

## **HONOR and DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE REPORT 2010-11**

### **To: Faculty, Staff, and Students**

The Honor and Discipline Committee reports to the College each year about the nature of the cases it has heard, the judgments made, and the penalties it has determined. This report covers the meetings of the committee that reviewed cases that occurred during the 2010-2011 school year. Following this report is a report on disciplinary activity in the Dean's office.

1. A first year student and a sophomore were accused of violating the Honor Code by collaborating significantly on homework. While some collaboration was permitted, the syllabus stated clearly that each student must write up his or her own solutions. The two students wrote up some solutions together, and did not note their collaboration on the homework as the syllabus required. Because the Committee felt that the students were genuinely unaware that they had collaborated beyond the degree encouraged or permitted, the committee found them guilty but imposed only a sanction of failure in the assignment.
2. Two first year students were accused of substantially sharing information to produce architectural sketches. Upon investigation, the Committee found that the students worked on drawings for the same building at the same time, but that they did not collaborate in ways that violated the Honor Code.
3. One first year student and one sophomore were accused of substantially sharing information to produce architectural sketches. Upon investigation, the Committee found that the students worked on drawings for the same building at the same time, but that they did not collaborate in ways that violated the Honor Code.
4. A sophomore was accused of submitting a bibliography that contained plagiarized annotations. The student explained how this came about – that the bibliographic software brought over the annotations from sources automatically, which she was not aware of. The committee found the student guilty, pointing out that the Honor Code does not merely require students to avoid cheating intentionally, but also requires students to act affirmatively to ensure that the work they turn in represents their own efforts and to carefully and explicitly acknowledge any contributions of others. The sanction was failure in the assignment.
5. A sophomore was accused of referring to a sheet of notes placed behind her chair during a quiz. Another student reported this case, and explained that she had observed the accused student repeatedly twisting and turning in her chair during the quiz, apparently in order to see the notes. The student argued that she did twist and turn due to long term back difficulties, but that she had not looked at or seen her notes. The Committee was unconvinced by this argument, and voted to

- recommend failure in the course with disciplinary probation as sanctions. The Dean elected to adjust the sanction to failure in the assignment with one semester of disciplinary probation.
6. A senior was accused of plagiarizing the majority of a paper from an online source. In the hearing, the student readily admitted having done this, and explained the difficult circumstances that surrounded her actions. Because this was a second violation for this student, the committee voted to suspend the student for one semester, along with failure in the course and disciplinary probation when she returned to campus.
  7. A first year student was accused of violating the honor code in a paper by using both verbatim text and very close paraphrases from two books without proper attribution. The student agreed that she had done this, and that she was very troubled to have done so. She related a lack of familiarity with how to write research papers, and some anxiety about doing so. The committee recommended a sanction of failure in the course, and encouraged the student to work with deans and the writing workshop, which she did.
  8. A senior was accused of writing a paper that contained large verbatim sections from several on-line sources, without quotation or attribution. The student admitted to having done so. The committee recommended a sanction of failure in the course.
  9. A senior was accused of plagiarizing several sections of a paper. The student admitted having done so and expressed significant remorse. The sanction was failure in the course.
  10. A sophomore and a junior were accused of collaborating on a problem set beyond what was acceptable in the course, and of not citing one another as collaborators. The students explained that they had discussed in a group, at some length, the ideas needed to solve the problem. They had also relied on a previous class they had taken in common in developing the approach to their solution. The students agreed that the level of discussion they had on the problem was significant, and that they should have cited one another. The committee found both students guilty of failing to cite a collaborator, a violation of the honor code. After hearing the discussion the faculty member determined that the collaboration itself was acceptable. The committee assigned a sanction of failure in the assignment to each student.
  11. A sophomore was accused of plagiarizing significant sections of a paper from an online source, without attribution. The student agreed that she had done this. The committee assigned a sanction of failure in the course with disciplinary probation for one semester.

12. A student observed another student interacting with his cell phone during a midterm exam in a manner that raised Honor Code concerns. The accused student claimed that the cell phone was used only as a calculator, which was permitted. After discussion, the committee found that there was not sufficient evidence to show a violation of the honor code in this case.
13. A senior was accused of two violations in one course. The first was using a cell phone during an exam. The second was working with the Teaching Assistant to make corrections to a paper, in a manner that was explicitly forbidden in the course syllabus. The student did cite the teaching assistant as having provided the assistance. The committee found the student not guilty in the matter of the cell phone, but guilty in the matter of working with the Teaching Assistant, and assigned a sanction of failure in the assignment.
14. A first year student was accused of presenting to a professor a program that was taken almost entirely from an online source. The program was shown to the professor informally, as evidence of work in progress, and not formally turned in for a grade. Nevertheless, the committee found this was a clear violation of the honor code as the student had represented work as his own when that work was, in fact, done by others. The committee assigned a sanction of failure in the course.
15. A second-semester senior was accused of submitting a paper that included multiple verbatim sections from sources without any attribution or quotation marks. The committee found the student guilty of plagiarism. This was this student's third violation of the Honor Code. The Committee voted unanimously that the student be expelled from the College. The Dean and the President concurred with the committee's decision (as is necessary for expulsion.)
16. A first year student submitted a paper that was drawn significantly from a website that was not cited. The paper included several sentences drawn verbatim from that site without attribution. The Committee voted a sanction of failure in the course.
17. A sophomore was found to have cheated on a take home final exam. She took the problems from the exam and asked her peer tutor to help her with them, telling the tutor that these were practice problems. The Committee found this to be a particularly egregious violation of the honor code, as it involved a second student and an extensive and planned deception over the course of several days. The Committee assigned a sanction of failure in the class with disciplinary probation until graduation.
18. A junior was accused of cheating on a final exam. The exam was closed book, but the student's response on one of the questions contained several sentences nearly verbatim from Wikipedia, and several others that were very close paraphrases. The student maintained her innocence, claiming that she had

memorized these portions of the answers while studying, and then reproduced them on the exam. The committee was unconvinced by this explanation, and found the student guilty of violation the honor code, with a sanction of failure in the course plus one semester of disciplinary probation.

19. A sophomore was accused of cheating on a final exam. Her essay contained verbatim phrases and close paraphrases from three online book reviews, without attribution. The student agreed that she had violated the honor code, and the committee assigned a sanction of failure in the course.

### **Dean's Office Action**

For the 2010-2011 academic year, there were 18 formal disciplinary actions taken by the Dean's Office;

One student was expelled from the College for repeated Honor Code violations.

Five students were suspended for violations of the College's Code of Conduct. These violations included sexual assault, drug distribution, and stealing.

One student was suspended for an Honor Code violation.

Four students were placed on disciplinary probation for Honor Code violations. In addition, three students were placed on disciplinary probation for exhibiting other behavior not in accordance with the College's Standard of Conduct.

Five students received written reprimands for exhibiting behavior not in accordance with the College's Standard of Conduct.

The Deans' office and Security Department conduct initial discussions with students about underage drinking and marijuana smoking; these discussions are not a part of the students' disciplinary record. There were 60 such discussions involving the Dean's office. In many cases these discussions are followed by referrals to a Health Educator.

The Dean's office also conducts conversations over minor disciplinary concerns with students that do not rise to the level of requiring formal action.

Respectfully submitted, 2010-2011 Honor and Discipline Committee

Peter Just, Faculty Chair

Cecelia Davis -Hayes, Student Chair

Sarah Bolton, Dean of the College