

Abstract of the Honor Council
Case 41-3, Spring 2023
10-12-2023

Members Present:

Rodolfo Gutierrez-Garcia (presiding), Dean Toumajian (clerk), Kamal Tijani, McKenzie Jameson, Naha Kohli, Pedro Ribeiro

Ombuds: Sharlie Wu

Letter of Accusation:

The Honor Council received a letter accusing Student A and Student B of using unauthorized aid (collaborating) on a coding assignment in 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
- Student B's written statement
- Student assignment comparisons
- Random samples
- Lecture material
- MOSS detection software explanation
- Course Syllabus

Plea:

Student A pled "not in violation."

Student B pled "not in violation."

Testimony:

Student A maintained their innocence and claimed they did not collaborate on their assignment. They claimed that the only resources they used were permitted resources by the professor. Student A knows Student B well, and for other assignments they worked together. Student A claims that their shared studying experience might have affected the similarities in the code. Student A referred to lecture material & TA provided material for how they formatted/ produced their code. The student used comments on their assignment for formatting reason, so that is why theirs is different from the random samples. They were able to justify their commenting & variable naming conventions.

Student B claimed that they did not work with Student A. They have an unclear memory of when/where they did the assignment. The student claimed to only have used the TA lecture material as a resource and nothing else. The student strayed from their usual comment conventions. They are pretty sure they attended office hours for this course.

Verdict Deliberations:

Council members believed that a preponderance of the evidence supported that a violation occurred because there were similarities present in the code that would be surprisingly. For example, there were similar spelling mistakes, spacing anomalies, and variable conventions.

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 and B committed the violation.

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

Yes: 6
 No: 0
 Abstentions: 0

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

Yes: 6
 No: 0
 Abstentions: 0

Penalty Deliberations:

The CPS penalty for this case, based on the weight of the assignment, is a 2-letter grade reduction.

The council opened by discussing mitigating factors, and they found none. Then they discussed aggravating factors. Again they found none.

Vote #4: What is the appropriate penalty for Student A?

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

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

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

The CPS severity starts at a baseline of severity level 2.

Vote #6: What is the appropriate severity level for Student A?

Expulsion: 0
 Suspension: 0
 Reprimand: 6
 Warning: 0
 Abstentions: 0

Vote #7: What is the appropriate severity level for Student B?

Expulsion: 0
 Suspension: 0
 Reprimand: 6
 Warning: 0
 Abstentions: 0

The council found that, Student B while having a prior violation, did not have sufficient time to reflect on their violation and thus aggravating would not prove effective nor be fair to the student.

Decision:

The Honor Council thus finds Student A “In Violation” of the Honor Code and recommends that they receive a 2 Letter grade reduction in the course and a severity level of reprimand.

The Honor Council thus finds Student B “In Violation” of the Honor Code and recommends that they receive a 2 Letter grade reduction in the course and a severity level of reprimand.

Time of testimony and deliberations: 02:00:00

Respectfully submitted,
 Dean Toumajian
 Clerk