

Abstract of the Honor Council
Case #42, Spring 2015
April 23, 2015

Members Present:

Alex Metcalf (presiding), Bradley Hamilton (clerk), Suzanne Wen, Helen Sharpless, Destiney Randolph, Isabel Alison, Shayak Sengupta, Meghana Pannala, Kristen Sweeney

Ombuds: Carey Wang

Letter of Accusation:

The Honor Council received a letter accusing Student A of plagiarizing on the written essay portion of an online exam for a lower level sciences course. The Chair read the Letter of Accusation aloud in full.

Evidence Submitted:

- Letter of Accusation
- Student A's written statement
- Syllabus
- Essay 1 Source of answer
- Essay 2 Source of Answer
- Accused's essay 1
- Accused's essay 2

Plea:

Student A pled "In violation."

Testimony:

Student A took full responsibility for what she did, and what she was accused of. She stated she was aware that it was in violation at the time. The accused stated that students took the exam on a laptop in the classroom, while the teacher came in and out of the room. It said in the syllabus students should avoid internet use outside of the test. The test took place from 2:30-4:00PM.

Closing Statement:

Student A said she panicked at the end of the exam causing her to cheat, and took full responsibility for her actions.

Verdict Deliberations:

The Council found that a preponderance of the evidence supported that a violation occurred because of the evidence presented by the accuser and the testimony made by the student.

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 had committed the violation. The Council saw that there is no evidence to the contrary, and found the student is in violation.

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

Yes: 9

No: 0

Abstentions: 0

Penalty Deliberations:

Council members opened by discussing mitigating circumstances. The Council believed that the amount and weight of the penalty are too large for mitigation, and the Council could have reached the decision without the student’s testimony. The Council thus found no mitigating factors. Some Council members aggravated for the nature of the violation, stating that it was a blatant violation of the Honor Code. The Council decided that the use of the internet should invalidate the total exam rather than only the questions of which there was evidence of the student cheating. Thus the Council decided that Student A did not deserve to receive credit for the course that which the violation occurred.

Vote #3: What is the appropriate penalty for Student A?

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: 2

F in the course: 7

3 letter grade reduction: 0

2 letter grade reduction: 0

1 letter grade reduction: 0

2/3 letter grade reduction: 0

1/3 letter grade reduction: 0

Letter of Reprimand: 0

Abstentions: 0

Decision:

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

Time of testimony and deliberations: Time of deliberation was approximately 20 minutes

Respectfully submitted,

Bradley Hamilton
Clerk