

Abstract of the Honor Council
Case 15, Fall 2016
March 31, 2017

Members Present:

Katie Jensen (presiding), Stefano Romano (clerk), Reece Rosenthal, Ike Arjmand, Joanne Kim, Sofia Yi, Ricky Robinson (observing)

Ombuds: Matt Nobles

Letter of Accusation:

The Honor Council received a letter accusing Student A of plagiarism for a lower level FWIS course. The Chair read the Letter of Accusation aloud in full.

Evidence Submitted:

- Letter of Accusation
- Student A's written statement
- Course syllabus
- Assignment prompt
- Student A's paper
- Class citation handout
- Selected online articles

Plea:

Student A pled "In Violation."

Testimony:

Student A started by stating that she did not intend to commit an Honor Code violation when writing her essay. Student A said that she did use the selected online articles that were part of the evidence, but that she forgot to cite these resources in the final paper. The student also said that she never copied and pasted any quotes from online articles, but that the similar phrases from these articles in her essay were solely from memory, as she referenced the articles when she was conducting research prior to writing her essay.

Student A closed by stating that there are many similarities between her essay and the selected online articles, but that she did not intend to commit an Honor Code violation.

Verdict Deliberations:

Council members believed that a preponderance of the evidence supported that a violation occurred because portions of the student's essay matched phrases from online articles word for word without proper citation of that work.

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

Yes: 6 + 1 observing

No: 0

Abstentions: 0

The Council then discussed whether or not Student A committed the violation. The Council saw no reason to believe that Student A did not commit the violation.

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

Yes: 6 + 1 observing

No: 0

Abstentions: 0

Penalty Deliberations:

Council members opened by discussing mitigating circumstances. The Council decided to mitigate for the amount of the assignment demonstrably not in violation, as only a few sentences (amounting to approximately a paragraph of a four page paper) plagiarized the selected online articles. The Council applied no aggravating factors.

The CPS penalty for this case, based on the weight of the assignment, calls for a two letter grade reduction. However, after mitigating, the Council arrived at a penalty of a one letter grade reduction.

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: 0

2 letter grade reduction: 0

1 letter grade reduction: 6 + 1 observing

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 one letter grade reduction in the class.

Time of testimony and deliberations: 30 minutes

Respectfully submitted,

Stefano Romano

Clerk