

Abstract of the Honor Council
Case 8, Fall 2015
11/21/2015

Members Present:

Alex Metcalf (presiding), Meghana Pannala (clerk), Claire Bonnyman, Billy Rothwell, Matt Roorda, Suzanne Wen, Jacob Schneckloth, and Ishmael Loera

Ombuds: Katie Jensen

Letter of Accusation:

The Honor Council received a letter accusing Student A of plagiarism on a paper for a Lower level BIOC course. The Chair read the Letter of Accusation aloud in full.

Evidence Submitted:

- Letter of Accusation
- Student A's written statement
- Professor Grade clarification
- BIOC 201 syllabus
- Paper instructions
- Source paper
- Student paper

Plea:

Student A pled "in violation"

Testimony:

The student stated that the paper was due immediately after the due date of a larger project and she did not realize that "what she was doing was wrong," because she wrote the paper while she was sleep-deprived.

The student said she did not copy and paste from the source paper at any time and that she understands that this was a violation of the honor code. This paper was her first piece of academic writing at Rice.

Verdict Deliberations:

Council members believed that a preponderance of the evidence supported that a violation occurred because of the correspondence between source paper and student paper.

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.

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.

Council member will be mitigating for the weight of the assignment, since it only comprises about 2% of the student’s grade.

- The council recommends a 2/3rds letter grade reduction, to account for weight of the assignment and the punitive aspect
- The Council believes that taking a zero on the assignment itself would be a 1/3rd letter grade reduction, plus an additional third would be punitive
- Almost the entire paper was pulled from the source paper

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: 0
 F in the course: 0
 3 letter grade reduction: 0
 2 letter grade reduction: 0
 1 letter grade reduction: 0
 2/3 letter grade reduction 9
 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 2/3rd letter grade reduction.

Time of testimony and deliberations: 20 minutes

Respectfully submitted,
 Meghana Pannala
 Clerk