

Abstract of the Honor Council
Case 53, Spring 2016
September 21, 2016

Members Present:

Katie Jensen (presiding), Alex Metcalf (clerk), Stefano Romano, Ellen Diemert, Ike Arjmand, Joanne Kim

Ombuds: Carey Wang

Letter of Accusation:

The Honor Council received a letter accusing Student A and Student B of giving and receiving unauthorized aid on a homework assignment for a lower level computer science course. The Chair read the Letter of Accusation aloud in full.

Evidence Submitted:

- Letter of Accusation
- Student A's written statement
- Student B's written statement
- Student A's homework
- Student B's homework
- Course slides
- Homework front page
- Homework problems
- Professor clarification
- Syllabus
- Comparison homeworks

Plea:

Student A pled "not in violation."

Student B pled "in violation."

Testimony:

Student A stated that the assignment he submitted was his own work. He acknowledged his collaboration with other students but said he had no awareness of any unauthorized actions. The student stated that since his computer was not working while he was completing this assignment, he used Student B's laptop to complete the assignment. He stated that he did not use any files that were not his on Student B's computer. He provided evidence to indicate his use of the cloud while completing this assignment. Student A also brought in a witness who recalled that Student A's computer was not working.

Student B acknowledged that his assignment was completed outside the bounds of the Honor Code. He stated that he was able to view Student A's code, and was able to take the logic and algorithms from Student A. He stated he was uncomfortable claiming credit for any portion of the assignment.

Student A stated he was not aware that Student B was looking at his code. He said that he was not aware of how his LaTeX structure would end up in Student B's solution. He stated it was highly probable that he used Student B's computer to access and edit his python file, which would result in him downloading a nearly complete version of his code onto Student B's computer. Student A stated that this work was his own, and that he did not willingly provide his work to Student B, or any other student. In his closing statement, Student A reiterated that he did not knowingly or willing provide code to any other student.

Student B stated that he did not look at any code Student A downloaded onto Student B's computer – he stated that he submitted his code after Student A downloaded his code. Student B stated that he looked at Student A's work, and copied it down, and then later transcribed this work back to his document. For his closing statement, Student B stated that only he committed a violation.

Verdict Deliberations:

Council members believed that a preponderance of the evidence supported that a violation occurred because the evidence and student testimony indicated that it occurred.

Vote #1: Does a preponderance of the evidence support that a violation occurred?

Yes: 6
No: 0
Abstentions: 0

The Council then discussed whether or not Student A committed the violation. Discussion revolved around the concept of "giving access", as well as the role of providing help and aid to another student.

Vote #2: Does a preponderance of the evidence support that Student A is "In Violation?"

Yes: 6
No: 0
Abstentions: 0

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

Yes: 6
No: 0
Abstentions: 0

Penalty Deliberations:

Council members opened by discussing mitigating circumstances. Council members mitigated for Student A, based on the amount of the assignment “In Violation”.

Council members aggravated for Student B, given that his actions involved another student without his knowledge, given her large scale copying of code from Student A.

The Council discussed the penalties for Student A and Student B. The Council decided that Student A and Student B should not receive the same penalty, since Student B indicated that he committed additional violations (knowingly receiving aid, as well as copying code from Student A without his consent).

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:	0
3 letter grade reduction:	0
2 letter grade reduction:	0
1 letter grade reduction:	6
Letter of Reprimand	0
Abstentions:	0

Vote #6: What is the appropriate penalty for Student B?

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:	6
2 letter grade reduction:	0
1 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 1 Letter Grade Reduction. The Honor Council thus finds Student B “In Violation” of the Honor Code and recommends that he receive a 3 Letter Grade Reduction. A Prior Violation Flag is also attached to their records.

Time of testimony and deliberations: 55 minutes

Respectfully submitted,

Alex Metcalf

Clerk