Giving and Receiving Help in General Chemistry I (BC2001x)
What is ok, and what is a violation of the Honor Code?

Learning chemistry can be challenging, and everyone needs some help. Studying together can be a great way to learn chemistry. We encourage you to join a study group (formal or informal) to study chemistry together. Even if your study partners are not at exactly the same level as you, all can benefit from working together. Explaining a difficult concept to someone else is an excellent way to clarify and reinforce it. But think about what you are doing: supplying an answer is seldom useful in the long run unless you have also conveyed understanding.

When coursework contributes to your grade, as in lab reports and weekly hand-in problem sets, it is only fair that we evaluate the work that you have done *on your own* based on your understanding. One reason for collecting and grading these weekly hand-in problems is to take some pressure off exams: it gives you a chance to show what you can do when time pressure is not an issue. But for this to work fairly, you must use careful judgment and be very sure that you are submitting your own work. To that end, the following policies apply.

Weekly practice problems (on Courseworks). These problems are not handed in and graded. Answers are also on Courseworks; you should check your own work. Feel free to work on these assigned problems, along with any problems in the textbook or any other book with a study group, a tutor, or anyone else. Faculty office hours are also a good place to come for help on these. Mastering problems is the key to success in chemistry. Understanding someone else's answer is a good first step, but you need to develop your own skills so you can start and finish such problems on your own. A sensible combination of group work and solo studying is strongly recommended.

Weekly hand-in problem. One problem set each week, not taken from the book, is handed in and graded. Since the contributes to your grade, it must be your own work. Thus **it is an honor code violation to give or receive help from anyone but Prof. Chapman on the hand-in problems**. If you need help, there are a couple of alternatives. Look in the practice problems, your textbook, or another chemistry book to find a problem that uses similar concepts; then ask anyone for help on that problem. Or come to Prof. Chapman's daily office hours or problem sessions. She will not tell you exactly how to do the problem, but will offer hints. To repeat: **you may not look at or work with anyone else's hand-in problem**. After the problems have been graded and returned, feel free to discuss them with others as part of your reviewing.

Lab Reports. We believe it is very important to have each student do her own lab work. We want everyone to gain basic skills in a chemistry lab, and from past experience, when students work in partners or groups, not everyone learns equally. That is why you have your own drawer and equipment and do you own experiments. What parts of lab work can be done together? When you are preparing for lab, feel free to discuss procedures and consult with friends about choosing options. During lab, while there are at least two instructors present to answer your questions, it is perfectly fine to ask a neighbor for a quick bit of advice. However keep in mind that your neighbor may be confused, and could inadvertently give you incorrect advice.

When writing your lab reports, if is fine to discuss things with each other generally, or to ask someone to help you understand a difficult concept, but it is not ok to copy from each other's lab books. Thus **it is an honor code violation to use or even look at another student's laboratory notebook while preparing your report**. Faculty are available every day to help you. As with problem sets, they will guide you, but they will neither check nor do your work.

If you have any questions or concerns about these policies, please do not hesitate to come discuss them with your instructors.