

Abstract of the Honor Council
Case 1, Fall 2012
October 22, 2012

Members Present:

Trey Burns (presiding), Isabelle Lelogeais (clerk), Adriana Bracho, Hurst Williamson, Shayak Sengupta, David French, Aaroh Parikh, Shep Patterson, Michael Pryor, Seth Lauer (Observing)

Ombuds: Aubrey Sirtautus, Jaclyn Pass (Observing)

Letter of Accusation:

The Honor Council received a letter accusing Student A of plagiarism and consulting unauthorized resources for an upper level Management course.

Evidence Submitted:

- Letter of Accusation
- Student A's written statement
- Course Syllabus
- Assignment OWL-Space Posting
- Assignment Prompt
- Student A's Submission
- Assignment Solutions
- Alleged Source
- Tutor Deposition

Plea:

Student A pled "Not in Violation."

Testimony:

In his opening statement, the student stipulated that the only help he received was from a private tutor. He stated that they discussed the concepts in general. Student A also maintained that he had never seen the website in question. He said that his tutor would often email him about concepts to address misunderstandings, and he would change a few words and submit the resulting answer for an assignment. Student A stated that he did discuss these concepts with his tutor. He speculated that the website responses may have ended up in his assignment through his tutor. In closing, he emphasized that he had never seen the website before, and has not knowingly committed a violation of the Honor Code.

Verdict Deliberations:

Council members believed that a preponderance of the evidence supported that a violation occurred because Student A's questions were verbatim copies of the website in question. The similarities were overwhelming between the two documents, and the Student could not have produced his answers "individually" as the assignment prompt requires. In addition, Student A also consulted a tutor who was not a classmate, when the assignment specifically states that students may only consult classmates.

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

Yes: 9+1 Observing

No: 0

Abstentions: 0

The Council then discussed whether or not Student A committed the violation. Because Student A was the only student involved in the case, the Council decided that he was in violation

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

Yes: 9+1 Observing

No: 0

Abstentions: 0

Penalty Deliberations:

Council members opened by discussing mitigating circumstances. Most Council members agreed that since the assignment was only worth 5% of the course grade, they would mitigate for the weight of the assignment. The Council saw no other mitigating factors relevant to the case. The Council saw no relevant aggravating factors. Council members agreed that suspension would be unwarranted. Most members felt that a 2 or 3 letter grade reduction would be the appropriate for this case.

Most members believed that a 2 letter grade reduction would be appropriate considering the entirety of the case; however, one member advocated that because Student A was blatantly and actively violating the Honor Code, he felt that a 2 letter grade reduction was too lenient.

Vote: 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: 1

3 letter grade reduction: 0

2 letter grade reduction: 8+1 Observing

1 letter grade reduction: 0

Letter of Reprimand: 0

Abstentions: 0

Decision:

The Honor Council thus finds Student A “In Violation” of the Honor Code and recommends that he receive a 2 letter grade reduction in the course. A Prior Violation Flag is also attached to his record.

Time of testimony and deliberations: 40 minutes

Respectfully submitted,
Isabelle Lelogeais
Clerk