

Policies Regarding Online Collaboration Tools

1.0 Introduction:

At the time of this writing, a plethora of online collaboration tools have been developed that allow easy access, sharing, and collaboration of source code and other documents online. Popular examples at the time of this writing include Google Code, Google Docs, github, bitbucket, and SourceForge, though many others exist. While the use of revision control in student projects is strongly recommended, there are certain guidelines and rules students should be aware of when working with online collaboration tools. These guidelines and rules are listed below.

2.0 Course Rules Concerning Online Collaboration Tools:

There are a few rules pertaining to the use of online collaboration tools. These are fairly straightforward, and listed below:

1. Student teams are allowed to use online collaboration tools at the sole discretion of the ECE477 course staff. This right may be amended or revoked at any time.
2. Online collaboration tools are not an acceptable alternative to the provided student websites and laboratory notebooks. If an online collaboration tool is used, students are still expected to host all relevant project information on their student website and keep laboratory notebooks subject to the course guidelines on laboratory notebooks. Use of automated scripts to populate course websites and notebooks is acceptable, but it is the responsibility of the student team members to ensure that the scripts work correctly and transfer the necessary data to the course website.
3. Student teams are expected to perform their own work over the course of ECE477. Therefore, all code contributions to an ECE477 team's student-written code should come from team members. Code improvements and merges from third parties during a team's ECE477 semester. Students or teams in violation of this rule may be subject to academic dishonesty actions and disciplinary measures.

3.0 Guidelines Concerning Online Collaboration Tools:

In addition to rules concerning online collaboration tools, the course staff has a few recommendations concerning such tools. These are:

1. If any aspect of the online collaboration course policy is unclear, students are encouraged to contact course staff for further clarification
2. It is suggested that students utilize an organized, consistent directory structure in their repositories. Doing so is professional and makes files easy to find and can simplify commits to a repository.