**Transcript for School of Computer Science Academic Integrity Presentation**

**Slide 1**

Hi I’m April Nejedly. I am the Academic Integrity Officer in the School of Computer Science and I’m here to tell Academic Integrity.  Oh…. I can tell you are sooo disappointed.  I’m sure your thinking this is going to be a snooze fest.  But this will only take about 10 minutes, so hang in there.

**Slide 2**

In this presentation I will tell you what academic integrity is, why you should care about it, and how you can keep out of trouble when it comes academic misconduct.

**Slide 3**

Academic Integrity is a code of ethics that preserves the honesty and intellectual standards of research and learning in academia. Simply, put having academic integrity means being honest and ethical about the work and research you do at university.

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In Practice Academic Integrity means no copying, you only submit your own original work

-not code copied from friends, group mates, strangers

-don’t take code from sites like GeeksforGeeks or GitHub.

-don’t get code or answers from online tutoring companies like Chegg.

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Having Academic Integrity also means not cheating on tests or assignments. Just to clarify because I’ve had students say they didn’t know this: Asking someone for the answer to a question on a test or assignment for marks is cheating. You can’t text or email a friend for the answer. You can’t post a question on Chegg during a test and say I was going to look at the answer after the test. If it is for marks, then the answer has to come from your brain alone. You are supposed to be demonstrating what you know.

You are also not allowed to falsify your program outputs.

You always need to cite your sources.

Having integrity means more but I’m short on time. Later I will tell you where you can learn more.

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Why should you care about academic integrity?

1. It promotes learning. Doing the work, yourself is how you learn best. If you copy someone else’s work, you don’t learn. Worse you make things harder for yourself because in computing many things build on previous knowledge.

2. It creates trust. When you act with integrity, people know they can trust you.

3. When you act with integrity you uphold the standards of the university.

4. And that means the degree you are awarded is valuable.

Reputations are important and all of us contribute to the reputation of the university and its students. Yep, when you go out and get a job people will know you are a UoG student. When you shine so do your peers, and when they shine so do you and word gets around.

But really all this integrity talk is kind of abstract, long term, general. Like seriously, why should you care, now?

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You should care because in the School of Computer Science integrity is paramount, and WE CHECK. Pardon me?

In many of the courses we check for cheating and copying on a regular basis using a software called MOSS. Your assignments get uploaded and the program compares them for similarity.

Maybe you think you’re a smart cheater and you:

* Change variable, function names
* Use different Tabbing, adding whitespace
* Re-arranging functions, lines
* Changing, removing comments

MOSS is NOT fooled by any of these things.

Even in courses not using MOSS we still check for integrity and it is easy to spot cheating.

-all of the sudden the code become brilliantly good

-the TAs remember marking this code already and they check

-the code has things in it that are unusual

Bottom line, the software, TAs, profs and I are always checking for misconduct. Seriously I was hired to spend 50% of my days investigating integrity cases. It is what I do. That is how important academic integrity is in the School of Computer Science. This isn’t high school anymore where copy pasting and referencing rules may have been relaxed.

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Since having integrity is so important, there strict penalties for academic misconduct.

The penalties for misconduct include:

-an official warning and a statement on note on your transcript

-getting a zero on the assignment, in the course

- expulsion from the university

-if the offense was bad enough, a revocation of a degree if the student has already graduated.

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There are some things you should not about the misconduct policies:

-The penalties depend on the severity of your offence. Repeat offenders get harsher sentences.

-Misconduct charges are brought against all parties involved - not just the person who copied, but also to the person whose work was copied. So, it is important to keep your work secure.

-Claiming ignorance will not be accepted as an excuse because it is the responsibility of all students to educate themselves about integrity.

-Also, you cannot drop a course if you are under investigation for misconduct. Also, you can’t drop a course if you have been charged with misconduct. That course and your grade in it will stay on your transcript forever.

At this point when I was rehearsing this presentation, my teenage daughter said ‘I’m not stupid you know.  I’m not going to be dishonest.’  Which I totally believe.  I believe you all have good hearts too but…maintaining academic integrity in computing science is almost extra hard and tricky.  What?!

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The first challenge to maintaining academic integrity is copying code.Copying code is sooo easy, especially when you are all stressed out. The solution is to not copy. Only use your own work.

Talk to your TA and prof before small problems become big so you are not tempted to cheat out of desperation.

Now we all know you wouldn’t copy, but there is a chance that if tempted a classmate may cheat. Say you take a quick break and leave your computer unattended, unlocked – just for a few minutes, getting something to drink or a snack…you would never know someone went on your computer stole your code until you are hauled into the Dean’s office for misconduct..

- log out

- restrict permissions – on your linux account so others can’t see

-don’t share your passwords, you have no idea how many times I’ve heard “my roommate had my password and they must have….. “

- keep code to yourself – only share with TA and prof, don’t email friends, don’t post on web

The next challenge to academic integrity is collaboration. Working with other people is how we learn best. It is why profs give you group work. But you talk, their idea goes in your head your write your assignment and it looks exactly like your partners and that is misconduct.

The solution to this is to ask the prof what exactly he or she means by group work – do you all hand in one assignment with everyone’s name on it? Can you talk but everyone has to produce an original and different piece of work? Group work means different things to different people so ALWAYS ask you prof.

If you are going to meet/collaborate, meet without a computer to avoid writing the same code

Avoid writing pseudocode or drawing figures that approximate the program too closely when planning on paper or a whiteboard

It is ok to discuss general strategies, sub-problems, requirements, etc. without fine-grained detail that might be close to code.

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PROBLEM -bugs, getting stuck. Sometimes you just can’t figure out why your code won’t work. You’ve worked on it for hours, gahhh, there must be a typo, a missing bracket, something but you can’t see it. What do you do? Ask your friend for help because that is what friends are for. (buzzer sound). If you show your code to your friend, it goes into their head, shows up in their assignment intentionally or not and you are both busted for misconduct. OR Your friends are most likely to ‘fix’ your code by telling you how they coded it - and that resulting in you copying and misconduct as well.

SOLUTION -ask TA, ask prof – they can help you without coding for you. That is what they are trained to do teach, not do it for you.

PROBLEM –pre-existing code. There is a lot of code out there – libraries of code in fact. Sometimes the prof even gives you code to use. But if you use it, that could be misconduct, remember copying code bad? What are you to do?

SOLUTION -ask the prof what you can and cannot use and how you can use it. For example, can you look at geeksforgeeks and github code to help teach yourself, but not include their code and answers in the assignments? You need to ask your prof.

PROBLEM –referencing. To maintain integrity, you always need to cite and reference the sources of information you use. Problem is many high schools don’t really talk much about referencing. Also, in computer science there isn’t really one standard way to reference so how are you supposed to know how and when to reference?

SOLUTION -ask the prof how and when they want you to cite and reference.

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It is your responsibility to make sure you understand what academic integrity. Claiming you didn’t know you were committing misconduct will not excuse you. So, to help you the School of Computer Science has put together an online module and quiz that you need to work through.

Go to the SoCS moodle, login with your university id and password, under the list of courses you will find the ‘Academic Integrity in Computer Science’.

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What are the take home messages?

Integrity means being honest and upholding academic standards.

Practically that means no copying.

You need to care about integrity because you will learn more, your degree will have value and you will avoid penalties.

To maintain your integrity:

-submit your own work

-protect your code

-ask ther TA and prof for guidance

-complete the integrity module.

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Just so you see I too practice academic integrity. Here are my references. My citations were the bracketed numbers throughout my presentation.

If you have any questions about integrity you are welcome to ask me, April Nejedly, the Academic Integrity Officer in the School of Computer Science. My alter ego is the Undergraduate Program Counsellor for the School.

That concludes my presentation on academic integrity.

Thanks so much for your attention.