

Abstract of the Honor Council
Case 1, Fall 2014
September 11, 2014

Members Present:

Hurst Williamson (presiding), Shayak Sengupta (clerk), Michael (Meng) Jin, Michael Zeringue, Julia Liu, John King, Allen Hu, Kristin Sweeney, Sam Kwitkowski

Ombuds: Jayme Smith

Letter of Accusation:

The Honor Council received a letter accusing Student A and Student B of submitting identical portions of an assignment that should have been completed individually for a graduate level business course.

Evidence Submitted:

- Letter of Accusation
- Student A's written statement
- Student B's written statement
- Course Syllabus
- Assignment Prompt
- Student A's Assignment
- Student B's Assignment

Plea:

Student A pled "not in violation."

Student B pled "in violation."

Testimony:

Student A submitted the assignment in question on OwlSpace before class started. Student A then put the assignment on a flash drive and gave it to Student B to print, but given the limited time before the class started, he asked the instructor if electronic submission was acceptable (without any hard copy submission). Student A believed that Student B had completed the assignment before class. Student A did not believe Student B wanted to maliciously use the file as he thought Student B's assignment was completed before he gave the file to Student B to be printed.

Student A did not ask Student B to delete the file and asked Student B in good faith to print the file without realizing that Student B could have looked at the assignment. Student A knew that Student B would have to open the file for reformatting to print. Student A did not ask the instructor if it was permissible for Student B to print the assignment for him. Student A also stated that the file name for his assignment had something along the lines of "Assignment 2" name and that his student ID was inside his assignment's spreadsheet but not in file name. In closing, Student A stated that he was not at fault and not in violation.

Student B understood that the assignment should have been completed individually and did so. Student B stated that Student A asked him to print the assignment in question before class started at 6:15 P.M on August 21. Student B then received the relevant files from Student A via flash drive. Student B stated that the instructor required both a hard copy and a soft copy and asked the instructor if only a soft copy submission was acceptable during the class break. Student B subsequently uploaded the assignment late and accidentally sent Student A's assignment (which was open on his own computer for printing) the day after the assignment was due to the instructor by email (around 2:15-2:30 AM on August 22) because the submission link on OwlSpace was not available after the submission deadline. He did not know when Student A submitted Student A's own assignment individually on OwlSpace. Student B also explained that that part of the his individual assignment was a template the instructor provided with the wording in about 5 cells as his own and the rest being part of the template. In closing, Student B believed that he understood the assignment and the course Honor Code policy. His error was unintentional because he accidentally submitted Student A's assignment.

Verdict Deliberations:

Council members believed that a preponderance of the evidence supported that a violation occurred because evidence showed identical files and student testimony explained that file sharing had happened. The submission of an assignment other than one's own is a violation.

Vote #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. Members agreed that Student A was not in violation because the assignment in question was completed individually. The act of asking another student to print the assignment was not considered a violation.

Vote #2: Does a preponderance of the evidence support that Student A is "In Violation?"

Yes: 0

No: 9

Abstentions: 0

The Council agreed that Student B submitted work that was not his own, so he was in violation. Student B wrote in his written statement he was in violation. Furthermore, Student A did have identification information at the top of his file, so Student B did not maliciously change this information for submission.

Vote #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. Mitigating circumstances include the weight of the assignment as well as cooperation shown to help the Council make a decision. The nature of the violation showed mitigation. The Council did not discuss any aggravating circumstances.

The Council discussed a letter of reprimand or a one letter reduction as possible penalties, but the latter was deemed too punitive.

Vote #4: 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:	0
F in the course:	0
3 letter grade reduction:	0
2 letter grade reduction:	0
1 letter grade reduction:	0
Letter of Reprimand	9
Abstentions:	0

Decision:

The Honor Council thus finds Student A “Not In Violation.” The Honor Council finds Student B “In Violation” of the Honor Code and recommends that he receive letter of reprimand. A Prior Violation Flag is also attached to his record.

Time of testimony and deliberations: 1 hour, 10 minutes

Respectfully submitted,
 Shayak Sengupta
 Clerk