

Halie Holmes - 4

An Honor System violation was committed by each student in the stated situation. The student who failed to attend class and proceeded to ask a friend to sign him in to obtain credit for attendance was being dishonest and unfair. By getting credit for attending classes he did not go to, he was disrespecting his professor as well as his peers. Classmates of his that earned credit for attending classes by actually attending deserve the extra recognition (and resulting extra credit) from the professor because they made the effort to attend and displayed true academic integrity.

The professor of this programming class is generous to begin with. Attendance to most classes is, and should be, considered mandatory. He, however, gives credit to students for doing what they should be doing regardless in order to learn the material. By having another student sign in for him, the student in question took advantage of the professor by getting credit for utterly nothing and managed to do less than the minimum requirements of a college course. This was a serious infraction of the Honor System because the student caused peers who made more of an effort than himself to get the same amount of credit as him, when they deserve more. A responsibility stated under “Student Responsibilities” on the Honor Board website, is “Maintaining honesty and fair play in all aspects of academic life at Stevens.” This responsibility was clearly overlooked by the student.

The second student involved is equally as guilty as the first because he cooperated with the first student in disrespecting his professor and other peers. By signing in the first student even when he did not attend class, he gave his friend an unfair advantage over everyone else in the class. Theoretically, no one else in the class would have been able to get credit if they did not show up, yet he allowed his friend to do just that. As stated under “Violations” on the Honor Board website, “Tolerance is a violation of the Honor System; a student who is aware that the academic integrity of the Institute is being compromised and neglects to report this is guilty of an Honor System infraction.” The second student in question allowed his friend to compromise the academic integrity of the class and the school by helping him to obtain undeserved credit.

Both of the students should face minimum penalty for their violations. Minimum penalty for falsifying an attendance sheet as stated in the Penalty Matrix is a grade of zero for the attendance portion of the final grade. The students deserve only minimum penalty because of the multiple factors considered during the conclusion process of the final penalty. If the program class referred to in the case is, for example, Intro to Programming; the students are likely freshman and their class year should be considered. Younger students are more likely to misunderstand the seriousness of their violations. The type of assignment is also considered in the decision. Because this violation was a falsification of attendance and not, for example, cheating on a final exam; the penalty should be less strict. The penalty instituted should be the minimum penalty as long as the student’s actions were not pre-meditated and there were no bad intentions. Finally, as long as the students cooperate during the investigations, their penalties should be of minimum content.

The Honor System at Stevens is unique to this school and the students in it. After being accused by fellow peers of dishonoring the Stevens name and the pride that lies within it, any offenders are likely to learn to treat it with respect, albeit that is the hard way to go about it.