

Abstract of the Honor Council
Case 3, Fall 2018
4/15/19

Members Present:

Virginia Xie (presiding), Caroline Brehm (clerk), Grace Coleman, Angela Liu, Izzie Karohl, Sanat Mehta

Ombuds: Hector Chaires

Letter of Accusation:

The Honor Council received a letter accusing Students A and B of unauthorized collaboration on several homework assignments in an upper level CAAM course. The Chair read the Letter of Accusation aloud in full.

Evidence Submitted:

- Letter of Accusation
- Course syllabus
- Assignment description
- Student A's written statement
- Student B's written statement
- Student A's assignment
- Student B's assignment
- Grader clarification
- Random student samples
- Homework assignment description
- Online programming function source

Plea:

Student A pled "not in violation."

Student B pled "not in violation."

Testimony:

Student A began his testimony by referencing the first homework assignment and the MATLAB online documentation of the linear programming function. On the fourth homework, both Student A and Student B followed along the online documentation when completing the assignment, which the class had been doing all year long. Thus, the similarities arose from following the MATLAB documentation. The similar spacing was due to having two separate linear programs. On the fifth homework, Student A did collaborate with Student B, but he reiterated that he did not collaborate for the fourth homework. They wrote the code together for the fifth homework because Student B did not have MATLAB on his computer. They did turn in the same assignment, but it was a joint effort between the students. In hindsight, he should have credited Student B for the collaboration, but he simply made an honest mistake and was not trying to deceive the graders. Since the course was collaborative in nature, they turned in the same assignment.

Student B stated that he did not work with Student A on the fourth homework. They took different approaches to answering the problems and followed the MATLAB documentation provided by the professor in class. They had the same variable names because they worked with the same data set, so it was logical that they would use the same names. He admitted that they collaborated on the fifth homework, but it was an unpledged problem. They did not copy each other and instead worked together to create on project, which is why it was not plagiarism. They worked together on Student A's laptop, after they completed the assignment, Student A sent the homework to Student B, who later printed out the assignment to turn it in. At the TA sessions, the TAs allowed students to collaborate on homework assignments and produce one final code.

Verdict Deliberations:

Council members believed that a preponderance of the evidence supported that a violation occurred because the students went beyond the allowed collaboration in the course Honor Code policy by submitting identical code.

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 Students A and B committed the violation. Since both students admitted to collaboration, the Council members determined that both students committed a violation.

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

Yes: 6
 No: 0
 Abstentions: 0

Vote #3: Does a preponderance of the evidence support that Student B is "In Violation?"

Yes: 6
 No: 0
 Abstentions: 0

Penalty Deliberations:

Council members opened by discussing mitigating circumstances. Council members determined that there were no mitigating or aggravating factors.

The CPS penalty for this case, based on the weight of the assignment, is a 1 letter grade reduction.

Vote #4: What is the appropriate penalty for Student A?

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

Decision:

The Honor Council thus finds Student A and Student B “In Violation” of the Honor Code and recommends that they receive a 1 letter grade reduction.

Time of testimony and deliberations: 1 hour 30 minutes

Respectfully submitted,

Caroline Brehm

Clerk