

Re: Academic Dishonesty

Muhammad Ahmad Mahmood <23100222@lums.edu.pk>

Sun 5/22/2022 12:21 PM

To: Razi Allah Lone <razi.lone@lums.edu.pk>

Dear Sir,

I would still stand by my statement that the final exam was extremely easy as compared to quizzes. And it doesn't even invalidate your experience. These two truths can co-exist. What seems easy to me might not be easy for others.

About the part 1 and part 2 thing; As far as I remember, the questions were pretty similar, so I don't know why I didn't get more marks in part 1. Maybe it was because of the time constraint in part 1. Or maybe the questions in part 1 were difficult for me, but I can't argue that without revisiting the questions first.

All the things that you have mentioned can indeed lead to the *probable* conclusion that I cheated. But even a non-Einstein would realize that it's not necessary for a probable thing to be also true.

And my dropping GPA *is* evidence of my honesty. It's common knowledge that in online semesters those who cheated left toppers behind, and those who refused to cheat suffered a decline in grades due to skyrocketing means. If you don't want to believe this harsh reality, it's your choice. Just discard this argument. But please do not be so cruel as to discredit the sufferings of many students.

Anyway, it seems like you have already reached a conclusion. You already believe that I have cheated. Even though you only have circumstantial evidence, which does not prove me guilty conclusively. The save-your-breath-for-the-DC-hearing vibe in the last part of your email suggests that you have either forwarded my case to DC or will do so soon. Now, if you were even entertaining the possibility of me being innocent, you would have chosen to evaluate my understanding of final questions or my general understanding of logic through viva or evaluation before resorting to DC. It feels like you are not looking for *evidence* to prove your *hypothesis* but *reasons* to justify your *belief*. And in my experience with people, usually, there is no amount of evidence you can provide to make someone abandon their beliefs.

I should save the rest of my defense for the DC hearing. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Regards,

Muhammad Ahmad Mahmood

2023-10-0222

From: Razi Allah Lone <razi.lone@lums.edu.pk>

Sent: Sunday, May 22, 2022 7:08 AM

To: Muhammad Ahmad Mahmood <23100222@lums.edu.pk>

Subject: Re: Academic Dishonesty

The long email was expected, so no surprise there. One, the quizzes were different from the final exam but not "extremely different". Two, MCQ-based exams are not necessarily easy and the general results that I have seen for many years do not bear out your statement. Three, if the final exam questions were really easy for you, you should have done much better in the part that was actually easy. The reality is that you got twice as many questions wrong in the easy part than you did in the more challenging part.

It doesn't take an Einstein to figure out that something is amiss. Four, the logical connection between your performance in the course and your performance in the final is not weak but makes good sense. It is not being presented deductively but renders the conclusion probable. Telling me that your GPA dropped to 2.45 is actually you making a case against yourself.

I have not created a false dilemma. If you read closely, the second option gives a way out by allowing you a chance to defend yourself in front of the DC.

I appreciate your effort to use the learning in this course for constructing arguments to defend your position. It would be good to use this learning in DC hearings.

Regards,

Razi Allah Lone | Teaching Fellow
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From: Muhammad Ahmad Mahmood <23100222@lums.edu.pk>
Sent: Saturday, May 21, 2022 12:20 PM
To: Razi Allah Lone <razi.lone@lums.edu.pk>
Subject: Re: Academic Dishonesty

Walaikum Assalam Sir,

First of all, the **quizzes were extremely different from the final exam**. Not just in the format but also in the nature of questions. **In quizzes, we needed more technical knowledge**. The quiz would give an argument and ask if it's ambiguous or vague and why? Now even if we answer correctly, we can still lose marks for not giving an explanation or appropriate explanation.

Now, **the final exam was more about the logic that we would use in daily life**. Like what would render an argument weak or make it strong. It didn't need much technical knowledge of the subject except for maybe the logical fallacy part (which we had also covered in the Writing and Communication course). And this made the exam extremely easy for me because I might not be good at the technical part of logic, but **I have a strong sense of logic in terms of reasoning. You can confirm this by asking my project partners**. I was highly involved in the hours-long discussions we did on the project, and they must have a good idea of my logical reasoning. (I haven't been in contact with them since after the presentation, so their evaluation will be unbiased.)

On top of that, **the exam was MCQ-based. It's easier to score in MCQs as compared to subjective questions**. In MCQs, you can just look at options and figure out the answer. Even if you don't know the answer, just eliminating the ridiculously wrong options, you can be left with 3 or 2 or, in the best case, only 1 option to choose from, which increases the probability of you getting it right from 25% to 50%, 75% or even 100%. Or, let's say in the fallacy question, you are confused between two types, then you look at options, and only one of them is present. Now you know what to choose.

Also, the **final exam questions were really easy** (at least for me). There was this meme going around after the exam that said that logic exam was as easy as an SAT. So, this opinion is clearly shared by others too.

Moreover, **my getting more marks in the final compared to quizzes is not a miracle but a carefully planned move.** I didn't pay much attention to quizzes because I planned to nail the final exam. I have used this strategy in other courses too. I had 8/30 marks in mid-1 of CS-300 and 61/94 in its final exam. And it was an in-person written exam. Through some very basic background research on me, you can confirm this trend in courses too.

Furthermore, **it is an established fact and common sense that CP score is not a good representative of understanding of the course material or a good predictor variable for final exam score.**

The thing is that the **logical connection that you presuppose between my quiz & CP marks and my final exam marks is logically weak**, which renders your conclusion invalid or, at best, uncogent (depending on whether you intended it to be inductive or deductive).

And please note that I am a junior. I have had two DHLs in the first two years. But my GPA dipped to 2.45 in the last two semesters due to high means. **If I was the type to cheat my way to the top, I wouldn't be standing here** but would be at the top of the food chain.

What you have constructed in the above email is a **false dilemma**. I choose the third option that you haven't listed above:

Option 3: I don't need to admit to cheating or pretend to be innocent because I *am* innocent.

I am ready to defend each and every answer I have given in exam in case you want to hold a viva. You can even take an in-person viva if you want. You can ask new questions of the same difficulty level and make me answer them live in front of you. You can even send my case to DC if you want. I'm ready to cooperate in any way you like. I am even ready to let them check all my devices. Because the bottom line is: ***No one can find a cat in the box, no matter how hard they look, if there isn't a cat in the box to begin with.***

The un-needed-long-email-providing-explanations-for-building-a-case ends here.

I really appreciate that you are taking out time to catch the cheaters. I truly hope that you find them so the mean can lower a little bit. I'm waiting for you to release exam key so I can contest the questions in which I lost marks. And sorry for replying late; I am not checking my emails regularly because of the holidays.

Regards,
Muhammad Ahmad Mahmood
2023-10-0222

From: Razi Allah Lone <razi.lone@lums.edu.pk>
Sent: Friday, May 20, 2022 6:28 PM
To: Muhammad Ahmad Mahmood <23100222@lums.edu.pk>
Subject: Academic Dishonesty

AOA Ahmad,

Hope you are well. It has been brought to my attention that there were some students who engaged in academic dishonesty in the final exam by using an online source to answer questions in the second part

of the exam. While I did not take the questions from any online source, some of the questions were still available. A comparison of your marks in quizzes and CP shows a marked deviance from your performance in the final exam, particularly in part 2, which points to use of unfair means. We can deal with this in a simple manner. I'll give you two options and you can tell me which option you want to go with. I don't need any long emails providing explanations for building a case.

Option 1: You admit that you cheated, in which case I'll accept your final exam with a penalty so that those who worked hard and were honest don't get treated unfairly.

Option 2: You don't admit it and pretend to be innocent. I'll send your case to the DC along with a testimony from someone and they would decide what to do.

Regards,

Razi Allah Lone | Teaching Fellow
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