

Abstract of the Honor Council
Case 8, Fall 2012
December 2, 2012

Members Present:

Trey Burns (presiding), Isabelle Lelogeais (clerk), Adriana Bracho, David French, Abby Endler, Seth Lauer, Jessica Mintz, Mitch Massey, Shep Patterson, Michael Meng (observing)

Ombuds: Aubrey Sirtautas, Jamie Smith (Observing)

Letter of Accusation:

The Honor Council received a letter accusing Student A of plagiarism in a lower Humanities course.

Evidence Submitted:

- Letter of Accusation
- Student A's written statement
- Course Syllabus
- Student A's Final Essay (with accuser comments)
- Investigator Notes
- Student A's Essay with Investigator Notes
- Sparknotes Pages for Various Portions of Frankenstein
- Student A's Prewriting with Professor Comments
- Student A's Notebook

Plea:

Student A pled "In Violation."

Testimony:

Student A began by expressing remorse for her actions, and continued to explain that the resource she copied from was instrumental to her understanding of the text throughout the reading process. She stipulated that she utilized the quotations without citation because she thought they expressed her ideas perfectly, and was worried about length. When asked about why she did not include citations for the quoted material, Student A said that she did not believe the resource was of the appropriate caliber to be included in an academic paper. In closing, Student A said that she was extremely sorry for violating the Honor Code and her teacher's trust.

Verdict Deliberations:

Council members agreed that a preponderance of the evidence supported that a violation occurred because portions of the paper were evidently plagiarized and Student A admitted openly to violating the Honor Code.

Vote: Does a preponderance of the evidence support that a violation occurred?

Yes: 9

No: 0

Abstentions: 0

The Council then discussed whether or not Student A committed the violation. Council members saw no evidence to suggest that Student A had not committed the violation in question.

Vote: Does a preponderance of the evidence support that Student A is “In Violation?”

Yes: 9

No: 0

Abstentions: 0

Penalty Deliberations:

Council members opened by discussing mitigating circumstances. All Council members agreed that Student A’s cooperation warranted mitigation, and that the amount of the paper that had been plagiarized was small enough to warrant mitigation. Some members also decided to consider the weight of the assignment, which was 10%, as a mitigating factor.

Council members saw no reason to aggravate the penalty in this case.

Council members agreed that a one letter grade reduction in the course was appropriate, because although Student A did knowingly plagiarize, the mitigating factors at play were substantial.

Vote: What is the appropriate penalty for Student A?

F in the course: 0

3 letter grade reduction: 0

2 letter grade reduction: 0

1 letter grade reduction: 9

Letter of Reprimand 0

Abstentions: 0

Decision:

The Honor Council thus finds Student A “In Violation” of the Honor Code and recommends that she receive a one letter grade reduction in the course. A Prior Violation Flag is also attached to her record.

Time of testimony and deliberations: 25 minutes

Respectfully submitted,

Isabelle Lelogeais

Clerk