

Abstract of the Honor Council
Case 41-1, Spring 2023
10/08/2023

Members Present:

James Cheng (presiding), Kamal Tijani (clerk), Dean Toumajian, Pedro Riberio, Simon Yellen, Naidhruv Ananth-Iyer

Ombuds: Hunter Smith

Letter of Accusation:

The Honor Council received a letter accusing Student A of accessing unauthorized aid 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
- 3 Witness Statements
- Evidence Request email from TA
- Course Syllabus
- Student B's Written Statement
- Random Samples
- Lecture Material
- TA supplementary Materials
- Code Side-by-side comparison
- Detection Software Information Sheet

Plea:

Student A pled "Not in Violation"

Testimony:

Student A began his testimony detailing that the timeline between alleged violation. Student A complained that the honor council process was a long time, so it was difficult to prove their innocence from collaboration. Student A alleges Student B went behind their back and took pictures of their assignment, and only found out much later from a friend who witnessed the event. Student A also highlighted that Student B also asked for unauthorized aid which Student A denies. Student A tried to collect as many witnesses as possible to corroborate the first witness's claims. Student A maintains that collaboration didn't occur and was dumbfounded that the assignments were so similar. Student A detailed repeated attempts from Student B reaching out for aid, which Student A denied. Student A claims to work independently on the assignment at a dinner table with friends that weren't in the class. Student A didn't find any wrongdoing or mishaps after leaving and returning to the table. Witness A corroborated Student A's description of events. Witness B corroborated Student A's description of events. Three other Witness's submitted statements corroborating the student's report.

Verdict Deliberations:

Council members believed that a preponderance of the evidence supported that a violation occurred because the similarities between the assignment were too great, and the various testimony given upheld that a violation occurred.

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. The Council considered all the evidence and testimony. The evidence seemed clear to the council that collaboration occurred where it shouldn't have. Furthermore, there were errors in the Witness testimony in the timeline of the violation. The alleged violation occurred several months before the hearing, so the ability of all the witnesses to corroborate specific details about the case, but not remember fewer specific details called into question the integrity of the witnesses, despite being sworn in. Also, the student acted in quite a roundabout manner in completing the assignment which put their testimony at odds with the physical evidence of the case.

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

Yes: 5
 No: 0
 Abstentions: 1

The Council deliberated further on the reliability of the witnesses and Student testimony. Ultimately, the confusion timeline at which the events occurred along with Student A's assignment being submitted late led the council to converge on one decision.

Vote #3: 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 found no mitigating circumstances.

The Council considered a possible aggravating situation of lying to the council but lacked evidence to fully categorize it as such.

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

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:	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

The Council also discussed classifying the violation as heinous because of potential deceit of the council, but council members argued that there wasn't enough evidence to classify it as such, just weak witness testimony.

Vote #5: Is this violation heinous?

Yes:	0
No:	6
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:	2
Reprimand:	3
Warning:	0
Abstentions:	1

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

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

Decision:

The Honor Council thus finds Student A "In Violation" of the Honor Code and recommends that they receive 2 letter grade reduction and a reprimand.

Time of testimony and deliberations: 3 hrs 5 min

Respectfully submitted,
Kamal Tijani

Clerk