

Abstract of the Honor Council
Case 34, Spring 2019
9/18/19

Members Present:

Sam Holloway (presiding), Caroline Brehm (clerk), Matey Yanakiev, Angela Liu, Hannah Dryer, Hugh O'Reilly

Ombuds: Zac Zalles

Letter of Accusation:

The Honor Council received a letter accusing Student A of unauthorized collaboration for a lower level MECH course. The Chair read the Letter of Accusation aloud in full.

Evidence Submitted:

- Letter of Accusation and Addendum
- Student A's written statement
- Student A's project report
- Project description
- Project resources
- Course syllabus
- Random sample projects

Plea:

Student A pled "not in violation."

Testimony:

The student began her testimony by admitting she did help another student with their project, but she stated their collaboration was within the bounds of the Honor Code for the assignment. The student said she never showed her code to the other student and only gave advice to the other student on how to correct mistakes. She said that referenced her code when teaching the other student about the project which explains why the code was so similar. Student A pointed out that large portions of her code were different from the other student's code. She concluded by stating she never helped the other student with the final report.

Verdict Deliberations:

Council members believed that a preponderance of the evidence supported that a violation occurred because the students' code crossed the line of acceptable collaboration as defined in the course's Honor Code. The two students' submissions were too similar for collaboration to have not occurred. Student A admitted in her testimony that she told the other student what to write for some portions of the 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 Student A committed the violation. Since the project description clearly stated students had to write their own code, and Student A admitted to sharing specific lines of her code, the Council concluded that Student A was in violation.

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 mitigating circumstances. Some members suggested the Council should mitigate because while Student A admitted to collaborating on one portion of the project, there didn’t appear to be any collaboration on the other parts of the project.

The Council found no aggravating factors.

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

Vote #3: 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

Since a large portion of the assignment was not in violation according to both the professor’s and the Council’s standards, the Council decided to mitigate to a 1 letter grade reduction.

Decision:

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

Time of testimony and deliberations: 1 hour

Respectfully submitted,
Caroline Brehm
Clerk