Abstract of the Honor Council
Case #45-10, Spring 2015
11.30.2015

Members Present:
Alex Metcalf (presiding), Isaac Schultz (clerk), Mario Aragon, Natalie Swanson, Isaac Batt, Bradley Hamilton, Sara Meadow, Allie Salter, Yash Tarkunde

Ombuds: Carey Wang

Letter of Accusation:
The Honor Council received a letter accusing Student L and Student R of plagiarism for a lower level COMP course. The Chair read the Letter of Accusation aloud in full.

Evidence Submitted:
- Letter of Accusation
- Course syllabus
- Collection of screenshots of stratocode
- Student L's written statement
- Student R's written statement
- Student L code
- Student R code
- Witness testimony

Plea:
Student L pled "Not in violation."
Student R pled "Not in violation."

Testimony:

Student L discussed his actions following the hearing. Afterwards, he and Student R went through the JAR files, expanding them and using the variable names therein. The JAR files, according to Student L, were meant to be read; students were encouraged to do so by the professor. Student L declared that a lot of the similar code introduced in the investigative meeting was interface provided by the professors, rather than code that was copied off of one another. Student L noted that he and Student R did shoot ideas back and forth at one another while composing their respective assignments, (e.g. "what do you think this class does…?") rather than actually exchanging code. Student L introduced a witness, who was sworn in. The witness had apparently worked with both Student L and Student R on a variety of COMP assignments, and saw the two students collaborate often (which is encouraged by many professors), although no code was ever exchanged.

Student R stated that whenever there was a COMP assignment, he and Student L would meet and collaborate. He further proclaimed that some evidence specifically pointed out as suspicious was, in fact, taken directly from the provided files. Within the MOSS files, some code that was extremely similar between students was so because it was not written

by either of them, Student R noted. Student R stated that Stratocode does not record a code history, so Student R noted that he was inhibited from going back and checking specifics as to what he may have written. The student stated that many people checked the JAR files because they gave class names and allowed students to avoid writing code in Stratocode, which students disliked due to frequent "breaking down". Student R said he did not know if some of the code was starting code or code that he or Student L wrote, because it has been so long since the assignment.

Student L was reintroduced, and noted that the code discussed at the end of Student R's testimony was written by him, and not starting code. Student L then declared that no code without comments on it could be his, as the professor deducted points whenever students did not provide comments on each individual line of code. That being said, Student L also notes he does comment on some code that is not his. Student L stated he wrote his entire code on Stratocode. Addressing the similarity between comments (specific comments were the same verbatim), Student L explained that it probably was not their code, in that case. Student L requested to see the original data files, because he wanted to see the reason all the comments were the exact same. The provided code, Student L notes, served as a starting point (or an interface) to write code. Student L asserted that he could not have written the comments in the "public array list" section because the comments were exactly the same. This led Student L to interpret the code as provided code. Student L proceeded to make his closing statement: the professor provided much of the "flagged code", and code analysis cannot be made due to Stratocode being taken offline.

Student R entered the room, and wished to add that "naming conventions" and "constructor conventions" were followed by both he and Student L. These conventions were provided by the instructor. Student R then made his closing statement; that no code was exchanged between the students despite the two meeting together to collaborate on assignments and discuss how to approach problems therein.

The Council's consensus was that a majority of the code under question was provided code that was apparently acceptable to use. The Council decided that no violation occurred.

Vote #1: Does a preponderance of the evidence support that a violation occurred?
Yes: 0
No: 9
Abstentions: 0

Vote #2: Does a preponderance of the evidence support that Student L is "In Violation?"
Yes: 0
No: 9
Abstentions: 0

Vote #3: Does a preponderance of the evidence support that Student R is "In Violation?"
Yes: 0

No: 9
Abstentions: 0

Decision:
The Honor Council thus finds Student L and Student R "Not in Violation" of the Honor Code.

Time of testimony and deliberations: 52 minutes

Respectfully submitted,
Isaac Schultz
Clerk