

## **Abstract of the Honor Council**

**Case 51, Spring 2021**

**November 9, 2021**

### **Members Present:**

Angela Liu (presiding), Max Slotnik (clerk), James Cheng, Bora Göbekli, William Wang, Rodolfo Gutierrez-Garcia, Simon Yellen (observing), and Pedro Ribeiro (observing)

**Ombuds:** Ashley Chung

### **Letter of Accusation:**

The Honor Council received a letter accusing Student A and Student B of unauthorized collaboration for a lower-level LING 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
- Class syllabus
- Midterm Canvas announcement
- Final exam announcement
- Student A's midterm exam
- Student B's midterm exam
- Student A's final exam
- Student B's final exam
- Random samples for both final and midterm (x10)

### **Plea:**

Student A pled "In Violation."

### **Testimony:**

Student A stated how he saw similarities on the exams and mentioned how he and Student B studied together for both the midterm and the final. He clarified that his "in violation" plea for unauthorized collaboration with Student B translated only to the final exam but not the midterm. Their collaboration extended to only a certain number of questions, and they did not consult each other on the entire final exam.

He iterated that the accusations for the midterm were coincidental and attributed to their studying together by going over lecture slides and homework, and not due to collaboration during the exam.

**Verdict Deliberations:**

Council members believed that a preponderance of the evidence supported that a violation occurred on the final exam but not on the midterm.

Council members believed the violation occurred on the final because Student A admitted to violating the Honor Code, along with the evidence suggesting unauthorized collaboration occurred.

The Council ultimately found the midterm not in violation because the similarities could be attributed to their studying together before the exam, and that there were enough differences between them that it is more likely than not they did not consult each other during the exam. Some Council members found some evidence convincing of a violation—having identical multiple-choice answers and the phrasing to a couple of questions being unique to their exams—but the Council concluded that they could have studied the same incorrect material that translated to their incorrect reasoning and answers on the exam.

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

Yes: 1+1  
No: 5+1  
Abstentions: 0

Vote #2: Does a preponderance of the evidence support that a violation occurred on the final?

Yes: 6+2  
No: 0  
Abstentions: 0

The Council then discussed whether Student A committed the violation. The Council believed that Student A did commit the violation because he admitted to it and there is no reason to believe he did not.

Vote #3: Does a preponderance of the evidence support that Student A is “In Violation?”

Yes: 6+2  
No: 0  
Abstentions: 0

**Penalty Deliberations:**

Council members opened by discussing mitigating circumstances. There were no mitigating circumstances. The student does have a prior violation, which serves as an aggravating factor.

The CPS penalty for this case, based on the weight of the assignment, is an F in the course and 1 semester of suspension. Due to the prior violation, the Council aggravated to an F in the course and 2 semesters of suspension.

Vote #4: 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:	6+2
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:	0
Letter of Reprimand	0
Abstentions:	0

**Decision:**

The Honor Council thus finds Student A “In Violation” of the Honor Code and recommends that he receive an F in the course and 2 semesters of suspension.

Time of testimony and deliberations: 1 hour and 20 minutes

Respectfully submitted,  
Max Slotnik  
Clerk