

**Abstract of the Honor Council**  
**Case 36, Spring 2017**  
**11/03/17**

**Members Present:**

Reece Rosenthal (presiding), Ricky Robinson (clerk), Siddharth Gorantla, Haihao Liu, Grace Coleman, Virginia Xie

**Ombuds:** Laura Li

**Letter of Accusation:**

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

**Evidence Submitted:**

- Letter of Accusation
- Student A's written statement
- Assignment
- Slavery and Old Testament Law Article
- Student Paper
- Syllabus
- Some Initial Reflections on Slavery in the New Testament

**Plea:**

Student A pled "not in violation"

**Testimony:**

The student does not think it was plagiarism because it is copied out of a bible and cites the verses from the bible. The student said that she included the relevant links, but not the paper. The student said they may have failed to correctly cite sources from websites. Then, the student said she does not remember which websites she visited. The student said they copied bible verses and explanations at the bottom of the paper. The student closed by saying that copying bible verses are not plagiarism and that she failed to cite the explanations appropriately.

**Verdict Deliberations:**

Council members believed that a preponderance of the evidence supported that a violation occurred because the pieces of the essay accused of plagiarism seem to be copied from an exterior source without citation and a plea of ignorance cannot be an excuse for plagiarism.

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 decided that the student is in violation has for the same reasons described above.

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 aggravating factors. The council found no aggravating factors or mitigating factors.

Council members began the penalty discussion on the borderline between an F in the course and a 3-letter grade reduction because the assignment is worth 20% of the final grade. The council said that the student should receive a 3-letter grade reduction because there is nothing to distinguish between the two and there is no reason to decide on F in the course instead of 3-letter grade reduction.

The CPS penalty for this case, based on the weight of the assignment, is a 3-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: 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 she receive a 3-letter grade reduction.

Time of testimony and deliberations: 25 minutes

Respectfully submitted,  
Ricky Robinson  
Clerk