

BHP Ethics FAQs

The BHP Student Ethics Board administered a survey last semester that allowed students to anonymously ask questions related to academic ethics. We have provided answers to the most commonly asked questions with the hope of informing and educating our peers on these sensitive issues. It is imperative that BHP students understand the implications of their actions to avoid facing the severe consequences that might result from committing a violation of academic integrity.

1) If a student has similar assignments in two classes, can the student use work from one class for another class?

Using the same work is unethical unless the student asks **both** professors if he or she can use the same work for the two classes. The **student must receive permission from both professors** in order to use the same work on two different assignments. Some common reasons that professors might choose not to allow students to use the same assignment:

- Simultaneous Assignments
 - The student is doing only half the work by doing the assignment only once, thus devaluing the class and ultimately devaluing the degree.
- Consecutive Assignments
 - If one of the assignments was already graded, the student has an unfair advantage over students in the second class. He or she will have already received feedback from a qualified university professor that other students do not necessarily have access to.

2) Where is the line between collaboration and cheating? Is collaborating among groups for group projects unethical?

The appropriate answer to this question is to ask the professor his or her rules for collaboration within the parameters of the course. Different professors characterize collaboration differently, and they are the best people to answer any questions. According to Student Judicial Services, collusion “includes, but is not limited to, unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit.” Therefore, as a default, students should **not** collaborate with others, unless specifically allowed by the professor. It is important to remember that although unauthorized collaboration might seem beneficial in the short term, it will not prepare students for tests. Many tests are structured to require a thorough understanding of the subject matter, including homework and projects.

3) Is it unethical to use old tests, found either online or from other students, when not explicitly provided by the professor

If the professor does not give back tests, then it is **not** acceptable to use the tests in any form as they have probably been illicitly obtained. On the other hand, if a professor passed back tests to prior students or posted them online, then it is generally acceptable to use these tests as study material. Always check with the professor if there is any question.

4) What are standard procedures for when you know someone is cheating—whom do you contact? What can I do about BHP students cheating outside of BHP classes?

There are two ways to report a violation of the UT Honor Code, whether in a BHP or UT class. In any class, the first method is to talk directly to the professor. The professor can then evaluate and handle the situation, often by filing a report through SJS (as described below). Additionally, students may take the following actions:

In a BHP class, a student can follow the link below and select the “Report an Ethical Violation” tab to fill out a report form: <https://utdirect.utexas.edu/business/bhp/code/> This report will be used to evaluate the situation and determine what steps will be taken. The student may also take steps recommended for non-BHP classes (below).

In a non-BHP class, the student may report an infraction directly to Student Judicial Services (SJS) by calling them and arranging an appointment. The full process is described below as well as on the SJS webpage: <<http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/>>

Student Judicial Services Process:

“If you have reason to believe that a student may have violated University rules, you may contact SJS at 512-471-2841. Arrangements can be made for you to meet with an SJS staff member who will inform you of your options and discuss the situation with you.”

If a student is found in violation of the University Honor Code, disciplinary actions will be taken. These actions can range from a written warning to immediate expulsion. Whatever punishment is decided will become part of the student’s disciplinary record, which is available to “appropriate University officials, faculty, and/or staff members who have a legitimate educational interest in such information.” In essence, BHP professors, faculty, and staff will have access to this information.

5) How often is the BHP Honor Code reviewed/rewritten?

One of the key responsibilities of the BHP Ethics Board is to review the [BHP Honor Code](#) annually for any necessary changes. It is important to note that there is also a separate [UT Honor Code](#).

***As of Fall 2012, the **revised text of the UT Honor Code** is as follows:

“As a student of The University of Texas at Austin, I shall abide by the core values of the University and uphold academic integrity.”

6) I have a question not answered above; what can I do?

You can submit questions [here](#) by selecting the “General Question About Ethics” tab and filling out the form. The Ethics Board will make its best effort to get you an answer in a timely manner.

Final Word of Advice:

If you would not want your professor to see your actions, or you have any doubt at all, do not do it – ask your professor first.