

Abstract of the Honor Council
Case 48, Spring 2016
May 1, 2016

Members Present:

Katie Jensen (presiding), Alex Metcalf (clerk), Sara Meadow, Jake Reinhart, Mario Aragon, Allen Hu

Ombuds: Kenton Whitmire

Letter of Accusation:

The Honor Council received a letter accusing Student A of falsifying an exam regrade request for an upper level chemical and biomolecular engineering course. The Chair read the Letter of Accusation aloud in full.

Evidence Submitted:

- Letter of Accusation
- Student A's written statement
- Professor Clarification
- Email Chains
- Syllabus
- Student Midterm (Exam and Copy)

Plea:

Student A pled "not in violation".

Testimony:

Student stated that the letter of accusation was the first time she understood what she was being accused of. The student stated that the accuser's interpretation of what happened was not the reality of the situation.

The student stated she was not going in for a regrade, but felt she did not earn sufficient points and wanted to understand why. The student said that she directed the professor to a specific point on the assessment, and asked if she would have gotten points back for specific problems.

The student stated that she assumed the professor was aware that the student had taken notes on the exam, and that she added additional notes after the attempted exam regrade request. The student said she had made assumptions, but failed to state them on the exam.

The student stated that she was taking this class pass/fail, and therefore had no reason to attempt to earn more points back. The student said that she believes that the accuser assumed she was guilty.

In her closing statement, the student restated that she went to ask the professor questions on the exam, but that she was not attempting to gain more points back. The student again stated that she did not cheat on this, and stood to gain nothing from an attempt to cheat.

Verdict Deliberations:

Council members believed that a preponderance of the evidence supported that a violation occurred because the language of the student’s email indicated that the student appeared to be seeking a regrade request. This was reinforced by the testimony of the professor.

The Council discussed the expectations of the professors and students, and how the regrade policy was timed. Council members had some concerns about the timing of the regrade request, and the ambiguity of the request’s nature. Council members raised a few points of conflict between the testimony of the student and the evidence submitted, including the student’s language in the email.

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

Yes: 6
 No: 0
 Abstentions: 0

The Council then discussed whether or not Student A committed the violation. The Council saw no reason otherwise.

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

Yes: 6
 No: 0
 Abstentions: 0

Penalty Deliberations:

Council members opened by discussing mitigating circumstances. Council members discussed mitigating for cooperation/substantial disclosure, and possibly the amount of the assignment that was demonstrably not in violation.

The Council reviewed the nature of this violation, and decided between assessing this violation as a significant miscommunication between the professor and the student, or a deliberate act on the part of the student to commit a violation. In reaching the decision, the Council primarily considered it a miscommunication.

Vote #5: 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:	1
1 letter grade reduction:	5
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 in the course. A Prior Violation Flag is also attached to record.

Time of testimony and deliberations: 1 hour.

Respectfully submitted,
Alex Metcalf
Clerk