

Abstract of the Honor Council
Case 22, Spring 2020
April 16, 2020

Members Present:

Virginia Xi (presiding), Grant Wilkinson (clerk), Caroline Brehm, Emily Wang, Riya Mehta, Saniya Gayake

Ombuds: Pierson Lund

Letter of Accusation:

The Honor Council received a letter accusing Student A of cheating off of another student for a lower level ESCI course. The Chair read the Letter of Accusation aloud in full.

Evidence Submitted:

- Letter of Accusation
- Student A's written statement
- Comparison spreadsheet
- Random sample clarification
- Additional professor clarification
- Accused student exam
- Exam that was allegedly copied
- Witness statement
- Randomly selected student samples

Plea:

Student A pled "Not in Violation."

Testimony:

The student pointed out that she had gotten a substantially lower exam grade than the student she had allegedly copied. The student then stated that there were many instances where the similarities between her exam and the allegedly copied exam showed up in other students' exams.

The accused student then said that a significant portion of the exam was taken after having been moved away from the student they had allegedly copied from. Additionally, the student brought up the witness statement from the person she allegedly copied from, which stated that they did not think that the accused had copied from her exam.

The student said that any similarities were due only to chance. She also said that she had not worked with the person from whom she had allegedly copied. The accused then clarified which parts of the exam they had completed next to the other student and which parts were completed after being moved.

Verdict Deliberations:

Council members believed that a preponderance of the evidence supported that a violation has occurred. As the Council went through the case, council members decided that a lot of the true/false, short answer, and multiple-choice answers were similar but similar misspellings and incorrect answers showed up in other student's exams. The Council noticed that some of the long answer responses were very similar. Ultimately, the Council decided that the similarities were too great to explain by chance alone and a preponderance of the evidence supported that a violation 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:

Council members opened by discussing mitigating circumstances. None were seen. 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 she receive a 3-letter grade reduction.

Time of testimony and deliberations: 1 hr. 45 min.

Respectfully submitted,

Grant Wilkinson

Clerk