

Abstract of the Honor Council
Case 33, Spring 2016
May 5, 2016

Members Present:

Alex Metcalf (presiding), Sara Meadow (clerk), Ike Arjmand, Allen Hu, Bradley Hamilton, Dessy Akinfenwa, Ellen Diemert, Haihao Liu, Kevin Zhang

Ombuds: Aaron Shaw

Letter of Accusation:

The Honor Council received a letter accusing Student A of copying information from the internet for an exam for a graduate level management course. The Chair read the Letter of Accusation aloud in full.

Evidence Submitted:

- Letter of Accusation
- Student A's written statement
- Course syllabus
- Final exam with professor annotations
- Final exam student submitted
- Owl Space instructions for the exam
- Sample questions for the final exam
- Transcript of video of a class in the course
- Professor statement on evidence

Plea:

Student A pled "not in violation."

Testimony:

The student noted that the phrases in question came from phrases in class. The student stated that because English is not his first language he often used exact phrases from his notes. He also stated that he did not use the internet during the exam.

The student said that he was not in class for the few classes right before the exam. Because of this, he read articles online and took notes from them. When he was taking the exam on his computer, he got a notification that he only had fifteen minutes left despite thinking he had almost an hour. Therefore, he flipped through his notes looking for anything related to the questions.

The student presented his browsing history to show that he did not go on the internet during the exam. He also presented his notes for the course with specific parts marked that related to the exam. After visiting IT, the student received a written statement from IT that OwlSpace gives a notification after being online for two hours. The student was also adamant that the professor wanted "key words" and "key sentences," and therefore

the student took more notes than usual to accommodate this teaching style. The student noted that many links the professor had included no longer worked.

The student again stated that he took notes from online articles before taking the exam, and he used these notes because he thought he was running out of time on the exam. The student mentioned that these articles were not part of the course and not provided by the professor. The student stated he did not have access to these articles during the test, only his notes.

Verdict Deliberations:

Council members believed that a preponderance of the evidence supported that a violation occurred because the instructions for the exam said not to cut and paste from either notes or internet, and this seemed to be the case for the exam.

Council members discussed the idea that it is always better to take a zero than have an honor council violation. The answers on the exam are word for word copied from online articles provided by the professor, suggesting direct plagiarism. If Student A took notes on online articles and then used these notes for her test, this still counts as a violation. The Council decided that there was a preponderance of the evidence that some prohibited material was used for the test.

Vote #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 A committed the violation. The Council believed Student A committed a violation.

Vote #2: 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. Some Council members noted that amount of the assignment in violation should be considered given that 14 points of the 50 were shown to be in violation.

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

Time of testimony and deliberations: 50 minutes

Respectfully submitted,
Sara Meadow
Clerk