

Abstract of the Honor Council
Case 57, Summer 2021
December 6th, 2021

Members Present:

Kaitlyn Crowley (presiding), William Wang (clerk), Kamal Tijani, Leah Johnson, Sahana Prasanna, Syed Shams, Pedro Ribeiro (observing clerk), and Jae Kim (observing clerk)

Ombuds: Eliot Behr

Letter of Accusation:

The Honor Council received a letter accusing Student A and Student B of collaborating on an exam for an upper level STAT 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
- Course Syllabus
- Blank Exam
- Student A's Exam
- Student B's Exam
- Student B's submitted evidence of technology problems

Plea:

Student A pled "Not in Violation."

Student B pled "Not in Violation."

Testimony:

Student A stated that he took the exam alone and that he had no reason to collaborate on this exam as they had already been accused of an infraction twice already. Student A stated he was being unfairly targeted due to these previous infractions. Student A acknowledged that he knew Student B but did not collaborate with him during the test. Student A explained that he took the exam in his room and tried his best with the material that he had studied. Since the test was open note, Student A recalled that he used lecture recordings and study guides provided to him during the exam. He explained that a lot of the suspicious errors could be attributed to copying the study guide.

Student B corroborated the story that he did not collaborate as they already had another honor code infraction. Student B provided screenshots of correspondence with the professor about his R studio, a software for statistical analysis, not working. Student B credited this mishap for his inability to complete most of the exam as well as for minimal work shown. He said that similarities in answers is likely because similar questions were found in review videos or class slides.

Verdict Deliberations:

Council members believed that a preponderance of the evidence supported that a violation occurred because the similarities could have only occurred if collaboration had occurred. For one question in particular, a numerical answer was not provided for part a even though the exam asked for one. Instead, both put the same numerical answer for part a as their answer for part b, which asked for a numerical answer found in a different way. Without their study guides, it is hard to attribute answers and mistakes to common resources used. Though there was a disparity in the amount of work shown and the grade received, the similarity would involve some exchange of ideas during the testing window, which is prohibited.

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

Yes: 6
 No: 0
 Abstentions: 0

The Council then discussed whether Student A committed the violation. As there was no indication that one student stole the work of another, the Council decided that Student A committed a violation.

Vote #2: Does a preponderance of the evidence support that Student A is “In Violation?”

Yes: 6
 No: 0
 Abstentions: 0

For the same reason and due to the lack of work shown on his exam, Student B was also found in violation.

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

Yes: 6
 No: 0
 Abstentions: 0

Penalty Deliberations:

Council members opened by discussing mitigating circumstances. The Council did not see any such factors. The Council aggravated 2 stages on the CPS because both students had another violation in this same course earlier this semester, of which they had been notified of prior to the exam.

The CPS penalty for this case, based on the weight of the assignment, is an F in course.

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
 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

Vote #5: What is the appropriate penalty for Student B?

F in the course and 3 semesters of suspension:	0
F in the course and 2 semesters of suspension:	6
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 and B “In Violation” of the Honor Code and recommends that they both receive an F in the course and 2 semesters of suspension.

Time of testimony and deliberations: 1 hour 54 minutes

Respectfully submitted,
William Wang
Clerk