

**Abstract of the Honor Council**  
**Case 16, Fall 2014**  
**March 19, 2015**

**Members Present:**

Hurst Williamson (presiding), Helen Sharpless (clerk), Maria Montalvo, Isabel Alison, Jake Schneckloth, Billy Rothwell, Josiah Grace, Emilia Duno, Destiney Randolph, Isaac Shultz (observing), Bradley Hamilton (Observing)

**Ombuds:** Jayme Smith

**Letter of Accusation:**

The Honor Council received a letter accusing Student A of unauthorized aid on a final exam for a lower level POLI course.

**Evidence Submitted:**

- Letter of Accusation
- Student A's written statement
- IT deposition

**Plea:**

Student A pled "Not in Violation."

**Testimony:**

In her opening statement Student A said that she was supposed to take the exam for her POLI class. She opened the exam in the morning before a class. She stopped taking the exam to go to class and finish her academic day. She communicated with the professor in order to retake the exam at a different time. She assumed that the exam time would pause and allow her to finish before timing out.

She started taking the exam in the morning 10-15 minutes before a class. She did not try to finish the exam until late at night because of a busy day of academics and practice. She was not aware that she was not able to finish the exam that night until the investigative meeting.

During testimony for the following timeline was presented in the evidence: the exam was started on a Thursday, an email was not sent to the professor until the following Sunday night.

The student was under the impression that the time limit would pause if she logged out of OwlSpace. She did not look at any notes since opening the exam in finishing it.

In her closing statement Student A said that she logged in to take the exam, answered 2 questions, scrolled to the bottom to check how many questions there were, and went to

class. She communicated to the professor who agreed to reset the time for her to complete the exam. At no point did she look at her notes.

### **Verdict Deliberations:**

Council members then discussed whether or not a preponderance of the evidence suggested that a violation occurred. The instructions detailing the time limit of the exam are explicitly clear. The time limits provided by the IT department did not corroborate Student A's her story. Members agreed that a preponderance of the evidence shows that a violation has occurred because Student A opened the exam, completed two questions, and then got an additional two hours to complete the rest of the exam. It was the student's responsibility to know how long the test was and Student A's attempts to gain more time on her exam constituted an unfair advantage over her fellow students.

Some members believed that by allowing her to extend her time, the professor is condoning the "attempted violation." However the Council decided that seeking additional help regardless of the professor's reaction is an Honor Code violation in itself. It is the student's imperative to seek clarification on time limits for exams.

Vote #3: Does a preponderance of the evidence support that a violation occurred?

Yes: 9  
No: 0  
Abstentions: 0

Council members then discussed whether or not Student A was in violation of the Honor Code. No one saw anything to the contrary.

Vote #4: Does a preponderance of the evidence support that Student A committed the violation?

Yes: 9  
No: 0  
Abstentions: 0

The Council then began a discussion of mitigating factors. The Council considered whether or not the exam Honor Code policy was unclear. After brief discussion, the Council decided that the Honor Code for the exam was more than clear on the rules for the exam and the Council decided not to mitigate.

The Council then began a discussion of aggravating factors. Council members decided to aggravate for deceit of the Council and/or false disclosure proven by material evidence since Student A's own version of what occurred was disproven by the IT Deposition.

The Council then began a discussion of appropriate penalties for Student A. The Council decided that while Student A's actions did warrant a more punitive penalty, that the nature of the violation did not automatically warrant failure in the course.

Vote #6: What is the appropriate penalty for Student A?

F in the course and 3 semester suspension:	0
F in the course and 2 semester suspension:	0
F in the course and 1 semester suspension:	0
F in the course:	0
3 letter grade reduction:	8
2 letter grade reduction:	1
1 letter grade reduction:	0
2/3 letter grade reduction:	0
1/3 letter grade reduction:	0
Letter of Reprimand:	0

**Decision:**

The Honor Council thus finds Student A “In Violation” of the Honor Code and recommends to Student Judicial Programs that she receive a 3 letter grade reduction. A prior violation flag is also attached to her record.

Time of testimony and deliberations: 1 hour and 9 minutes

Respectfully submitted,  
Helen Sharpless  
Clerk