

Abstract of the Honor Council
Case 29, Fall 2016
Mar 21, 2016

Members Present:

Alex Metcalf (presiding), Reece Rosenthal (clerk), Sara Meadow, Natalie Swanson, Allie Salter, Owais Syed, Claire Bonnyman, Anika Zaman, Katie Jensen, Jake Weinhardt (observing), Hiahao Liu (observing), Ellen Diemert (observing),

Ombuds: Kenton Whitmire

Letter of Accusation:

The Honor Council received a letter accusing Student A and B of conversing/cheating during the final examination for a LOWER level Econ course. The Chair read the Letter of Accusation aloud in full.

Evidence Submitted:

- Letter of Accusation
- Student A's written statement 1
- Student B's written statement 1
- Student C's written statement 1
- Student Written Statements 2
- Exams (MC) of the Students
- Summary of Results
- Syllabus
- TA Statement
- TA Statement 2
- Analysis of the results

Plea:

Student A pled "NOT IN VIOLATION"

Student B pled "NOT IN VIOLATION"

Testimony:

Student A:

Student A pointed out that he studied very meticulously throughout the semester by supplying evidence supporting notetaking/studying. Student A insisted that he maintained his honesty during the examination. Student A insisted that there was no talking or conferring with any other students, and that no warning by the TA's and Professors occurred. Student A was not warned during the first or second midterm, insisting other students were warned but not him. Student stated that the warnings were not in the statements of the TA's, either. He noted that did not show the answer sheet, and that his paper was turned in before the exam time was complete. In response to the similarity of

the answers, the student indicated that statistically speaking there will be some students that have made the same choices as student A did on their examination.

The student stated that student A and B studied together. Student indicated that his workload was incredibly stressful so they were not able to study together during the midterms. Student could not remember if he had accidentally moved the exam, hence why the TA indicated that there was copying.

Student B:

Student B indicated that, all of the midterms exams were not alike in any way. Student B claimed that the students warned during the midterm were not them, but instead were a different group of students. Student B insisted that he did not confer on any of the exams. Student B said that the accusation is false, and that they were not allowed to get professor clarifications. He stated that the probability of getting the same answer isn't simply $\frac{1}{4}$ -- it depends on the way it was taught, the performance of students on particular questions, the way the question was asked, etc. Student B also indicated that he and the other accused student studied together before the examination. The second TA statement, the student contended, is unreasonable because it was only written by the TA in front of them, even though it was written three months after the examination. Student B stressed the pressure put on by the accusation, given his alleged innocence.

Student B indicated that it would have been impossible for the TA at the front to make eye contact, given the distance across the room.

Student B said that there was no point where he looked at the student's paper, and that they looked at the clock behind him, not the test.

Student B insisted that no talking took place.

Verdict Deliberations:

Council members believed that a preponderance of the evidence supported that a violation occurred.

Council members determined that the statistical analysis was conclusive, as it pointed to the unlikelihood that the students would get the same answers without somehow collaborating. The similarity of the midterms seemed to indicate a violation has occurred.

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

Yes: 9 (3 observing)

No: 0

Abstentions: 0

The Council then discussed whether or not Student A committed the violation.

The Council saw no directionality and saw no reason why both students were not in violation.

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

Yes: 9 (3 observing)

No: 0

Abstentions: 0

Vote #3: Does a preponderance of the evidence support that Student B is “In Violation?”

Yes: 9 (3 observing)

No: 0

Abstentions: 0

Penalty Deliberations:

Council members opened by discussing mitigating circumstances.

Council members determined that there was no reason to mitigate or aggravate. Initially, some were willing to mitigate for amount given that only a portion of the assessment was available for comparison between the accused students. However, the council members determined that the amount of the assignment was significant enough to not mitigate for such things.

There was a discussion about whether or not suspension would be an appropriate punishment.

Vote #6: 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: 8 (2 obs)

F in the course: 1 (1 obs)

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

Vote #7: What is the appropriate penalty for Student B?

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: 8 (2 obs)

F in the course: 1 (1 obs)

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 and Student B “In Violation” of the Honor Code and recommends that both Student A and Student B receive an F in the course and 1 semester of suspension. A Prior Violation Flag is also attached to both of their records.

Time of testimony and deliberations: 2 hours

Respectfully submitted,
Reece Rosenthal
Clerk