

**Abstract of the Honor Council**  
**Case 19, Fall 2014**  
**1/21/15**

**Members Present:**

Hurst Williamson (presiding), Anika Zaman (clerk), Alex Metcalf, Michael Jin, Nick Conard, Billy Rothwell, Natalie Swanson, Owais Syed, Mario Aragon

**Ombuds:** Natalie Danckers

**Letter of Accusation:**

The Honor Council received a letter accusing Student A and Student B of unauthorized collaboration on a paper for a lower-level BIOC course.

**Evidence Submitted:**

- Letter of Accusation
- Student A's written statement
- Student B's written statement
- Student A's paper
- Student B's paper
- Student A's email chain with professor
- Course syllabus
- Student A's original submission
- Student A's second submission

**Plea:**

Student A pled "not in violation."

Student B pled "not in violation."

**Testimony:**

In his opening statement, Student A said that he originally submitted the paper through email. He later went to turn in the paper to the professor in person, but the professor wasn't there. He then left the paper on the floor in front of the door of the building that leads into a number of offices including his professor's and told the professor that he left it there. The next day, the professor told Student A that she did not find a paper. Student A also went to the basement at Brown College and downloaded the paper on a computer there. The professor took off points worth one day of late submission.

In his opening statement Student B provided a copy of the emails between him and the professor to the Honor Council.

Student B submitted the assignment a week after Thanksgiving. He thought that the assignment was due after Thanksgiving. He gave up on the paper, but later decided that he

had sufficient information to submit something. He submitted the paper to the professor by slipping the paper under the professor's door.

Student A looked at the paper submitted by Student B and his own paper and noted that the discussion section of the paper is identical to the discussion section of his own paper. Student A said he did not discuss the paper with Student B at all.

Student B looked at the paper submitted by Student A and his own paper and said that the discussion sections of both papers are the same. He said that he did not know how to explain the situation.

In his closing statement, Student A said that he had no contact with Student B throughout the entire course and the process of writing the paper. He submitted the paper once through email and then later placed the paper in front of the professor's building.

In his closing statement Student B stated that he was surprised with this situation because he had never had contact with Student A before. He said that the reason for this problem was his own inability to stay organized.

### **Verdict Deliberations:**

Council members believed that a preponderance of the evidence supported that a violation occurred because the discussion sections of the two papers were identical.

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: 0

No: 9

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: 9

No: 0

Abstentions: 0

### **Penalty Deliberations:**

Council members opened by discussing mitigating circumstances. The Council agreed that there were not any mitigating factors.

Council members discussed aggravating factors. Members agreed that an aggravating factor was Student B involving another student in Honor Council proceedings by taking the paper of Student A from under the doors and using it to write his own paper.

Appropriate penalties were discussed. Members discussed between F in the course and 1 semester suspension and F in the course and 2 semesters suspension. Members unanimously agreed that suspension was warranted given the blatant nature of the violation on a final paper.

Straw Poll #3: What is the appropriate penalty for Student B?

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:	9
F in the course:	0
3 letter grade reduction:	0
2 letter grade reduction:	0
1 letter grade reduction:	0
Letter of Reprimand	0
Abstentions:	0

**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 F in the course and 1 semester suspension. A Prior Violation Flag is also attached to his record.

Time of testimony and deliberations: 1 hour and 10 minutes

Respectfully submitted,  
Anika Zaman  
Clerk