

## **Abstract of the Honor Council**

**Case #42, Spring 2020**

**June 5, 2020**

### **Members Present:**

Ricky Robinson (presiding), Virginia Xie (clerk), Kaitlyn Crowley, Matey Yanakiev, Caroline Brehm, and William Wang

**Ombuds:** Dylan Glenn

### **Letter of Accusation:**

The Honor Council received a letter accusing Student A of using the textbook solution manual on the final exam for an upper level COMP course. Specifically, one question on the exam had an incorrect solution in the solution manual that was nearly identical to Student A's answer on the final exam. The Chair read the Letter of Accusation aloud in full.

### **Evidence Submitted:**

- Letter of Accusation
- Student A's written statement
- Course syllabus
- Textbook sections
- Final exam
- Student A's final exam
- Textbook solution manual
- Expert testimony
- Additional student-provided detailed explanations
- Student A's initial draft of final exam

### **Plea:**

Student A pled "not in violation."

### **Testimony:**

Student A started by explaining the professor's guidelines for the Honor Code policy for the course. Student A said that she never downloaded the solutions for the exam and only used the textbook to study. She claimed that she didn't copy from the solution manual and came up with the solution on her own. She added that it was easy to make an arithmetic error due to the number of calculations involved. Student A explained both the textbook and the solution manual were based on the same method of solving and gave a detailed explanation of how she solved the question on the exam. She explained that she initially arrived at the correct solution but then wrote down the incorrect answer when double-checking her work.

**Verdict Deliberations:**

Council members believed that a preponderance of the evidence supported that a violation occurred because Student A made the same strange mistake that the textbook manual did. Student A wrote the correct answer but then arrived at an incorrect solution in the same format that the textbook manual did. Council members found the student’s explanation that she made an arithmetic error while checking her work unlikely due to the unusual format of the error.

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.

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 and did not find any mitigating factors. Council members then discussed aggravating factors and did not find any aggravating factors.

The CPS penalty for this case, based on the weight of the assignment (5.4%), is a two letter grade reduction.

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: 6  
1 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 letter grade reduction.

Time of testimony and deliberations: 1 hr.

Respectfully submitted,

Virginia Xie

Clerk