

Abstracts AC26- AC27

Professors Simon, Professor Randy and Students Paula and Britney in Computer Science AC26

Paula was an undergraduate student in Professor Simon and Professor Randy's 100-level Computer Science course. Over the summer Professor Simon and Professor Randy took it upon themselves to catalog many past semesters' worth of assignments to evaluate how to best proceed with modifying class structure for the upcoming school year. In doing so, they came across the submitted work of Paula. Oddly enough many of Paula's assignment were like that of Britney's- a student who had taken the course 2 semesters before Paula. Professor Simon contacted Paula and asked that she report herself to the Honor Board.

In Paula's statement to the Honor Board she revealed that out of the 7 major assignments for the class, Paula did not complete 4 by herself. She felt that these particular assignments required a lot of time and creative effort that she simply could not invest because she was under significant stress due to issues at home- which her Dean could vouch for. She expressed that the work in question was all her own coding- but the creativity and ideas behind them were that of Britney's. Britney often shared her finished projects with Paula because she was proud of how they had come out. Britney had no idea that sharing her enthusiasm over classwork would lead to intellectual theft- least of all by a friend. Professor Simon commented that Paula was a great student and most likely knew the material as she had performed exceptionally well during in-class exams. Paula offered to re-do the assignments because she knew the material, but simply lacked the creativity. Professor Simon would accept the work, but felt the issue of stealing the ideas of a peer needed to be further discussed.

The Honor Board resolved that Paula write a letter of thanks, reflection and apology to Professors Simon and Randy by a specified date and that Paula speak to the friend from whom she had stolen work and ideas of and acknowledge that she had inappropriately used her friends' intellectual property with no concern for what that meant to community, peer-to-peer honesty and trust. Paula was also warned that a second appearance in front of the Honor Board will be dealt with more severely. No grade penalty was recommended by the Honor Board since the Professor expressed that he would rather not assign a grade penalty and that he did encourage collaboration in the class, but did not define the extent to which collaboration was acceptable.

Professor Austin and Student Felicity in Computer Science AC27

Felicity was a junior in Professor Austin's 300-level Computer Science course. Felicity had to excuse herself from academics to address personal medical concerns. She would miss class and would often request extensions for assignments. At the end of the semester Professor Austin looked over all the submitted work in order to determine final grades and found that 3 out of 5 of Felicity's problem sets were never handed in. While each did not make up a large part of her class grade, he should have received them by now. Professor Austin then asked Felicity to submit the assignments and Felicity assured him that she already had. A few hours later she "re-submitted" 2 out of the 3 missing assignments, but upon evaluating these assignments Professor Austin noticed that what was just handed in were based off of the answer keys he had already posted for the class. Coincidentally the third assignment Felicity failed to resubmit did not have an answer key up on the class Moodle site. Professor Austin also looked into the metadata that accompanies files and it showed that the student did not spend significant time completing the assignment- which led him to believe Felicity in no way completed these assignments on her own.

In Felicity's statement she included screenshots of the re-submitted assignments in question and they proved that she did in fact complete them when she said she did- and because she worked on a Mac, she converted them into something more PC compatible before she resubmitted them to Professor Austin- which would account for the information he was able to get from the metadata. However, when the Honor Board observed the files Felicity shared with the Honor Board and the ones she has sent to Professor Austin submission, they found that they were different. They had different file accompanying details and were of different sizes.

The Honor Board resolved that Felicity receive an 0.0 on both of the assignments in questions and have her final grade for the course recalculated to reflect that. She was also asked to write a reflective essay to submit to the Dean of the College by a specified date discussing what is meant by conducting oneself with honor and integrity.