

Abstract of the Honor Council
Case #45-6, Spring 2015
October 27, 2015

Members Present:

Alex Metcalf (presiding), Emilia Duno (clerk), Nikki Thadani, Sarah Meadow, Reese Rosenthal, Kristin Sweeney, Komal Agarwal, Elliot Baerman, Billy Rothwell

Ombuds: Katie Jenson

Letter of Accusation:

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

Evidence Submitted:

- Letter of Accusation
- Student F's written statement
- Student M's written statement
- Course Syllabus
- Professor Explanation
- Assignment A7 Description
- Student F Additional Statement
- Student F Code
- Student M Code

Plea:

Student F pled "Not in Violation."

Student M pled "In Violation".

Testimony:

Student M stated that he began work on assignment 7 early and the day before it was due he found that he was having trouble with some spatial reasoning that was needed to finish the assignment. He spoke with Student F about how to fix the problems in his code and at some point during this conversation Student F got up and left to do something else. Student M tried to run his code one more time and when it didn't work he went to Student F's computer to look at his code and generated a clone link and sent it to himself. This was done without Student F's knowledge or permission. He then completed the assignment using Student F's code.

A Council member asked Student M how much he copied and pasted from Student F's code. He stated that he copied the end of the assignment which was a harder portion and some structural things throughout the code, as his test cases were not working beforehand.

Student F stated that he was the victim of a theft and he had no knowledge of the actions of Student M.

Witness statements claimed that Student F spent a lot of time in TA sessions, and that Student F had a good understanding of the course material. The witness, a TA in the course, recalled seeing Student F consistently working on course assignments, gradually progressing through pieces of each assignment.

The two witnesses also discussed character testimony of Student F that the council could not consider.

Verdict Deliberations:

Council members believed that a preponderance of the evidence supported that a violation occurred because of the plea and confession of Student M.

Straw Poll #1: 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 F committed the violation. Given the pleas of the two accused students and the nature of the violation, the Council determined that Student F was not in violation of the Honor Code.

Vote #2: Does a preponderance of the evidence support that Student F is “In Violation?”

Yes: 0
 No: 9
 Abstentions: 0

The Council then discussed whether or not Student M committed the violation. Given the confession of Student M, the Council determined that Student M was in violation of the Honor Code.

Vote #3: Does a preponderance of the evidence support that Student M is “In Violation?”

Yes: 9
 No: 0
 Abstentions: 0

Penalty Deliberations:

Council members opened by discussing mitigating circumstances. The council decided that they would mitigate for cooperation as Student M provided significant information that allowed the council to make a decision that would not have been possible without his cooperation.

The council decided to aggravate for the theft of another student's work. Student M committed a serious violation of the Honor Code in stealing the work of another student in the course without his knowledge. Student M knowingly incriminated another student in his violation of the Honor Code, even going so far as to leave a traceable trail back to Student F (in the form of sending a stratocode link of Student F's code to himself).

The council discussed that, when taking into account the aggravating factor of the theft of another student's work as well as the fact that Student M was so cooperative, either a 3 letter grade reduction or an F in the course would be most appropriate. Upon taking into account that two violations really took place, first being the sending of code and second being the plagiarism of the code, the council decided that the F in the course was most appropriate.

Vote #4: What is the appropriate penalty for Student A?

F in the course and 3 semesters of suspension:	0
F in the course and 2 semesters of suspension:	0
F in the course and 1 semester of suspension:	0
F in the course:	7
3 letter grade reduction:	2
2 letter grade reduction:	0
1 letter grade reduction:	0
2/3 letter grade reduction	0
1/3 letter grade reduction	0
Letter of Reprimand	0
Abstentions:	0

Decision:

The Honor Council, thus finds Student F "Not In Violation" of the Honor Code.

The Honor Council thus finds Student M "In Violation" of the Honor Code and recommends that he receive an F in the course. A Prior Violation Flag is also attached to his record.

The council then moved to consider Student M's final penalty for this class as he was also found in violation for a separate Honor Council case (in the same course) previously. The previous panel recommended that he receive a two letter-grade reduction for that violation.

Based on the lack of access to the material and nature of the first violation the council did not feel comfortable increasing the severity of the penalty for Student M. The Council thus applied an overall penalty of an F in the course for Student M.

Time of testimony and deliberations: 2:45

Respectfully submitted,
Emilia Duno
Clerk