

Abstract of the Honor Council
Case 56, Spring 2016
September 22, 2016

Members Present:

Katie Jensen (presiding), Sofia Yi (clerk), Bradley Hamilton, Richard Bui, Ike Arjmand, Ellen Diemert

Ombuds: Carey Wang

Letter of Accusation:

The Honor Council received a letter accusing Student A of falsifying a regrade request on multiple assignments for an upper level bioengineering course. The Chair read the Letter of Accusation aloud in full.

Evidence Submitted:

- Letter of Accusation
- Student A's regrade request
- Course schedule
- Syllabus
- Exam 2 Scan
- Exam 2 regrade request
- Homework 4 Scan
- Homework 4 regrade request
- Homework 5 regrade request
- Homework 6 regrade request
- Annotated regrade request
- Student A's flight itinerary
- Owlspace notification

Plea:

Student A pled "Not in Violation."

Testimony:

Student A stated she originally submitted all assignments in question by the initial due date and requested a regrade at end of semester. She stated that she submitted all the assignments in their original form, with the exception of Exam 2. She admitted exam 2 was slightly altered and that she requested a regrade before she remembered that she had adjusted the answer for Exam 2 Question 4a. The student mentioned that the problem she had changed was worth 0.5% of her final grade. For Homework 4, the student stated that the work and answer remained unchanged. The sentence she had added, in quotes, was an attempt to highlight the error in grading for the course staff, and that she had informed the professor that new sentence was added by using quotation marks. She continued by saying that the additional page for Homework 5 fell out from the rest of homework during the original submission, but was turned in for the regrade. She also mentioned that

the TA noted the homework was not stapled. For Homework 5, the student says that the extra page was a different type of paper but that it was completed by the due date, and that there was not a violation in her assignment.

The student stated that they did not discuss the exam answers in class, and that she went over the solutions by herself. She made the changes to Exam 2 question 4a during this time as she looked over the solution.

Witness 1 was called in and stated that she drove the student to the airport. She had discussed the grading for the course with Student A, who thought she had gotten question 4a on Exam 2 correct.

A member of the Council was called in as a second witness; however, the testimony could not be considered due to the fact that he was a member of the Honor Council.

Student A concluded by stating that all work she submitted was in its original form except for Exam 2 Question 4a, which she was unaware that she adjusted when she submitted the request for a regrade. She said that it would not make sense for her to attempt to trick the professor, who had made copies of exam, and that the correction she made on Exam 2 was an easy mistake to make.

Verdict Deliberations:

Council members believed that a preponderance of the evidence supported that a violation occurred because the evidence showed a clear alteration of the original work, and that council members could not factor in the intentions of the student.

Council members also decided that they were unable to consider the addition to Homework 4 as a clarification for graders as, although the regrade request mentioned the student made additions to her work, she changed her answer on the homework and requested points back for it. Some members did not consider the addition as a significant alteration of the content of the question, but others agreed that the change gave additional points back to the student on the regrade. Council members concluded that there was not enough evidence to determine if there was a violation on Homework 5 and Homework 6.

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. The Council saw no reason that indicated otherwise.

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

Yes: 6

No: 0

Abstentions: 0

Penalty Deliberations:

Council members opened by discussing mitigating circumstances. Many council members agreed that the amount of the assignment in violation could be a mitigating factor, although some argued that falsifying a regrade request should invalidate the entire assignment.

The council saw no aggravating factors.

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:	1
2 letter grade reduction:	4
1 letter grade reduction:	1
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 she receive a 2 letter grade reduction. A Prior Violation Flag is also attached to her record.

Time of testimony and deliberations: 1 hr

Respectfully submitted,
Sofia Yi
Clerk