

**Abstract of the Honor Council**  
**Case 37, Fall/Spring/Summer 2012**  
**April 1, 2012**

**Members Present:**

Kaleb Underwood (presiding), David French (clerk), Clinton Willbank

**Ombuds:** Lila Kerr

**Letter of Accusation:**

The Honor Council received a letter accusing Student A and B of falsely signing an attendance sheet for a lower level computer science course.

**Evidence Submitted:**

- Letter of Accusation
- Student A's written statement
- Student B's written statement
- Course syllabus
- Examples of student A's signatures
- Attendance sign-in sheets

**Plea:**

Student A pled "not in violation."

Student B pled "not in violation."

**Testimony:**

Student A testimony

Opening statement: He does not feel that the violation fell in the realm of the honor code. The honor code deals with academic assignments, which does not include attendance sign-ins. The course syllabus does not specifically mention that attendance falls under the honor code. Additionally, the grade value of a single sign-in is less than a point.

He did not know that student B was going to sign in for him, nor did he ask him to do it. He found out about it afterward and warned student B not to do it again. Student A felt that the act of signing in for someone else was morally wrong but not necessarily an honor code violation. Therefore, student A did not report student B's act of signing in for him.

Closing statement: He knows that he was morally wrong to not report the violation, but he did not feel that it was worth reporting due to its ambiguous nature as an honor code violation and the negligible effect it had on his grade.

Student B testimony

Opening statement: He admits signing in for student A despite not being prompted to do so. He felt that he was helping his friend. He does not feel, however, that constituted an

honor code violation. The honor code policy in the syllabus specifically mentions assignments and exams but does not mention attendance sign-in. Therefore, it falls outside the scope of the honor code policy and is not an honor code violation.

He does not feel that a single attendance sign-in was a significant enough part of the course grade to matter.

He told student A about the sign-in later that day, and student A advised him not to do it again.

Student B made no closing statement.

**Verdict Deliberations:**

Most members thought that Student B wrongly signed in for his classmate, which constitutes as an honor code violation because it counted toward the course grade. Honor Council members also discussed whether student A was wrong not to report the violation once he found out about it. Some members pondered if the ambiguous nature of the sign-in attendance absolved student A of failing to report it. Other members thought it didn't matter that he was ignorant of the act as an honor code violation, since the honor council does not consider honor code ignorance as a mitigating factor.

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.

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

Yes: 9  
No: 0  
Abstentions: 0

The Council then discussed whether or not Student B committed the violation.

Straw Poll #3: Does a preponderance of the evidence support that Student B is "In Violation?"

Yes: 0  
No: 8  
Abstentions: 1

Straw pool #4: Does a preponderance of the evidence support that Student B is "in violation?"

Yes: 0  
No: 9

Abstentions: 0

Straw polls 1, 2, and 4 made binding.

**Penalty Deliberations:**

Members mitigated for the extremely small weight of the assignment. Some members also mitigated for the ambiguous nature of the violations and the fact that the professor and the syllabus were not clear on the subject of attendance. The student's intent was also mitigated for, because the student did not plan the violation ahead of time, nor did he have a clear way of knowing that the act was a violation.

The council saw no aggravating factors.

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

2 letter grade reduction:	0
1 letter grade reduction:	0
Letter of Reprimand	9
Abstentions:	0

Council members also decided to ask the professor to strike student A's name from the attendance on the day on which the violation occurred.

**Decision:**

The Honor Council thus finds Student A "Not in Violation" of the Honor Code. The Honor Council thus finds Student B "In violation" of the Honor Code and recommends that he receive a letter of reprimand. A Prior Violation Flag is also attached to his record.

Time of testimony and deliberations: 52 minutes

Respectfully submitted,  
David French  
Clerk