. This document is designed with the purpose of clarifying some specific student actions that promote or violate these values. It should be read as a reinforcement, clarification, and extension of the "Academic Honor Code" as stated in the Saddleback College Catalog (under the section of "Student Rights and Responsibilities") and in the Student Handbook as the "Code of Conduct".

This document is not designed to be an exhaustive list of academic “dos and don’ts.” Rather, students are expected to understand that all participants in an academic environment have an active and on-going responsibility to be self-critical and to assess whether their actions are in compliance with a true spirit of learning. Students are accountable for academic dishonesty in any form, whether their actions are explicitly listed below or not. Further, ignorance or confusion about this policy or its interpretation is not a valid excuse for violating it. It is each student’s responsibility to recognize when an action is questionable and to question it. When in doubt, a student should always ask his or her instructor.

Academic honesty

When you submit work for credit you must do so honestly. At a minimum, this means:

1. Any and all work you submit must be your own work. For lab work, this includes gathering, analyzing, and presenting data. Group projects, if assigned, should be submitted using only the names of group members who contributed to the completion of the project.
2. You may use only those resources explicitly allowed by the instructor in completing an assignment. Allowed resources will vary with classes, instructors, and assignments. It is your responsibility to know which resources are allowed on any given assignment.
3. You must acknowledge use of allowed resources in completing an assignment, unless the instructor does not require such acknowledgment. Many instructors allow, and even encourage, students to receive help from each other, other instructors, tutors, and/or printed or online materials. At the top of any assignment on which you have received outside help, you should list the sources of that help. For example, you might write: “I worked with [names of classmates worked with]” or “I got help in the LAP from [names of tutors].”
4. Unless given explicit permission, you may not submit work for credit if that work was completed for a different class. This includes work completed for the same course in a different semester. Learning is not just about the final product, but the process, and instructors give assignments with the expectation that completing the assignment will be a learning experience.

Academic dishonesty

The following actions are considered to be cheating. Again, this is not an exhaustive list, and students are expected to take an active role in assessing their own actions to ensure that they are honest.

1. Submitting a test or any other work (including homework, lab report, research or literature report, etc.) that is copied wholly or in part from another person's test or work, or knowingly allowing another student to copy from your work.
2. Having another person complete an assignment, take a test, or otherwise meet a requirement for you or you doing so for another student.
3. Using written or electronically retrievable notes or other unauthorized sources of information during a test.
4. Receiving specific information about a test from anyone but the instructor during the test, or giving to or allowing another student to get from you such information during the test.
5. Receiving specific information about the contents of a test before taking it, or providing specific information about a test after taking it in such a way that another student receives the information before s/he takes the same or a similar test.
6. Plagiarizing assignments from any source including Internet sources.
7. Falsifying or altering laboratory data, or copying results or answers from another student. Even if you were directed to work in a pair or other grouping, and although you may be allowed to share "primary data", it will be considered as evidence of cheating if you and another student report identical results that should naturally differ from one student to another, or identical wording in conclusions, answers to questions, etc. "Primary data" means numerical values or observations obtained directly by the experimenter or read directly from a measuring instrument.
8. Submitting a lab report using data you did not help to collect or sharing data with a student who did not help collect it. This does not include data provided by the instructor. While lab work is often done in groups, each group member is expected to participate in performing the experiment and analyzing and presenting the data collected.
9. Getting allowed help in preparing, writing, reviewing, editing, or proofreading an assignment for submission without acknowledging that help, if required by the instructor. This includes help from any source including other students, teachers, lab technicians, family members, friends, acquaintances, and even from anonymous sources (especially Internet sources). It may not be considered cheating to get the help, but it is definitely considered cheating not to note the source and extent of the help in a prominent way in the submitted work, if required by the instructor.
10. Using the whole of or substantial part(s) of any written assignment submitted for credit in another (concurrent or previously taken) course, without the explicit permission of the current instructor.

The penalties for any act of academic dishonesty are left to the discretion of the instructor. Possible penalties are listed in College Catalog and the Student Handbook. It is the policy of this division that all acts of dishonesty are reported to the Division Dean and the Vice President for Student Services. The Vice President keeps records of all reported incidents, and repeated offenses are handled with increasing severity.