Abstract of the Honor Council
Case 39, Spring 2015
April 21, 2015

Members Present:
Alex Metcalf (presiding), Helen Sharpless (clerk), Michael Jin, Owais Syed, Maria Montalvo, Emilia Duno, Clark Zha, Sam Kwiatkowski, Natalie Swanson

Ombuds: Natalie Danckers

Letter of Accusation:
The Honor Council received a letter accusing Student A of receiving unauthorized aid for a lower level engineering course. The Chair read the Letter of Accusation aloud in full.

Evidence Submitted:
- Letter of Accusation
- Student A’s Written Statement
- Course Syllabus
- Course Policies
- Student A’s Homework
- Instructor’s Homework Key From Previous Year
- Professor’s Statement

Plea:
Student A pled “In Violation.”

Testimony:
Student A said in his opening statement that Clear Cache was used in another engineering course to compile documents. Clear Cache contained a folder for the class in which he was accused. The folder had previous homework keys.

Clear Cache is a file sharing service provided by the University. The student used the answer key found in the Clear Cache folder to complete the homework assignment which is under investigation.

Student A said in his closing statement that he used the Clear Cache server to complete the homework assignment. He said that it is a service provided by Rice and required a netID to access.

Verdict Deliberations:
Council members believed that a preponderance of the evidence supported that a violation occurred because the Honor Code of the course is explicit in the Course Syllabus and because of Student A’s testimony.
The Council then discussed whether or not Student A committed the violation. The Council saw no evidence to the contrary that Student A was in violation because he was the only student involved and his testimony corroborated the evidence.

Vote #1: 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. Most of the Council mitigated for the weight of the assignment. Some of the Council did not consider any mitigating factors.

Council members then discussed aggravating circumstances. The Council did not consider any aggravating factors.

Members of the Council discussed their thoughts on the appropriate penalty. Members believed a 2 letter grade reduction was appropriate because there should be a punitive aspect to the penalty. The student chose to commit a violation rather than receive a failing grade on the assignment.

Vote #2: 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: 0
3 letter grade reduction: 0
2 letter grade reduction: 9
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 A “In Violation” of the Honor Code and recommends that he receive a two letter grade reduction. A Prior Violation Flag is also attached to his record.

Time of testimony and deliberations: 31 minutes
Respectfully submitted,
Helen Sharpless
Clerk