

Abstract of the Honor Council
Case 23, Spring 2013
February 20, 2013

Members Present:

Trey Burns (presiding), Isabelle Lelogeais (clerk), Hurst Williamson, Likeleli Seitlheko, John Cavallo, Sam Kwiatkowski, Mick Pryor, Shayak Sengupta, Nick Uhm

Ombuds: Gabe Breternitz, Sara Fraser (observing)

Letter of Accusation:

The Honor Council received a letter accusing Student A of unauthorized collaboration in a lower level Chemistry course.

Evidence Submitted:

- Letter of Accusation
- Student A's written statement
- Student B's written statement
- Course Syllabus
- Student A's Lab
- Student B's Lab
- Professor Deposition

Plea:

Student A pled "Not in Violation."

Student B pled "In Violation."

Testimony:

Student A began by saying that when he was running to class, Student B asked for help producing graphs for a lab report. Student A gave Student B his graphs as a model for how to complete his own work with his own data. He continued to say that because their data were different, he did not believe showing his graphs to Student B would constitute an Honor Code Violation. He emphasized that he did not give Student B permission to copy or turn in his graphs, and had no knowledge of the fact. He said that the other notable similarity between his lab report and that of Student B resulted from his consulting Student B about the general procedure for a specific problem, which he does not believe constitutes an Honor Code Violation. He never saw Student B's lab report, and stated that they only discussed the problem in general.

Student B believed he was in violation for turning in the graphs, but not to sharing calculations. Student B began by addressing the calculation singled out by the professor, and demonstrating how he did his calculation. He said that Student A had asked him in general about the procedure for the specific calculation, but that Student A never saw his lab report. He then stated that he did turn in Student A's graphs because he did not have enough time to finish his own. He was aware that submitting another student's work is against the Honor Code.

Verdict Deliberations:

Council members believed that a preponderance of the evidence supported that a violation occurred because Student B admitted to turning in the work of Student A as his own, without permission, and in direct violation of the Honor Code.

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

Yes: 9

No: 0

Abstentions: 0

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

Yes: 9

No: 0

Abstentions: 0

Vote: Does a preponderance of the evidence support that a violation occurred in the pre-lab?

Yes: 0

No: 9

Abstentions: 0

The Council then discussed whether or not Student A committed the violation. Members referenced the fact that Student A was within the Honor Code to show Student B his graphs based upon the fact that collaboration and discussion were allowed as long as students produced their own work. In addition, the professor deposition states that she does not believe that showing another

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

Yes: 0

No: 9

Abstentions: 0

The Council then discussed whether or not Student B committed a violation. Members agreed that Student B submitting the work of Student A constituted an Honor Code violation because the course Honor Code policy requires that all students produce their own work.

Vote: Does a preponderance of the evidence support that Student B is "In Violation?"

Yes: 9

No: 0

Abstentions: 0

Penalty Deliberations:

Council members opened by discussing mitigating circumstances. Most members agreed that they would mitigate for the small weight of the assignment, and some members

decided to mitigate for the amount of the assignment in violation. Most Council members believed that a 1 letter grade reduction was the appropriate penalty in this case. Some members thought that the blatant nature of the violation required a more punitive penalty, while some members felt that the small weight of the assignment required a less punitive penalty.

Vote: What is the appropriate penalty for Student B?

F in the course:	0
3 letter grade reduction:	0
2 letter grade reduction:	2
1 letter grade reduction:	6
Letter of Reprimand	1
Abstentions:	0

Decision:

The Honor Council thus finds Student A “Not in Violation” of the Honor Code. The Honor Council thus finds Student B “In Violation” and recommends that he receive a one letter grade reduction. A Prior Violation Flag is also attached to his record.

Time of testimony and deliberations: 52 minutes

Respectfully submitted,
Isabelle Lelogeais
Clerk