Unauthorised Academic File Sharing – Guidelines for UCD Students

File sharing occurs where academic lecture materials, notes, assessment tasks, answers, and responses are shared, swapped, and traded over Internet-based sites in fee, free, or barter (credit/exchange) arrangements.

Each year academic staff produce original teaching materials to support your learning. These materials are provided for study purposes only and are not for sale or distribution outside the University.

Sharing University provided materials (including lecture slides, exam papers, handouts, etc) via external platforms is strictly prohibited in the **UCD Academic Integrity Policy** and the **Student Code of Conduct** which highlights the practice to be a serious form of academic misconduct.

The practice is also considered to be a breach of copyright. Copyright is important in helping the University to protect the value of intellectual and creative work of our academic community and therefore all copyright infringements are taken very seriously by the University.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Academic file-sharing?
Academic file sharing is the academically unethical and illegal distribution of copyrighted course materials, assignment documents, and assessments.

1.   **What is university owned material?**
The following are examples of university owned material, which includes, but is not limited to:
- lecture slides
- course notes or handouts
- recordings of lectures
- examination or test papers / questions and answers
- external examiner reports
- journal articles / book chapters (your lectures may use materials from other sources in class such as library licenced journal articles or book chapters. Do not share this material outside of class without contacting your lecturer).

2.   **What will happen if I share university material?**
- You should avoid uploading any university material to external information sharing websites of platforms services such as CourseHero/Studocu/Chegg.
- Where the University is made aware that UCD content has been shared we will contact the relevant platform/website owners to instruct that the material be removed immediately.
- Where students are identified as engaging in this activity may be subject to the University's disciplinary procedures, under the UCD Student Code of Conduct and the Student Discipline Procedure.

3.   **Can I share my own work?**
File Sharing websites are designed for students to upload their own work, such as essays and assignments. You should be mindful that although you may wish to help others uploading your work facilitates other students to engage in academic misconduct. You may also be at risk of allegations of collusion if the University's plagiarism detection software identifies similarities between your work and others.