CS Department Policies

A08. Koofers

Course Policies (continued)

A08. Koofers

Computer Science Department Policy

Departmental Policy on KOOFERS, OLD PROGRAMS, CHEATING, AND COMPUTER USE

Warning: All students in all Computer Science classes are responsible for reading and understanding the content of this document.

1. KOOFERS. The issue surrounding what students call Koofers actually breaks down into three distinct subissues: obtaining and using lists of questions without answers, obtaining and using answers to questions for study only, and handing in answers which were obtained from previous terms. (Note: question lists that are drawn up by students are also permitted; these guidelines apply to question lists drawn up by the instructor.)

a. QUESTION LISTS. Any list of questions and other handouts that the instructor hands out in class may be used. Question lists such as previous exam forms may be used provided that the instructor voluntarily gave them to students at some point. Any use of question lists that were obtained without the instructor’s knowledge constitutes cheating. This includes use of exam forms which students removed from an examination room without the instructor’s permission. Student must never assume that they are free to carry away copies of an examination, unless they have been explicitly told that they can.

b. ANSWERS FOR STUDYING. Graded examination papers or past term homeworks or assignments that were voluntarily returned by the instructor may be used in studying for tests provided that they are not available at the time of the examination. (This rule applies to closed book examinations. Guidelines for open book examinations will be set by the instructor when the examination is handed out.) Using, or providing for use, graded answers that were not voluntarily returned by the instructor is cheating.

c. HANDING IN ANSWERS. Handing in anything which counts for a grade and which is not the product of your own effort is cheating. Obviously what you study will affect what you write; however, any direct use of koofers in preparing material for a grade is cheating, whether or not the original wording is maintained. From the time you have read the questions you are to answer, no koofers shall be consulted until your work has been handed in. Handing in a copy of someone’s homework from a previous term is cheating. Copying a key that was handed out in a previous term is cheating. Reading someone else’s homework or an answer key from the current term or any previous term before preparing your own answers (or after an initial draft but before completing the work to be handed in) and using someone else’s answers to questions you have been asked is cheating. Copying someone else’s answers onto an examination paper without accurately identifying the source is cheating, regardless of whether you are copying from someone else in the same class, from an exam from a previous term, or from any other source, and regardless whether the exam is in class or take home, open or closed book.

The only legitimate use of answers obtained in previous terms is in studying before a test, when the questions on the test have not been handed out and answers are not being prepared. The permission to study in no case extends to copying answers and handing them in as your own. Changing wording but retaining the essence of the answer constitutes copying for the purpose of this rule. If you hand it in as yours, you must have worked it out yourself.

Unless explicitly otherwise stated, all work to be handed in by any student must be exclusively the work of the student whose name it bears. Students may not work together on homework unless it is explicitly stated that they may. Students may not consult with one another on any programming project unless it is explicitly stated that they may. Students may not debug each other’s code, tell each other how to get around problems, or provide each other with fragments of code no matter how small, unless it is explicitly stated that they may. Students are allowed to help one another with questions pertaining solely to system use and hardware issues, provided that the solutions to those questions do not constitute the point of the exercise.

Any case of plagiarism, falsification, tampering with records, purchasing work for hire, or any other form of cheating of which the instructor or graduate assistants of a course become aware and can document will be reported to the Honor Board. The original work in question will be held by the instructor as evidence. THERE WILL BE NO WARNINGS, AND NO EXCUSES WILL BE ACCEPTED.

Students who become aware of cheating have a responsibility to report it. Reporting is not optional. Under the Virginia Tech Honor System (Section VII, article 1), “It is the duty of all members of the academic community to report cheating, regardless of whether they are students, faculty, or staff.”
alleged violations promptly. Alleged violations must be reported in writing...”
(Taken from the 1988-89 Pylon, page 86; for further information on the honor code, see the Pylon, pages 81-91.) Students may report cheating in C.S. courses in
either of two ways. (a) They can report the case to the Honor Board directly and
in writing.  (b) They can report the case to the instructor.  Whichever they choose,
such students must provide specifics of names and evidence.  Telling the instructor
“You know, a lot of people are cheating on this assignment” is not reporting the
case to the instructor.

These guidelines constitute the official policy on cheating of the Department of
Computer Science.  Unless the instructor explicitly states otherwise, the rules
contained herein are in force for all work in all Computer Science courses.

4. USE OF DEPARTMENT COMPUTERS

The following policy supplements the departmental policy on student use of
computer accounts, as presented in the Virginia Tech Student Handbook, Pylon.
The policy presented there concerning accounts on university mainframes remains
in full force.

Undergraduates in computer science courses may be given access to Computer
Science Department computer facilities.  Use of such facilities is a loaned
university resource, and as such is covered by several sections of the University
Policies on Student Life, including the sections on Theft of State Funds.  (See the
section entitled, “Statement of Individual Responsibilities,” in the Virginia Tech
Student Handbook, Pylon.) Access to departmental computer systems is provided
for the express purpose of completing assignments for computer science courses,
as outlined by the instructor.  On rare occasions, access may also be provided for
specifically authorized research, with or without course credit.  Any other use
whatsoever of any departmental computer is a violation of departmental policy.

Acceptance and usage of any account on any departmental computer constitutes
acceptance of this policy.  CS departmental policy stands in addition to the
University’s “Computer and Communication Systems Use” policy as stated in the
University Policies for Student Life.

Exception to this policy:  Computer Science majors and a restricted group of CS
minors will use CSUGRAD accounts for electronic mail and projects as defined
by system administrators (see CSUGRAD handbook).

Unauthorized activities specifically prohibited include, but are not limited to, the
following:

1. Attempting to penetrate system security for any reason, including (but not
limited to) guessing/stealing user or system passwords, deliberately crashing
or attempting to crash the system, attempting to override the system’s accounting
or security routines, and having files intended to or actually causing systems to
behave atypically.  In particular, knowingly infecting any system with a virus,

---

If any student needs special accommodations because of a disability, please
contact the instructor during the first week of classes.

***************