

## CS103 and the Stanford Honor Code

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*Thanks to the entire Fall 2013 CS103 staff for helping out with this handout!*

The Stanford Honor Code is the following:\*

1. The Honor Code is an undertaking of the students, individually and collectively:
  1. that they will not give or receive aid in examinations; that they will not give or receive unpermitted aid in class work, in the preparation of reports, or in any other work that is to be used by the instructor as the basis of grading;
  2. that they will do their share and take an active part in seeing to it that others as well as themselves uphold the spirit and letter of the Honor Code.
2. The faculty on its part manifests its confidence in the honor of its students by refraining from proctoring examinations and from taking unusual and unreasonable precautions to prevent the forms of dishonesty mentioned above. The faculty will also avoid, as far as practicable, academic procedures that create temptations to violate the Honor Code.
3. While the faculty alone has the right and obligation to set academic requirements, the students and faculty will work together to establish optimal conditions for honorable academic work.

This handout explains in detail many of our course policies and how they relate to the Stanford Honor Code. By writing this handout, we hope to explain what we expect from you and what you can expect from us. Additionally, we hope to describe our policies that may “create temptations to violate the Honor Code” and explain why we consider these policies important and reasonable.

*Please note that this handout does not enumerate all permitted and prohibited behaviors.* The point of this handout is to clarify how we apply the Honor Code rather than to specify exactly what we will enforce. As always, please use common sense. If something feels wrong, it probably is. You can always contact us to ask for clarifications if you'd like.

### Collaboration Policies

The majority of your grade in CS103 comes from the nine problem sets. We give problem sets so that you will see how to apply the techniques developed in the course to a variety of problems, as well as to help solidify your understanding of the material.

We are well aware that the problem sets in CS103 are challenging. They will ask you to approach difficult problems and each problem set will push you in ways the preceding problem sets did not. Consequently, it is permissible to discuss the questions on the problem set with other students. We hope that this will give you a chance to bounce ideas off of one another. However, if you do so, we require the following:

- **You must list the names of all other students you work with.** That way, if we notice that your problem set is very similar to another student's problem set, we know that you did indeed work with that person.

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\* Taken from <http://studentaffairs.stanford.edu/communitystandards/policy/honor-code>. It wouldn't be much of a handout on the Stanford Honor Code if I didn't provide a citation, would it? ☺

- **You must not share written answers.** You are absolutely welcome to discuss the problems at a high level: discussing the general ideas behind the solution, working through examples to try to find a pattern, reviewing relevant terms and definitions, etc. are all perfectly acceptable. If when working in a group you have a “Eureka!” moment together and figure out the key idea, great! However, when you begin writing up your solutions, we expect you to do so on your own. For example, you should not work in a group to develop single answer and then have each group member submit that answer.
- **You must write up your own solutions.** One of the important skills you will develop in CS103 is the ability to write clear, well-structured, logically sound proofs. Accordingly, we expect you to write up your own answers to all of the problems on your own. This is mostly a corollary of the previous bullet point (if you aren't sharing answers, then your solutions should be your own). For example, you should not write up proofs in a group by working “sentence by sentence” and discussing what to write at each step.

Note that no collaboration is permitted at all on the exams. Exam policies are discussed in more detail later on.

## Using External Sources

When working on the problem sets, if you consult any resources other than those listed in the Problem Set Policies handout, you need to provide a citation of this fact. This can be brief (“I read through *Introduction to Automata, Languages, and Computation* by Hopcroft, Motwani, and Ullman when working on this problem set,”) as long as you indicate this.

Some of the problems we will ask on the problem sets are classic problems or famous results. We expect you not to search for solutions to these problems in existing sources; that's just dishonest and entirely defeats the purpose of the problem sets. If you do come across a solution to a problem set question in an external source, you must indicate this in your problem set submission. Because the problem sets are designed to help you practice with the material and assess your understanding of the material, we may assess a penalty if your answers are derived from external sources (though you will not be guilty of plagiarism).

## A Note on Question Reuse

When designing problem sets, we try to curate and design problems that are interesting, explore new approaches to problem solving, and focus on different aspects of the course material. It is difficult to design problem sets that meet these design goals. Consequently, we often reuse problems from quarter to quarter. In doing so, we hope to make the problem sets as interesting and effective as possible. Reusing problems also allows us to develop fair grading criteria and for the teaching staff to more effectively help you in office hours in case you get stuck.

Every quarter, we release solutions to the problem sets both electronically and in hardcopy. Each quarter, we remove electronic copies of the solution sets from the course website before they are automatically backed up by Stanford servers so that they are not accessible in future quarters.

That said, we know that it is still possible to gain access to old solution sets (usually in hardcopy). We consider it a serious violation of the Honor Code to look at any of these solution sets. One of the most common ways in which students violate the Honor Code in CS103 is by referring to old solution sets or copying answers from those solution sets. ***We are adept at spotting solutions that are copied or derived from old solution sets.*** We treat copying answers from old problem set solutions as a serious violation of the Stanford Honor Code. Similarly, because we reuse problems from quarter to quarter, we are aware that it is possible to look at graded problem sets from previous quarters. You must not consult any graded problem sets from previous quarters.

## Exam Policies

Although assignments account for a large fraction of your grade in CS103, the midterm and final examinations account collectively for 40% of your total grade. These exams are designed to test your ability to work on problems on your own.

The exams in CS103 are open-book and open-note. You will be permitted to use a computer during the exams, but when doing so are only permitted to look at materials from the course website, online copies of the recommended readings, or notes and other materials for which you yourself are the original author.

We've designed the exams to be open-book and open-note for two main reasons. First, CS103 covers a lot of material, and we hope to make it easier for you to look up any terms or definitions that may arise or to look at sample problems related to those on the exam. Second, we hope that CS103 will train you to think mathematically. Therefore, the exams will not be recall-based, but will test your ability to solve new problems or explore new applications of the material.

The exams are open-computer because (as you'll see), many of the course materials for CS103 are given in the form of large slide decks. It would be an enormous waste of paper to expect every student in CS103 to print out hundreds of pages of slides for each exam. Similarly, later in the quarter the course website will have several tools available (for example, tools for designing regular expressions and finite automata), and we want you to be able to use these tools on the exam.

That said, we are quite serious about the restriction on computer usage on the exam. In the past, our policy was “open-computer, closed-network” and we allowed students to use their computer however they wanted as long as they did not use a network connection. This backfired when a student downloaded Wikipedia pages relevant to the course and then copied cached Wikipedia content on the exam. Since then, we have explicitly spelled out what computer behaviors are permissible on the exam. To summarize:

- You *may* look at anything on the course website.
- You *may* look at electronic copies of the recommended readings.
- You *may* look at notes for which you are the original author.
- You ***must not*** use the computer for anything else.