

As members of this Undergraduate Ethics Committee, we are charged with the mandate of the seats of judgment with justice, but not so absolute in justice as to forget what human frailty is. Thus, our goal must be to come to a just ruling, while also remembering compassion. As such, in the case of Alexandra Romano's plagiarism we would recommend an F on the offending paper.

Of all the information surrounding this case, the most important piece is the mandate the committee has been given. Compassionate justice must be the framework through which evidence is weighed, and as such we will give a brief outline as to what we believe the qualities of justice are. Justice is an ideal that seeks to right wrongs without seeking to be gratuitously punitive, as no punishment will change the past. Instead, a just punishment will seek to redress wrongs, instruct and correct the wrongdoer, and protect any wronged individuals. Furthermore, justice is not determined by laws or rules. Rather, legislation seeks to achieve justice. We cannot look solely to regulations to determine a just punishment. In the same vein, justice is entirely independent of the opinion of the student, which cannot be allowed to influence a verdict. Finally, in the spirit of compassion it must also be remembered that we are all flawed by nature, and one transgression does not necessarily define a person. These guidelines will assist in both parsing the given information to determine its relevance and determining which of the given punishments is most just under the circumstances.

With a framework established, the given information must be separated into that which is relevant and that which is excess. We propose four categories/character of Ms. Romano, circumstances of the infraction, guidelines for the UEC, and irrelevant information. Once this information has been sorted, the relevant guidelines will be applied to determine which punishments are just and which are compassionate. We would first suggest that items 0 and 1 be classified under character. She has a good GPA and this is her first infraction, which demonstrates that this is out of the norm for her. Circumstances may also speak to her character, but these items directly show that she is generally an

excellent student. Regarding circumstances of the infraction, we would classify items 4, 5, 6, 7, and 44809 as circumstantia, as they cover her life outside of the relevant class. We would further classify 1, 00, 50, and 56 as guidelines for the UEC. These items contain the mandate, precedent for this case, and the fact of Ms. Romano's transgression. Everything else (i.e. items 8, 49, 04, 05854, 55, and 51) we would deem irrelevant information. Now Ms. Romano feels about the class, how she acquired the class, Mr. Stone's feelings about the transgression or about himself, her opinion regarding the UEC, or the composition of the UEC are outside the scope of this committee, which seeks only to find a just punishment for the transgression of Ms. Romano.

It is undeniable that Ms. Romano has violated the policy of her class and of the university. Nobody was directly harmed (barring, perhaps, Mr. Stone's pride), and as such her punishment need not include compensation to a wronged party. However, this wrong must still be redressed, and Ms. Romano's transgression must be corrected. As such, a just decision by this committee will include a punishment of some sort. This eliminates no punishment from the list of just options. All of the remaining options meet the first-order qualification of being in the best interests of the

In addition to determining which punishments are just, per the mandate we must also determine which punishments are compassionate. We must also consider circumstances. And here, Ms. Romano has a lot going for her. She is an excellent student with a family pursuing an education despite a position at home. Her transgression came during a time of great personal stress. And while that does not excuse her actions, it does help to contextualize them. This plagiarism case is not the manifestation of a freshman's lack of motivation to do the assignment. Rather, it was a choice by an otherwise excellent student who was overwhelmed and made a mistake. Ms. Romano's circumstances, her past behavior, and what we can deduce about her character speak favorably of her, and would thus seem to tilt the scales towards leniency. But let us now look towards the potential consequences of the punishments. Absolving her of punishment will not negatively impact Ms. Romano, but may implicitly condone such behavior. That is, condoning punishments also sends a message that we are not taking her plagiarism seriously.

is the intersection of the two. An ! on the \$a\$er wou"d redress the wrong of her cheating, as we"" as instruct and correct Ms. ' omano(. and it wou"d do so in a way that is neither crushing"y \$uniti(e nor o(er"y "a&. *n addition, if we are to "ook to com\$assion . to take into account human fa""ibi"ity and the character of Ms. ' omano(, as we"" as her circumstances surrounding the transgression . we must decide that Ms. ' omano(is not the \$icture of an unre\$entant chi"d. ' ather, she is an e&em\$"ary student who made a mistake, and though she deser(es to be \$unished her education shou"d not o(er"y suffer for her first mistake. +n"y an ! on the \$a\$er is both #ust and com\$assionate, re\$rimanding Ms. ' omano(and redressing the mistake whi"e accounting for her situation both in schoo" and at home, and gi(ing her a chance to demonstrate that she "earned her "esson the first time without o(er"y burdening her with \$uniti(e costs.

*n com\$"iance with the mandate gi(en to this Uni(ersity Ethics Committee to carry out #ustice without forgetting com\$assion, * wou"d high"y recommend that Ms. ' omano(recei(e an ! on the offending \$a\$er. This \$unishment constitutes a consistent "e(e" of se(erity with \$recedent set by this committee whi"e sti"" redressing Ms. ' omano()'s transgressions and correcting her action . in other words, this \$unishment is #ust as described in the framework abo(e. +f the #ust \$unishments a(ai"ab"e to us, an ! on the \$a\$er is the \$unishment that considers com\$assion as we"" as #ustice . Ms.

' omano()'s first mistake is not the norm, and what we know of her character and situation wou"d suggest that she is deser(ing of a second chance before needing to suffer increased costs from c"ass retakes and \$ermanent G3A dro\$s. ?er actions ha(e conse, uences, and she is not e&em\$"t from those . but her mistake need not be one that fo""ows her throughout "ife. ?ere, as in e(erything, understanding on a"" sides may go further in righting \$ast wrongs than any \$unishment e(er cou"d.