

Abstract of the Honor Council**Case 4, Fall 2014****November 9, 2014****Members Present:**

Hurst Williamson (presiding), Shayak Sengupta (clerk), Michael Jin, Katie Jensen, Billy Rothwell, Helen Sharpless, Isaac Batt, Julia Liu, Maria Montalvo

Ombuds: Divya Bhat**Letter of Accusation:**

The Honor Council received a letter accusing Student A of submitting an exam for a regrade that was not hers in an upper level engineering course.

Evidence Submitted:

- Letter of Accusation
- Student A's written statement
- Professor A's written statement
- Professor B's written statement
- Course syllabus
- Exam submitted by student for regrade to Professor B
- Exam originally submitted by student
- Photo of first page of exam submitted to Professor B for regrade

Plea:

Student A pled "not in violation"

Testimony:

Student A missed two class periods when exams were handed back to the class. She asked Professor B if she could receive her graded exam back. Professor B asked the student to follow him back to his office so she could get the exam. The student went back to the office with Professor B. As they were walking to his office, the student also mentioned to Professor B that on OwlSpace she could not see her exam grade. The student then received her exam from Professor B in his office. After resolving the technical difficulties with OwlSpace, Professor B saw an incorrect grade on OwlSpace for the exam. The student gave the exam he received back to Professor B, who took a picture of the first page of the exam and changed the exam grade on OwlSpace.

Student A never submitted for a formal regrade as she only asked Professor B to change the grade when she received the test back in Professor B's office. After she received the graded exam, she received multiple emails from both Professor A and Professor B asking for a formal regrade request to be sent. The student did not read these emails until much after they were sent.

Verdict Deliberations:

Council members believed that a preponderance of the evidence supported that a violation occurred because according to the scanned exam copies, the student's original exam does not match the one she submitted for a regrade.

The student contradicted herself throughout the testimony, especially concerning who pointed out the grading discrepancy (the student or Professor B).

The Council also put weight on Professor A's testimony that he gave the student's exam back to her. This contradicts the student's claim that she received the exam from Professor B.

Vote #1: 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. Given the contradictions and clear material evidence showing that the exam submitted for a regrade was not the student's original exam, the Council found Student A in violation.

Vote #2: 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. They found none.

Council members then discussed aggravating factors. These included deceit of the council and an attempt to conceal a violation after initial violation had occurred. The Council saw Student A's contradicting testimony as well as her failure to produce the original exams as grounds for these aggravating factors. The student also had defensive responses when these contradictions were questioned. Council members almost considered this case a heinous violation because Student A put another student's academic integrity into question by submitting an unoriginal exam for the regrade.

Vote #4: What is the appropriate penalty for Student A?

F in the course and 3 semesters of suspension: 1
 F in the course and 2 semesters of suspension: 6, 1 observing
 F in the course and 1 semester of suspension: 2
 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

Council members came to this conclusion because Student A's testimony had too many red flags, so a penalty no less than an F in the course was warranted. Members then considered the weight of the aggravating factors, with some members pushing for a one-semester suspension as aggravation and others leaning towards a two-semester suspension. One member mentioned while there were parts of Professor B's testimony that did line up with Student A's, more weight should be put on the testimony of Professor A, who handled grading and other administrative matters for the course.

It was clear to the members that the aggravating factors warranted a harsher penalty. One member cited Student A giving three different versions of her story during testimony. Another member wished that the student whose exam was turned in for a regrade by Student A should have submitted testimony as well.

Decision:

The Honor Council thus finds Student A "In Violation" of the Honor Code and recommends that she receive a F in the course and 2 semesters of suspension. A Prior Violation Flag is also attached to her record.

Time of testimony and deliberations: 2 hours 35 minutes

Respectfully submitted,
Shayak Sengupta
Clerk