

**Abstract of the Honor Council**  
**Case 16, Fall 2016**  
**February 5, 2017**

**Members Present:**

Katie Jensen (presiding), Stefano Romano (clerk), Jacob Kesten, Joanne Kim, Ike Arjmand, Grant Wilkinson

**Ombuds:** Aaron Shaw

**Letter of Accusation:**

The Honor Council received a letter accusing Student A and Student B of collaborating on an examination for an upper level MUSI course. The Chair read the Letter of Accusation aloud in full.

**Evidence Submitted:**

- Letter of Accusation
- Student A's written statement
- Student B's written statement
- Course syllabus
- Student A's examination
- Student B's examination
- Exam instructions
- Email chain between Students A and B

**Plea:**

Student A pled "In Violation."

Student B pled "Not In Violation."

**Testimony:**

Student A made no opening statement. Student A stated that she asked for Student B's exam under the guise of wanting to compare answers after having completed the exam, but that she actually copied Student B's answers onto her own exam. Student A stated that Student B was not aware that she was copying her answers from Student B's exam. Student A closed by stating that she is in violation of the honor code, and will accept any penalty that the Council assigns to her.

Student B started by stating that she did provide Student A with a copy of her exam, but that she did not think that Student A would use the exam to commit an honor code violation. Student B stated that she did not read the exam instructions closely, and that she did not see that there was to be no discussion of the exam until after the semester concluded. Student B closed by stating that she is not in violation, because she thought that discussing the exam answers after the exam did not constitute a violation, and that she did not know that Student A had not submitted her exam yet.

**Verdict Deliberations:**

Council members believed that a preponderance of the evidence supported that a violation occurred because the two exams were identical and the testimony of the accused students supported that a violation had occurred.

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 Students A and B committed the violation. The Council saw no reason why Students A and B did not commit a violation, as discussing the exam was explicitly explained in the exam instructions as an honor code violation and copying answers is a violation.

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

Yes: 6  
 No: 0  
 Abstentions: 0

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

Yes: 6  
 No: 0  
 Abstentions: 0

**Penalty Deliberations:**

Council members opened by discussing mitigating circumstances. Council members saw no mitigating factors because aid was given and received on the entirety of the exam. Council members then discussed aggravating factors. The Council decided to aggravate for Student A for actions that were deemed harmful to the academic environment and collective honor of Rice University, in purposefully deceiving another student. The Council did not find any aggravating factors for Student B. According to the Consensus Penalty Structure, an exam worth 10% of the total course grade corresponds to a two letter grade reduction, so the Council started with this penalty as a baseline.

Vote #4: 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: 6  
 2 letter grade reduction: 0  
 1 letter grade reduction: 0  
 Letter of Reprimand: 0  
 Abstentions: 0

Vote #5: 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:	0
F in the course:	0
3 letter grade reduction:	0
2 letter grade reduction:	6
1 letter grade reduction:	0
Letter of Reprimand	0
Abstentions:	0

**Decision:**

The Honor Council thus finds Students A and B “In Violation” of the Honor Code and recommends that Student A receive a 3 letter grade reduction and that Student B receive a 2 letter grade reductions. A Prior Violation Flag is also attached to their records.

Time of testimony and deliberations: 40 minutes

Respectfully submitted,  
Stefano Romano  
Clerk