

**Abstract of the Honor Council  
Case 7-3, Fall 2017  
March 6, 2018**

**Members Present:**

Reece Rosenthal (presiding), Stefano Romano (clerk), Bella Buntin, Amy Lin, Sean Olsen, Virginia Xie

**Ombuds:** Sam Morimoto

**Letter of Accusation:**

The Honor Council received a letter accusing Students A, B, C, and D of unauthorized collaboration for a lower level COMP course. The Chair read the Letter of Accusation aloud in full.

**Evidence Submitted:**

- Letter of Accusation
- Students A, B, C and D's written statement
- Student-submitted evidence
- Random code samples
- Reference Code
- Full code comparison links
- Supplementary evidence
- Project description
- Course syllabus

**Plea:**

Student A pled "Not In Violation." Student B pled "Not In Violation." Student C pled "Not In Violation." Student D pled "Not In Violation."

**Testimony:**

Student A started by stating that he worked with Students B and C on this assignment, but had never met Student D before. He then stated that he only asked higher-level questions, rather than questions specifically about the assignment. Student A stated that when discussing the class with other students, his computer was open with reference code, but did not discuss specific questions related to the specific assignment. Student A stated that he and Student B would ask Student C questions when they were discussing concepts related to the class.

Student B started by stating that he only discussed higher-level questions related to the reference code, and never asked any questions related to this assignment. Student B said that he asked questions about functions in the assignment when working at the same table as Students A and C. He then stated that he had never worked with Student D in this class.

Student C started by stating that he disagrees with the Letter of Accusation, and that he solely collaborated within the confines of the course Honor Code policy. Student C then went on to explain his thought process for his code on this assignment. He then stated that he discussed reference code and higher-level concepts with Student D, but not any specifics about the assignment. Student C also stated that he did discuss certain coding concepts with Students A and B, but not specifically the assignment. Student C stated that Student A was probably coding while asking Student C questions, but Student C was not coding when Students A and B were working on the assignment at the table where Student C was seated. Student C then reiterated that he discussed higher-level concepts with Students A and B, but did not discuss particular problems from the assignment. Student C stated that he discussed this assignment in person with Student D, but only discussed the assignment instructions with Student D. Student C stated that he understood the assignment instructions well, and that other students may not have. Student C did not recall if he discussed this assignment with Student B.

Student D started by stating that he was not in town on the weekend of the assignment deadline. He then went through his thought process for coding the entire assignment. Student D then stated he did not know Students A and B when this assignment happened. He also stated that he might have discussed the reference code or the assignment instructions with Student C in person, but he does not remember if his laptop was open at the time. Student D then stated that he did not understand the assignment instructions at first, so he may have went to Student C for help understanding the assignment questions.

Student A closed by stating that he worked with Students B and C, but not Student D, on this assignment, but within the confines of the Honor Code policy, as they only discussed higher-level concepts.

Before closing, Student B explained her thought process for coding the entire assignment. Student B then closed by stating that all of his collaboration with Students A and C were within the confines of the course Honor Code policy.

Student C closed by stating that most of the assignment is simply a reformatting of the professor's reference code, and that he did not violate the course Honor Code policy.

Student D closed by stating that he did all of the work for the assignment by himself, as he was out of town on the weekend of the deadline for this assignment. He stated that he only discussed the assignment instructions with Student C, and did not discuss anything related to the course with Students A and B.

### **Verdict Deliberations:**

Council members believed that a preponderance of the evidence supported that a violation occurred because code similarities between students' assignments were too similar to have happened within the confines of the course Honor Code policy.

Vote #2: 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 found that similarities in Students A and B's code supported our preponderance of the evidence standard that a violation occurred. The Council did not find enough evidence to support that Students C and D were "In Violation".

Vote #3: Does a preponderance of the evidence support that Student A is "In Violation?"  
 Yes: 6  
 No: 0  
 Abstentions: 0

Vote #4: Does a preponderance of the evidence support that Student B is "In Violation?"  
 Yes: 6  
 No: 0  
 Abstentions: 0

Vote #5: Does a preponderance of the evidence support that Student C is "In Violation?"  
 Yes: 1  
 No: 5  
 Abstentions: 0

Vote #6: Does a preponderance of the evidence support that Student D is "In Violation?"  
 Yes: 0  
 No: 6  
 Abstentions: 0

### **Penalty Deliberations:**

Council members opened by discussing mitigating circumstances. The Council saw no reason to mitigate.

The CPS penalty for this case, based on the weight of the assignment, is a 1 letter grade reduction. The Council found this to be an appropriate penalty for Students A and B.

Vote #7: 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  
 Letter of Reprimand: 0

Abstentions: 0

Vote #8: What is the appropriate penalty for Student B?

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

Letter of Reprimand 0

Abstentions: 0

The Council then was told that Students A and B had received a 1 letter grade reduction in this course for a different assignment. The Council decided that the appropriate combined penalty for Students A and B would be a 2 letter grade reduction in the course.

Vote #9: What is the appropriate combined 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: 6

1 letter grade reduction: 0

Letter of Reprimand 0

Abstentions: 0

Vote #10: What is the appropriate combined penalty for Student B?

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: 6

1 letter grade reduction: 0

Letter of Reprimand 0

Abstentions: 0

### **Decision:**

The Honor Council thus finds Students A and B “In Violation” of the Honor Code and recommends that they receive a 2 letter grade reduction in the course.

Time of testimony and deliberations: 2 hours

Respectfully submitted,  
Stefano Romano  
Clerk