

## **Abstract of the Honor Council**

**Case #6-2, Fall 2020**

**November 29, 2020**

### **Members Present:**

Izzie Karohl (presiding), Ricky Robinson (clerk), Andrew Barber, Christopher Bi, Kaitlyn Crowley, Rodolfo Gutierrez, Max Slotnik (observing), and William Wang (observing)

**Ombuds:** Clay Siminski

### **Letter of Accusation:**

The Honor Council received a letter accusing Student A of copying code from a former student for a lower level CAAM course. The Chair read the Letter of Accusation aloud in full.

### **Evidence Submitted:**

- Letter of Accusation
- Student A's written statement
- Project Description
- Project Bonus Description
- Course Syllabus
- RLA Slides
- Student A's Code
- Former Student's Code
- Code Comparison
- Various MathWorks Resources
- Two RLA Statements
- Random Student Samples
- Lecture Slides
- Pseudocode provided by professors

### **Plea:**

Student A pled "not in violation".

### **Testimony:**

Student A began her testimony by stating that there were noticeable differences between her code and the former student's code and that she did not have any contact with the former student. The student then explained how she structured her code and the resources used to write her code. She elaborated on the indentation and spacing styles used in her code, emphasizing that it is a standard format that she followed. Student A continued to explain her variable names in the context of the code. She then clarified some of the similarities and unusual notations noted by the

RLA in her statement. The student concluded by restating that the only resources she used to write the code were the material provided by the RLA and the lecture slides.

**Verdict Deliberations:**

Council members believed that a preponderance of the evidence supported that a violation occurred because there are too many inexplicable similarities between the code of the accused and the code of the former student.

The Council began by discussing whether the aspects of the code that were similar between the codes in questions were due to copying or were a result of circumstance. The Council mentioned that the RLA statements noted numerous unusual similarities between the codes that were not present in any of the student sample codes. For instance, the codes shared a strange convention in the beginning of a comment that no random samples had. The Council believed that the student’s testimony did not adequately explain multiple odd similarities between the codes. The Council decided that the number of similarities between the codes suggested that they did not occur by chance and must have been the result of a violation.

Vote #1: Does a preponderance of the evidence support that a violation occurred?

Yes: 6  
No: 0  
Abstentions: 0

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. The Council did not see any reason to mitigate or aggravate.

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 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 Student A “In Violation” of the Honor Code and recommends that she receive a two-letter grade reduction.

Time of testimony and deliberations: 60 minutes

Respectfully submitted,  
Ricky Robinson  
Clerk