

**Abstract of the Honor Council****Case 7, Fall 2015****12/6/15****Members Present:**

Isabel Alison (presiding), Elliot Baerman (clerk), Jacob Schneckloth, Anika Zaman, Clark Zha, Luke Vanderspoel, Mario Aragon, Yash Tarkunde, Bradley Hamilton

**Ombuds:** Katie Jensen**Letter of Accusation:**

The Honor Council received a letter accusing Student A of plagiarizing on an abstract for an upper level EBIO course. The Chair read the Letter of Accusation aloud in full.

**Evidence Submitted:**

- Letter of Accusation
- Student A's written statement
- Published paper
- Assignment handout
- Student abstract
- Student abstract with highlighted portions
- Other student essays
- Student 1 class notes
- Student 1 letter of support
- External Professor statement
- Student 2 letter of support
- Student 3 class notes
- Student 3 letter of support

**Plea:**

Student A pled "Not in violation"

**Testimony:**

The student stated that EBIO 412 is a course required for EBIO major, limited to senior students in which 7 different styles of writing were learned. The students were given the introduction, methods, and conclusion, but not the title and abstract of a research paper. The assignment entailed reading the paper in its entirety and to write the title and abstract. The assignment due date fell on Rosh Hashanah, and the professor extended the due date to September 17<sup>th</sup> at midnight. Accordingly, the student submitted the assignment on September 17<sup>th</sup>.

The student said that the professor walked through the abstract line by line in class on September 16<sup>th</sup> before the accused submitted assignment on the 17<sup>th</sup>. In this class, the professor read what she wanted to see in abstract, and the accused took notes on this class and used these notes to write the abstract.

The student went through each phrase that was highlighted as potentially plagiarized and gave a detailed explanation of how he came to write each one on his own without the aid of the actual abstract. The student was unsure whether the teacher knew if the student's assignment had been submitted before class on the 16<sup>th</sup>.

The student reaffirmed that the paper was turned in on the extension date and that there was an opportunity in class to go over the paper. The accused stated that only the notes and other portions of the paper were used to write the abstract, which was not a violation.

### **Verdict Deliberations:**

Council members believed that a preponderance of the evidence supported that a violation did not occur because the explanations for the similarities in the paper were in great detail and seemed plausible. The students were permitted to use other parts of the paper, which could account for similar wording as well as the fact that the professor went over the abstract in class before the due date. Additionally, members felt that a preponderance of the evidence failed to support a finding of "In Violation".

Vote #1: Does a preponderance of the evidence support that a violation occurred?

Yes: 0

No: 9

Abstentions: 0

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

Yes: 0

No: 9

Abstentions: 0

Time of testimony and deliberations: 1:30

Respectfully submitted,  
Elliot Baerman  
Clerk