

October 2005

To: Faculty, Staff, and Students:

The Honor and Discipline Committee reports to the College twice each year about the nature of the cases it has heard, the judgments it has made, and the penalties it has determined. This report covers the meetings of the Committee that reviewed cases that occurred during the Spring 2005 semester. Following this report is a report on disciplinary activity in the Dean's Office.

Report of the Honor Committee

The Committee heard eight cases during the Spring 2005 semester.

1. A senior voluntarily came forward to admit that they had consulted class notes in a closed book take-home exam. While the Committee greatly appreciated the student's honesty and courage in confessing to this behavior, this was a clear violation of the Honor Code and the Committee imposed a sanction of failure in the course and a Letter of Warning.
2. A senior was accused of cheating on a take-home exam. The written evidence, analysis of card reader information, and testimony by a friend who observed the student taking the exam, convinced the Committee that the student was innocent.
3. During an exam, a first-year student was found to possess a calculator that had formulas pertinent to the exam hidden in part of its memory. The student admitted to placing the formulas on the calculator, but claimed that they did not consult them during the exam. The Committee determined that the student was guilty of an Honor Code violation for intentionally hiding information in the calculator. While the student ultimately did not use the information to their advantage, their behavior constituted a violation of academic honesty, which is at the core of the Honor Code. The Committee imposed the sanction of one year of Disciplinary Probation. A second first-year that used the same calculator during the exam was determined to have no knowledge of the hidden formulas.
4. Two first-year students were accused of cheating on an in-class exam due to the highly unusual degree of identity between the two tests. Given the behavior of the two students during the exam, the professor suspected that one copied from the other without the other's knowledge. Both students maintained their innocence, but the highly unusual nature of the exams as compared to other exams convinced the Committee that copying did take place. One student was found innocent as they had no knowledge of the copying, and the second was found guilty. The Committee imposed failure in the course and Disciplinary Probation for two years.

5. A sophomore was accused of plagiarizing from a source on the Internet. While the student maintained that they did not represent someone else's ideas as their own, it became clear that the student was not properly paraphrasing, nor did the student fully understand the rules of proper attribution. The Committee determined that the student did violate the Honor Code and when a harsher penalty did not reach the required three-quarter majority, imposed Disciplinary Probation until graduation and required that the student work with a tutor from the Writing Workshop.

6. A junior was accused of making false statements to a Professor in order to avoid timely submission of their work. The Committee determined that the evidence supported this accusation and found that there were a series of false statements to the Professor. While the accused student maintained their innocence, the Committee found the evidence overwhelmingly supported the conclusion that the student did commit this infraction. The Committee found the student guilty and imposed failure in the course and Disciplinary Suspension for one semester.

7. A first-year student was accused of plagiarizing from a source found on the Internet and presenting the work as their own. In addition, the student did not include a required bibliography with their paper. The student claimed that they had paraphrased to the best of their ability and admitted to using the source without proper citation due to being under time pressure to complete the assignment. The Committee found the student guilty and imposed failure in the course and required that the student work with a tutor from the Writing Workshop.

8. Two sophomores were accused of inappropriate collaboration on a lab report. The students openly and honestly described their collaboration and maintained that they had had conversations with the instructor that led them to believe that their collaboration was permitted. The instructor corroborated their statements. The Committee determined that the incident was the result of a miscommunication between all parties and found the students not guilty.

Report of the Discipline Committee

The Discipline Committee consists of all members of the Honor Committee plus four additional members of the faculty. All members of the Committee vote. The Discipline Committee heard no appeals during the Spring 2005 semester.



Respectfully submitted

2005-2006 Honor-Discipline Committee:

Professor Jay Thoman, Faculty Chair
Andrew Eyre '06, Student Chair
Nancy A. Roseman, Dean of the College

Dean's Office Action

- During the Spring 2005 Semester, there was one student suspended for violation of community standards regarding harassment of another student.

The Security Department conducts initial discussions with students about underage drinking and marijuana smoking; these discussions are not a part of the students' disciplinary record. For the Spring 2005 semester there were 76 such discussions. In especially problematic cases, or in the case of repeated warnings, the student is referred to the Dean's Office.