

Abstract of the Honor Council
Case 2, Fall 2011
September 29, 2011

Members Present:

Kaleb Underwood (presiding), Kate Snyder (clerk), Adam Hartman, David Fortunato, Andrew Patterson, Johnny Lam, Trey Burns, John Cavallo, Jeff Worne, Likeleli Seitlheko (Observing)

Ombuds: Aubrey Sirtautas

Letter of Accusation:

The Honor Council received a letter accusing Student A of using more than the allotted time on a take-home quiz for an upper level Business course.

Evidence Submitted:

- Letter of Accusation
- Student A's written statement
- Course Syllabus
- Student A's Quiz
- Email exchange between Student A and Professor

Plea:

Student A pled "Not in violation."

Testimony:

Student A wrote the email to the professor regarding the use of more time than was allotted because she wanted to be honest with the professor about the difficulties she had while completing the exam. She thinks the quiz was worth approximately 5% of the total course grade. The professor did not specifically say that going over the time limit would be considered an Honor Code violation. In hindsight, she realizes she should have noted on the exam where she was in the quiz when the time limit was reached. She did not email the professor right away regarding the overuse of time due to access to email. She sent the email to the professor in good faith so that the professor could penalize her score as she saw fit. The professor had said in class before that on a quiz, students could mark where they were in the quiz when time stopped and continue to work beyond that.

Verdict Deliberations:

Council members believed that a preponderance of the evidence supported that a violation occurred because the emails between Student A and the professor and Student A's testimony suggest that Student A used more time than was allotted. A council member wanted to consider whether this may have been a procedural error versus a violation of the Honor Code because there were other instructions on the front of the exam that do not apply to the Honor Code. Some members thought that the student did partially follow the Honor Council's recommendation for noting when a time limit when

the limit is passed, but others countered that her email confession was not part of following those recommendations, but rather a side note for another issue.

DESCRIBE DISCUSSION

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

Yes: 9

No: 0

Abstentions: 0

The Council then discussed whether or not Student A committed the violation. No council members saw any reason to believe that any student other than Student A committed the violation.

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

Yes: 9

No: 0

Abstentions: 0

Straw Polls #1 and #2 made binding.

Penalty Deliberations:

Council members opened by discussing mitigating circumstances. Council members were going to consider the small weight of the assignment and cooperation for sharing what portion had been completed before the time limit and being forthright from the beginning, though some did not think that the original email counted as cooperation. Some were also considering the amount of the assignment that had been completed past the time limit.

Council members also considered intent, as Student A was not taking extra time in a malicious way to gain an advantage over classmates, and did follow the Council’s procedures of alerting the professor to the overuse of time, although not at the time of submission. Some thought there may have been a lack of clarity between the professor’s statement regarding the Honor policy and the instructions on the quiz.

Council members did not see any need to aggravate.

Straw Poll #3: What is the appropriate penalty for Student A?

F in the course: 0

3 letter grade reduction: 1

2 letter grade reduction: 2

1 letter grade reduction: 3

Letter of reprimand: 1

Abstentions: 2

Most members mitigated on weight of the assignment and cooperation, and some also considered intent and the amount of the assignment that was violated.

There was discussion of adding a penalty of a letter of reprimand plus a loss of credit for anything that had been done past the time limit. Another councilmember suggested a letter of reprimand plus deferring to the professor to determine how to score the quiz. No one was significantly in favor of adding this option.

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

F in the course:	0
3 letter grade reduction:	0
2 letter grade reduction:	0
1 letter grade reduction	5
Letter of reprimand	4
Abstentions:	0

Most moved down in penalty because of more discussion on intent and amount of the assignment. The possibility of a penalty of a letter of reprimand plus a recommendation to the professor to score the quiz as they see fit after consultation with Student A was brought up, and many members supported the addition of that penalty because it is what professors usually are advised to do in cases of exceeding time.

Straw Poll #5: What is the appropriate penalty for Student A?

F in the course:	0
3 letter grade reduction:	0
2 letter grade reduction:	0
1 letter grade reduction	1
Letter of reprimand plus grade deferred to prof	8
Letter of reprimand	0
Abstentions:	0

Straw Poll #5 made binding.

The Honor Council thus finds Student A “In Violation” of the Honor Code and recommends that she receive a letter of reprimand and the grade of the quiz deferred to the discretion of the professor with consultation of the student. A Prior Violation Flag is also attached to her record.

Time of testimony and deliberations: 1 hour 10 minutes

Respectfully submitted,
Kate Snyder
Clerk