

**Abstract of the Honor Council**  
**Case 19, Fall 2013**  
**February 2, 2014**

**Members Present:**

Adriana Bracho (presiding), John Cavallo (clerk), Seth Lauer, Brooke Evans, Mitch Massey, Luke Van Der Spoel, Michael Williams-Hart, Shayak Sengupta, Komal Agrawal, Jake Hassell (observing), Brian Barrow (observing), Mario Aragon (observing)

**Ombuds:** Aubrey Sirtautas, Natalie Danckers (observing)

**Letter of Accusation:**

The Honor Council received a letter accusing Student A of copying off another student during a lower level mathematics final exam.

**Evidence Submitted:**

- Letter of Accusation
- Professor Deposition
- Student A's written statement
- Student A Exam
- Student B Exam
- Witness Depositions
- Accuser Depositions
- Expert Depositions

**Plea:**

Student A pled "Not In Violation."

**Testimony:**

Student A opened testimony by reiterating that he is not in violation of the Honor Code. He described the seating arrangement of the exam room by saying the professor instructed students to sit in such a way that would prevent or make it very difficult for students to view other students' exams. He said that the student he is alleged to copy from was hunched over his exam for most of the exam period and, furthermore, was left-handed which would make it harder to see around him to copy off of.

Going through the accused student's exam, he stated that the last problem on his exam lacked explanatory details because he was running out of time and wanted to get down as much of the answer he could. He also argued that another similarity between the two exams arose from the simplicity of the question and straightforward nature of creating a graph. Another problem from his test which he is alleged to copy from the other student earned higher points and had more detail than the other student. He stated that, after viewing the evidence, it appeared as though he followed the answer key more closely than the other student he is alleged to have copied from. Another argument he brought to his defense is from an expert deposition's opinion that there is no conclusive evidence to suggest any copying.

Moving on to questions from council members, Student A stated that it would be highly difficult to look over someone's shoulders in the testing room because of the high backs of the chairs and low slope of the room. Discussing one of the problems from the exam, Student A described the methodology for working a problem as a strategy taught in class. Although the work is very similar between the two exams, the method was taught as the strategy for solving the problem and that other students in the class should also have solved the problem in a similar manner.

**Verdict Deliberations:**

Council members believed that a preponderance of the evidence supported that a violation had not occurred because both expert depositions indicate that there are vague similarities between the two exams and that the evidence supporting a violation is flimsy and insufficient to substantiate the accuser's statements. Many Council members also argued that the two students' exams had similar but still correct answers. The fact that they had somewhat dissimilar incorrect answers didn't substantiate the accuser's claims that a violation had 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 "Not In Violation" of the Honor Code.

Time of testimony and deliberations: 26 minutes

Respectfully submitted,  
John Cavallo  
Clerk