

Abstract of the Honor Council
Case 65-6, Spring 2016
August 29, 2016

Members Present:

Katie Jensen (presiding), Claire Bonnyman (clerk), Angel Garces, Ike Arjmand, Bradley Hamilton, Yash Tarkunde

Ombuds: Kenton Whitmire

Letter of Accusation:

The Honor Council received a letter accusing Student A of receiving unauthorized aid on several homework assignments for a lower level economics course. The Chair read the Letter of Accusation aloud in full.

Evidence Submitted:

- Letter of Accusation
- Student A's written statement
- Student A's Problem Set 2
- Problem Set 2 Solutions
- Student A's Problem Set 3
- Problem Set 3 Solutions
- Student A's Problem Set 3
- Problem Set 4 Solutions
- Student A's Problem Set 5
- Problem Set 5 Solutions
- Syllabus
- Professor Clarification
- Course Powerpoints

Plea:

Student A pled "not in violation."

Testimony:

Student A explained that the professor used Powerpoints in class, which included some of the problem set questions and solutions. He stated that he wrote down the information from the Powerpoints word for word in his notes and used these when he was doing his problem sets. He said that the professor used the same questions in the Powerpoints and problem sets, leading to the similarity between Student A's answers and the problem set solutions. He stated that he Googled some of the questions, specifically multiple choice questions, to see if he answered them correctly.

Student A stated that he used his notes and discussed with classmates when he worked on the problem sets, both of which are allowed in the syllabus, though he did not write down any answers when discussing with his classmates. He also said that it would be

improbable that he had access to the solutions given that he did not receive perfect scores on the assignments.

Verdict Deliberations:

Council members believed that a preponderance of the evidence supported that a violation occurred because Student A's answers were identical to the problem set solutions. Some Council members wondered whether the Student found some of the "in violation" answers when he was Googling questions but they agreed that finding solutions online and copying them word for word is still a violation. Additionally, Council members considered the fact that Student A's answers did not match what was given in the Powerpoints.

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. Council members saw no reason that anyone other than Student A would be in violation.

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. Council members saw no aggravating factors. Council members then discussed the appropriate penalty. Some Council members agreed that, based on the Consensus Penalty Structure, a 3 letter grade reduction would be appropriate when 16% of the course grade is in violation. Others considered mitigating for the amount of the assignments that was in violation and felt that a 2 letter grade reduction would be appropriate. Through further deliberations, they came to the following vote.

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

F in the course: 0
3 letter grade reduction: 5
2 letter grade reduction: 1
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 3 letter grade reduction in the course. A Prior Violation Flag is also attached to his record.

Time of testimony and deliberations: 45 minutes

Respectfully submitted,
Claire Bonnyman
Clerk