

Plagiarism

I am a fourth year student. I committed plagiarism during my fourth year during the winter semester. Our class was assigned a project during the second week of the semester. It was worth ten percent of our final grade. The professor gave us a month to do the project. He warned us many times that we should work on it early because it was a long and tedious project and midterms would be coming up during the due date of the project.

I tried to take his advice and started early on it. I found myself stuck on various parts of the project. When two weeks passed I wasn't even close to being half way done. A friend of mine took this class the previous year, so I went to him asking for help. He did help me on some parts of the project but he forgot most of it. I asked him for his project that he handed in the previous year to use as a reference. He gave it to me in hopes of helping me finish my project.

Once I knew I had a finished product I didn't worry about my project anymore. I left it on the back burner and concentrated on my other courses. Midterms were coming up as well and time to finish my project was coming to an end. Ultimately, I only gave myself less than a week to finish my project and found myself not being able to complete it. I became **desperate** and **decided to use my friend's project** that he handed in the previous year. I altered a few instructions in his project to make it different and handed it in on the due date.

Two weeks later we received our marks back and I **ended up with a zero** as my grade. The professor was able to find that my project was a copy of someone else's through a computer program he had. I thought that receiving a zero as my grade would be the end of it. But it wasn't. My case was referred to the **Academic Integrity Office**.

I told the Academic Integrity Officer the whole truth behind what happened and my reasons for the misconduct. I knew **if I lied** it would get me into **deeper trouble**. I had to wait for the results of my punishment since it had to be reviewed by the Vice-Provost, Students. Fortunately, in the end I wasn't suspended or forced to withdraw from the University. I settled my case with educational sanctions (community service, letters of apology, this testimonial, the submission of the original project, and an essay on the negative impact of plagiarism).

I regret that I ever decided to hand in someone else's work. Instead, I should have handed in what I had done and accept whatever mark I would receive from my own work. I still passed the course but now I have to **face the consequences** of my actions.

My advice to other students is this: **Think before you act** and accept what you can and cannot accomplish. Be true to yourself and if you ever face a situation where you think you can get away with cheating or being unethical think about the consequences you could possibly face.

- Engineering Student
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