

Abstract of the Honor Council
Case 16-7, Spring 2019
4/25/19

Members Present:

Matt Nobles (presiding), Amy Lin (clerk), Stefano Romano, Kyler Foutch, Sam Holloway, Syed Shams

Ombuds: Sam Morimoto

Letter of Accusation:

The Honor Council received a letter accusing Student A of collaborating on an assignment 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 B's written statement
- TA reference code
- Random student samples
- Course reference code
- Peers' code
- Student B and TA conversation screenshots
- Student A's code
- Student B's code
- Syllabus clarification
- Background information
- TA testimony
- Peer testimonies
- Expert testimony
- Project description
- Lecture clarification

Plea:

Student A pled "not in violation."

Student B pled "not in violation."

Testimony:

Student A began by explaining how the project had three separate parts. She had completed the first part and dropped the second part, and she then started the third part of the project based off the professor's solution for the second part. She also attended TA sessions more often for this part of the project because she had not completed the second part of the project. She had gone to the same TA office hours as Student B, and their test cases had been based off of advice given by the TA. She did not cite the TA in her assignment, but this was only because the suggestions given to her were given to the

general group and did not constitute a critical insight. She stated that commit times were irrelevant, and that she had always started her projects late. Student A did not recall working with Student B outside of office hours, although she remembers attending the office hours together.

Student B pointed out that the design freedom for the project was limited by the initial choice in the structure, and after that, there was only one way to complete the project. She pointed out that her implementation of the first function was unique, as supported by the expert testimony. On the second function, she followed logic given to her by the TA. She received the test cases from the TA during office hours but never cited the TA in the code. She did not cite the TA because she didn't perceive the help as critical insight. Student B also stated that she had most likely attended the same TA office hours as Student A. She never shared code with Student A.

Verdict Deliberations:

Council members believed that a preponderance of the evidence supported that a violation occurred because certain portions of the code were identical, and Student A's and Student B's code did not match the random student samples or the peers' code. The TA testimony indicated that she did not provide the cases in high-level detail, and thus, the Council believed that collaboration had occurred, which violated the course Honor Code. If the TA had in fact provided the cases in high-level detail, it constituted critical insight that was not cited by either student.

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 and Student B committed the violation. Council members found no reason to not believe that both students were in 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 found no reason to mitigate or aggravate.

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

Vote #4: Do Council members believe that Student A and Student B should receive the same penalty?

Yes: 6

No: 0

Abstentions: 0

Vote #5: What is the appropriate penalty for Student A and 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

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 55 minutes

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Lin

Clerk