

## **Abstract of the Honor Council**

**Case 29-3, Spring 2021**

**October 14, 2021**

### **Members Present:**

Kaitlyn Crowley (presiding), Caroline Brehm (clerk), Andrew Barber, Kamal Tijani, Clyde Xu, and Leah Johnson

**Ombuds:** Suravi Sarker

### **Letter of Accusation:**

The Honor Council received a letter accusing Student A of accessing unauthorized materials on a pledged assignment for an upper-level CAAM course. The Chair read the Letter of Accusation aloud in full.

### **Evidence Submitted:**

- Letter of Accusation
- Student A's written statement
- Student A's homework submission
- Chegg access log
- Chegg screenshots
- Email from Student Judicial Programs to Chegg
- Homework assignment
- Homework solutions
- Course syllabus
- Random student samples
- Student evidence
- Screenshot of Student A's email
- Screenshot of Student A's homework metadata

### **Plea:**

Student A pled "Not in Violation."

### **Testimony:**

Student A admitted he did access Chegg during the exam period. However, he maintained that he accessed the page after he completed his assignment and did not reference Chegg when completing the assignment. Student A explained that when he was taking the class, he was living internationally and required a VPN connection to complete his coursework, causing his internet speed to be slow. Consequently, when Student A uploaded the pdf of his completed assignment, it took several hours from when he started the upload to when he was finally able to submit it.

Student A recounted that during that upload time, he decided to look on Chegg to see how homework problems could be solved, which is why the timestamps showed he uploaded his assignment .pdf after the time he accessed Chegg.

As evidence that he finished his assignment before accessing Chegg, Student A showed screenshots of his homework pdf data, which showed that the pdf was created at 9:43 AM, before he accessed Chegg at 9:51 AM and 10:12 AM. Student A also referenced screenshots that show that the email he sent himself with his completed assignment was sent before he accessed Chegg. Student A concluded that since he completed his exam and did not edit it before accessing Chegg, he was not in violation of the Honor Code.

**Verdict Deliberations:**

Council members believed that a preponderance of the evidence supported that a violation did not occur because timestamp evidence showed that Student A completed and began to upload his assignment before he accessed Chegg, and he did not use Chegg when working on his assignment.

Council members believed the evidence showed that Student A finished their exam and did not alter it before he accessed the Chegg materials, as demonstrated by the timestamps. The assignment instructions say students are not allowed to use materials from the internet when completing the pledged assignment. The Council determined that the timestamps evidence showed that Chegg was not used by Student A when completing the assignment, so he did not violate the Honor Code in this manner.

The Council then moved on to discuss whether Student A would be in violation for accessing Chegg before submitting the assignment even if Chegg did not influence the content of the student's assignment. Council members referenced a line in the syllabus that prohibited accessing the solutions manual for coursework. The Council decided that Chegg did not amount to a solutions manual, so Student A did not commit a violation. Ultimately, the Council decided that since Student A could demonstrably show that he finished his assignment before accessing Chegg and that accessing Chegg was not automatically considered a violation, the student did not violate the Honor Code.

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

Yes: 1  
No: 5  
Abstentions: 0

**Decision:**

The Honor Council thus finds Student A “Not in Violation” of the Honor Code.

Time of testimony and deliberations: 1 hour and 3 minutes

Respectfully submitted,

Caroline

Clerk