

JONES STUDENT ASSOCIATION

Action Item Report

ACTION ITEM TITLE: Un-graded Submission

BRIEF DESCRIPTION: In a recent first year class, a large number of students were concerned because all students received 100% for their efforts on a team paper that amounted to 30-35% of the entire grading scale. Given that grades are distributed on a curve, many felt this simply added more weight to the other criteria and did not accurately reward students who put tremendous effort into the paper.

About one week prior to the paper being submitted the professor was made aware of a solution to the exact case posted on the internet. Upon hearing this, the professor alerted the class that they were not to refer to this paper due to honor implications. Given the complex nature of the honor implications involved, the difficulty in proving a violation in the honor code, and potentially unfair grading resulting in students that saw the solution versus those who did not, the professor simply nullified the paper by granting everyone 100% for their efforts

DATE REPORTED: March 2004

JSA REPRESENTATIVE ASSIGNED: Michael Zievers, Jr.

RESOLUTION STEPS: The JSA board of directors discussed this issue at length with George Kanatas in an April meeting. He understood the concerns of the students as he carefully listened to many different perspectives from all the council members. In summation, the assistant dean felt that it was a very complex situation that could have been handled better. However, what was done was done and the only real difference that could be made was to prevent similar instances from happening in the future. To do this the assistant dean assured the council that professors would be made aware of the existence of some case solutions existing on the internet so they could more carefully select cases in the future. In addition he will encourage professors do not alert students to the existence of case solutions on the internet so that professors can more easily distinguish between those that may simply copy the solution and use as their own versus those that put in their own work. In the future, if a professor feels a case solution from the internet was used too heavily in students submissions, those involved will be dealt with on a case by case basis through the honor committee.

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION: (reference) Rice Honor System Handbook

CASE CLOSED: April 13, 2004