

Abstract of the Honor Council
Case 44, Spring 2012
April 16, 2012

Members Present:

Trey Burns (presiding), Isabelle Lelogeais (clerk), Adriana Bracho, Hurst Williamson, Melissa Fwu, David French, Brian Walker, David Kim, Andres Rodela, Katie Stewart (Observing), Nick Uhm (Observing)

Ombuds: Alec Lignitz

Letter of Accusation:

The Honor Council received a letter accusing Student A and Student B of unauthorized collaboration on a midterm examination for an upper level engineering course.

Evidence Submitted:

- Letter of Accusation
- Student A's written statement
- Student B's written statement
- Course Syllabus
- Exam Instructions
- Student A's Exam
- Student A's Reference Sheet
- Student B's Exam
- Student B's Reference Sheet
- Professor Deposition
- Expert Deposition

Plea:

Student A pled "Not In Violation."

Student B pled "Not In Violation."

Testimony:

Student A said that she misses this particular class on a somewhat regular basis, and that she sits next to Student B when she does attend. Student A said that she works on all assignments for the class with Student B, and that Student B lets her look at her notes when she misses class. Student A said that she and Student B made their reference sheets for the exam – which were allowed by the exam instructions – together, and that, because of this, they were nearly identical. Student A walked the Council through the exam, explaining how questions on the test were very similar to questions on homeworks throughout the semester that she and Student B had completed together. Student A said that she completed her exam alone in her apartment off campus. She said that she never saw Student B's exam. Student A said that she relied heavily on his reference sheet while taking the exam.

Student B said that she abided by the honor code pledge, and took the exam completely by herself. She said that she is good friends with Student A, and that they work together on homeworks and study together for exams. Student B said that she took her exam at one day before Student A. Student B then proceeded to address the concerns about specific similarities between her exam and Student A's exam. She used their shared reference sheet, as well as class notes and homeworks to justify the similarities. Student B said that she and Student A went through all the class notes and previous exams, and decided which information would be most important. Student B mentioned that she relied heavily on the reference sheet made by her and Student A while taking the exam.

Verdict Deliberations:

Council members believed that a preponderance of the evidence supported that a violation did not occur. Members agreed the fact that both students' heavy reliance on their reference sheets, which were nearly identical, explained why their exams were so similar. In addition, members noted that the expert deposition does not say with any certainty that a violation occurred.

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

Yes: 0

No: 9

Abstentions: 0

Decision:

The Honor Council thus finds Student A and Student B "Not In Violation" of the Honor Code.

Time of testimony and deliberations: 1 hour

Respectfully submitted,
Isabelle Lelogeais
Clerk