

**Abstract of the Honor Council**  
**Case 43, Spring 2017**  
**3/2/18**

**Members Present:**

Reese Rosenthal (presiding), Grace Coleman (clerk), Virginia Xie, Ricky Robinson, Siddarth Gorantla, Maheen Khizer

**Ombuds:** Colin Losey

**Letter of Accusation:**

The Honor Council received a letter accusing Student A of collaborating outside of the bounds of the Honor Code for a lower level COMP course. The Chair read the Letter of Accusation aloud in full.

**Evidence Submitted:**

- Letter of Accusation
- Student A's written statement
- Student submitted evidence
- Accuser submitted evidence docket

**Plea:**

Student A pled "Not in violation."

**Testimony:**

Student A explained the division of the assignment and grading for the assignment. Student said that he only spoke to one other student while working on the assignment. Student asserted that the MOSS score is not sufficient evidence to prove a violation has occurred, only to arouse suspicion from the professor. MOSS score should be taken in context – student explained that the professor provided pseudo-code that can explain the similarities between the students' code.

Student said he wrote all of his code independently, and follows coding protocol very strictly. Student proceeded to talk through his code. Student explained why he made the coding decisions he did and explained his stylistic choices.

Student said he followed his programming styles very strictly. The student said that patterns found in his code are his own patterns.

Student said he only worked with one other student. Student said he and the other student only talked about "big picture" ideas. Student said he and other student spoke about these big picture ideas while looking at pseudo-code provided by the professor. Student said he never looked at other student's code. Student could not explain why there would be so much similarity between his own code and another students code. Student said that he did not show the other student his code. Student said he also spoke with his professor about his code.

Student said the main issue with the case is the similarity between the two students' code, and since he never looked at other student's code he could not explain the similarity.

Student said he only spoke to other student one time. Student said he did not know if the

other student had spoken to more students in the class. Student said he and the other student only talked through the pseudo-code.

Student asserts that MOSS score should not be used as evidence. Student said he never shared code with any other students.

**Verdict Deliberations:**

Council members believed that a preponderance of the evidence supported that a violation occurred because of the high similarity in MOSS score. Looking through actual code some highlighted code is word-for-word the same. MOSS score will not be used as evidence, only to highlight what code should be looked at more closely. This code is similar enough that it is more likely than not that some collaboration beyond the bounds of the Honor Code occurred between the two students on the assignment. Honor Council members compared the two students code and compared it to random sample code. The Honor Council determined that the testimony of the student and the similarities between the codes did not match up. The Honor Council discussed the misconduct portion of the syllabus. Several Honor Council members determined that a violation of the honor code had occurred while not considering the MOSS scores and the admission of a violation by student 1. Honor Council members determined that the code between the students in question was similar enough to determine that a preponderance of the evidence supported that a violation has 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.

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

Yes: 6  
 No: 0  
 Abstentions: 0

**Penalty Deliberations:**

No aggravating factors were determined. Council members discussed mitigating for the amount of the assignment that was found in violation. Only a portion of the assignment was presented as evidence and discussed during the hearing. Therefore, only this portion of the assignment was demonstrably in violation of the honor code.

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 he receive a 3 letter grade reduction.

Time of testimony and deliberations: 50 minutes

Respectfully submitted,  
Grace Coleman  
Clerk