

Collaboration vs. Collusion

Collaboration

Working together with permission to learn and grow.

Collusion

Unauthorized cooperation resulting in academic dishonesty.

KEY DIFFERENCES

Collaboration: Openly acknowledged and approved by the instructor.

Collusion: Hidden from instructors and against course rules.

Collaboration: Intended for shared learning and growth.

Collusion: Done to gain an unfair advantage or due to confusion about boundaries or lack of instruction clarity.

Collaboration: Individual contributions are still valued and evident.

Collusion: Individual effort is compromised or misrepresented.

COMMON COLLUSION EXAMPLES

- Working with a classmate on homework but forgetting or choosing not to disclose it when required.
- Sharing submitted assignments, or exam specifics across course sections or semesters.
- Sending completed work to a friend as a “reference.”
- Failure to actively contribute to group projects.
- Using unpermitted AI to finish completion-based assignments, especially if it is without the other team members’ knowledge.

Collaboration policies may vary across courses and assignments. Make sure to always check your syllabi and ask your professors before collaborating.