

Abstract of the Honor Council
Case 16, Fall 2015
4/27/2016

Members Present:

Alex Metcalf (presiding), Matt Roorda (clerk), Reece Rosenthal, Sofia Yi, Sara Meadow, Bradley Hamilton,

Ombuds: Sophie Schnitz

Letter of Accusation:

The Honor Council received a letter accusing Student A of cheating on multiple assignments for an upper level COMP course. The Chair read the Letter of Accusation aloud in full.

Evidence Submitted:

- Letter of Accusation
- Student A's written statement
- Course syllabus
- Homeworks 4 & 5 problem statements
- Student A's homeworks 4 & 5
- Homework 4 & 5 solutions
- Homework 4 & 5 submissions from other students
- Clarifying response from professor
- Facebook conversations involving Student A
- Slides from course

Plea:

Student A pled "not in violation."

Testimony:

The Student A first addressed the accusation in regards to assignment 4 problem 1. She pulled up the Wikipedia page from which she had retrieved the algorithm used on the assignment. She stated that whoever wrote the solutions manual must have also used this page. She then mentioned that several other students used the same approach for problem 2. Then, moving on to assignment 5, she stated that the similarity to the answer key came verbatim from slides provided in class. Student A addressed evidence that she had discussed her homework with her cousin, and she noted that their past grades on assignments showed that they were not in the habit of doing badly on assignments. Student A also mentioned that in the past they have been docked points on assignments because graders did not understand their algorithms, even if they worked. The student was aware that outside assistance was prohibited, but did not consider the help garnered by her cousin to qualify, as the help was very general.

Verdict Deliberations:

Council members believed that a preponderance of the evidence supported that a violation occurred because of the extreme similarities in the written answers of assignment 5.

Vote: 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. The Council saw no reason otherwise.

Vote: 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. There were no mitigating factors, however Council decided that Assignment 4 was not in violation. Therefore, they only considered Assignment 5 to be in violation. The Council did not aggravate for anything.

Due to the weight of the assignment, the Council found a one letter grade reduction to be fitting.

Vote: 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: 0

F in the course: 0

3 letter grade reduction: 0

2 letter grade reduction: 0

1 letter grade reduction: 9

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 a one letter grade reduction. A Prior Violation Flag is also attached to her record.

Time of testimony and deliberations: 55 minutes

Respectfully submitted,
Matt Roorda
Clerk