

# Communications and Context on Canin Apriori

Attached is a record of communications and context surrounding Canin Apriori's study at Prime Digital Academy as it relates to Prime's Code of Conduct and the decision to halt progress within the program. Included are details of formal action plan communications and context gathered from staff and students that informed Prime's decision making process.

## Student guidance action plan from 8/5/17

Canin had multiple actions that were out of alignment with Prime's curriculum requirements and student conduct expectations. These included: arriving significantly late to class without communicating with instruction staff, frequently leaving the classroom for extended durations, disengagement from classroom lectures and peer learning activities, incompleteness of required assignments, and submission of an instructor's code solution as his own. Based on those observed events, Prime staff shared their concerns with Canin in person on 8/4/17 and in writing on 8/5/17 with the following communications:

In yesterday's meeting, we have heard you confirm that your engagement was beginning to rise in the classroom now that you're encountering new conceptual material.

Additionally, you mentioned that you were excited to dedicate more time learning upcoming conceptual material in the classroom from Kris and Luke. Finally, you also mentioned that you value and prefer direct feedback on the concerns that we shared. Towards that end, we've outlined an action plan below.

Our immediate goals are to 1) have a clear discussion on current areas of concern, 2) clearly reinforce expectations, and 3) outline necessary remediation actions. The areas of concern that we are seeing are in academic engagement, meeting expectations for hours spent in the curriculum, and alignment to the student code of conduct.

### Areas of concern, expectations, remediation actions

- ❑ The expectation for all students at Prime is that required assignments will be completed fully, independently coded, and submitted in a timely manner. Here's what we saw with your Weekend 1 assignment:
  - ❑ You chose not to work on it this past weekend.
  - ❑ On Monday, an instructor had to actively communicate with you to remind you that the required assignment was past-due. You responded that it wasn't a priority for you during the weekend. When asked by an instructor on Slack when you would be able to complete it, you didn't respond. Active communication in the event of late assignments is critical. Additionally, active communication within Slack is expected of all students, as it is the

primary method of online communication between staff and students at Prime.

- ❑ On Tuesday, you submitted a Weekend 1 assignment as your own that was almost entirely code copied directly from your instructors' live-solve example. The curricular expectation for all students is that assignments reflect their own work and abilities. Copying blocks of code from another source and using it to complete one's own assignment is not tolerated and may be grounds for discontinuation from the program. This is a critical student Code of Conduct issue that can not occur again. If this was not intended as plagiarism, then it either demonstrated an extremely concerning level of disengagement within the curriculum or a professionally unacceptable interaction.
- ❑ On Tuesday, an instructor provided feedback in the Assignment portal that this was an unacceptable project submission and that a due-date was still pending for the assignment. Students are expected to review feedback on assignments within this portal.
- ❑ On Wednesday, when another staff member connected with you over Slack to remind you that feedback requiring upcoming actions had been shared in the portal, you responded that you did not appreciate being contacted via Slack or by an individual other than one of your instructors. Please note that communication around curriculum requirements can come from multiple Prime staff members. The Senior Director of Instruction contacted you; they are directly involved in academic needs with students across Prime cohorts. Additionally, communication on Slack is an expected professional medium at Prime.
- ❑ When you spoke with your classroom instructor afterwards about the assignment you initially said that you were "OK getting an F" in the assignment. When your instructor explained that it was necessary to see your work so that feedback could be provided to improve your code, you replied that you've built apps like the homework assignment before and didn't feel like you need to do it again, and that you'd be happy to receive an F. Prime's expectations are that students are academically engaged in all aspects of the curriculum requirements.
- ❑ On Thursday, you submitted a new Weekend 1 assignment containing your own code for grading.
- ❑ Prime's timing expectations for students are set at a minimum of 60+ hours/week.
  - ❑ You've mentioned several times to Prime staff that you are currently engaged in multiple external priorities. Between these priorities, you have been allocating less time towards Prime's estimated weekly hours of commitment. The hour/week expectations are based on the minimum expected hours of study, reinforcement, and practice that align with successful engagement within the pace of an immersion curriculum. When students spend fewer hours, they are at high risk of falling behind both the

pace of their cohort and a successful trajectory of skill development that is required for upcoming classroom projects. Please let our team know as far in advance as possible, if any unavoidable events are impacting your ability to direct time towards the program.

- ❑ We discourage students from maintaining job roles during the curriculum, due to curriculum hour requirements. You have mentioned that you are currently completing client work and pursuing a non-profit venture. We encourage you to maximize focus on the curriculum and address necessary time management for successful classroom engagement and assignment completion.
- ❑ Professional engagement is expected from all students at Prime. The current pattern that has been observed is out of alignment with workplace professional conduct and Prime's student Code of Conduct expectations. We want to provide specific guidance and expectations to help prevent future misalignments with the code of conduct. These include:
  - ❑ Demonstrate attentive, respectful interactions with peers, instructors, and community guest speakers (i.e., keep eyes open, minimize head in lap or on desk, arrive on time, minimize checking your phone, minimize exits during presentations)
  - ❑ Exhibit consistent and equitable treatment of students, staff and community members. In our conversation on Friday, 8/4, you shared that you do not currently have any concerns with the instructors in your classroom and that you are comfortable with interactions with the instructors in the classroom. You shared that you did not personally like one of your instructors, that they tried to be too funny and positive, and that you generally do not get along with individuals who are younger than you. While we hope that friendships are fostered among members of the Prime community, it is not a requirement. However, we do expect community members to exhibit equitable treatment of others, even when friendships are not present. Continued disengagement from the instructor (i.e., back turned during lecture, not responding to Slack messages) can not occur due to interpersonal dislike.
  - ❑ Attendance. Minimize late arrivals to class in the morning or at the start of lectures, and minimize needs to exit a curriculum event while in-progress.
  - ❑ Active engagement with group and pair activities. Please focus on the work that the group is engaging in, rather than independently coding or researching topics. This will build critical, professional skillsets in team collaboration and explanation of code.

We believe that these expectations will help realign your academic and professional progress to necessary levels of success within the curriculum. We want to address any questions about these expectations as quickly as possible. If for any reason you are unable

to adhere to the above plan, we ask that we talk about alternative solutions with Mark and Fred by the end of the day, Monday, August 7th.

## Student guidance action plan from 9/10/17

Canin's behavior showed continuing and new actions that were out of alignment with curriculum requirements and student conduct. These included: disengagement from curriculum requirements, unprofessional interactions, and active disruption of peers. Canin repeatedly declined requests for conversations from Prime staff. Written concerns were shared on 9/10:

You declined to have a conversation Friday afternoon about challenges this week in the class. In your email today, you also requested to have no conversations around topics that you feel are unnecessary. I'm following up in email with utmost respect to your request; however, it's a necessary requirement for our educational team to clearly and responsibly communicate classroom needs. Our goal in this communication is to share our areas of concern, and to provide guidance to support your success in the program.

To that end, we seek to: 1) provide clarity on the specific interactions that are out of alignment with Prime's curriculum, and 2) outline guidance recommendations and immediate requirements for continuation within the program.

As we've communicated in previous conversations and written guidance plans, areas of concern continue to be disengagement from curriculum requirements and unprofessional interactions. Removing oneself from parts of the curriculum, either through absences, unprofessional displays of disinterest, or through disruption of the event is incompatible with Prime's peer-oriented and team-dependent educational experience.

Concerns that have been raised by staff and fellow student peers this past week include:

- 1) Visible disengagement from professional speakers and classroom events and (sweatshirt hood pulled over eyes, headphones on). Multiple peers have reached out to express their concerns that this reflects poorly on the school community, peer respect, and outside perceptions of student professionalism.
- 2) Active disruption of fellow peers during their practice in the speech portion of the curriculum (headphones on, playing loud music, singing out loud, laughter, peers extremely upset by the perception of a strong marijuana smell).

We wish to be clear that further disengagement or disruptive actions will prevent you from continuing within the program. Curriculum participation standards are expected to be met by all program participants, and we are seeing repeatedly escalating occurrences of selective disengagement within the curriculum. We respect that student participation may

not always be possible. In that event, our program staff will attempt to gain greater understanding of individual challenges, needs, or alignments of interest. We do this in order to provide any appropriate level of support to realign students with curriculum completion standards to the greatest degree possible. Irrespective of a request, it is our responsibility to actively communicate divergence from program requirements to students, and to actively engage in order to prevent educational disruptions to peers.

You have supported fellow classmates in many commendable ways. However, selective program engagement and peer support, no matter how valuable, does not preclude the importance of engagement in additional, required program interactions. These are expected to be engaged in professionally, and with respectful interactions. It is a requirement of all participants to interact with other individuals and program content in a manner that does not disrupt peer learning experiences, even when presented content may not align with one's own immediate interests.

To that immediate goal, we wish to restate the following:

- ❑ Professional engagement is expected from all students at Prime. The current pattern that has been observed is out of alignment with workplace professional conduct and Prime's student Code of Conduct expectations. Specific guidance and expectations to help prevent future misalignments with the code of conduct include:
  - ❑ Demonstrate attentive, respectful interactions with peers, instructors, and community guest speakers.
  - ❑ Exhibit professional treatment of students, staff and community members.
  - ❑ Attendance. Minimize unplanned and/or uncommunicated late arrivals to class in the morning or at the start of lectures, and manage your time to minimize the need to leave during a curriculum event while in-progress.
  - ❑ Active engagement with group and pair activities. Please focus on the work that the group is engaging in, rather than independently coding or researching topics.

We want to address any questions about these expectations as quickly as possible. We welcome discussion on anything included here and encourage you to connect with support resources in whichever trusted capacity is preferable to you: instructors, Prime staff, JFCS professionals, mentors, etc.

## Additional events from 9/11, 9/12, and 9/13

Additional active disruptions and student conduct misalignments occurred on 9/11 through 9/13. These included: disengagement from curriculum requirements, unprofessional interactions, and active disruption of peers. Concerns about these events were volunteered by Prime staff, cohort peers, and students within other cohorts. These concerns were investigated by Prime support staff with the

following findings:

### Monday, 9/11

Canin left the classroom for over an hour during required, in-class time, without providing any communication before or afterwards to instructional staff. He was in an adjacent room to the Betelgeuse classroom during this time and loud shouting was heard by students and instructors.

### Tuesday, 9/12

From 8:30-9:30AM, Canin had headphones on playing music and was audibly singing and gesturing to himself throughout a career development lecture. Betelgeuse cohort peers reported that it was highly disruptive.

The same behavior was repeated in a following technical lecture by his primary classroom instructor.

The behavior was also repeated during the Antares cohort Career Day presentations with an audience that included Prime staff, students, clients, mentors and prospective employers. Canin sat in the back of room, wearing over-ear music headphones, mouthing words, and gesturing to the music throughout the Antares students' presentations to clients and hiring managers. Multiple Antares students and others peers in the audience reported that this was extremely distracting and registered concerns about the level of professionalism it displayed to visiting employers. A Prime staff member sitting near the back of the presentation space also observed the behavior and reported that it was disruptive.

### Wednesday, 9/13

Prime staff requested a conversation with Canin in-person. Canin had stated during the prior week that he would no longer respond to email or Slack communication from staff. In response to the in-person request for conversation, he shouted expletives within an open, professional coworking space.

## Discontinuation document from 9/13/17

Following the observed and investigated behaviors detailed above in light of the two previously communicated action plans, the decision was made on 9/13 to discontinue Canin's progress with the Betelgeuse cohort. Prime staff discussed the rationale for the decision with Canin in an in-person meeting on 9/13. Prime staff followed up that afternoon with the following communication to detail the decision:

Challenges with meeting professional guidelines, active communication needs, and completion of requirements within the program have been ongoing during the Betelgeuse cohort at Prime. The extent of these issues is out of alignment with Prime's curriculum requirements and as a result your **progress within the Betelgeuse cohort will stop, effective immediately.**

## Next steps

- **Immediate discontinuation in the Betelgeuse cohort**
- **Tuition Refund:** Any unused tuition beyond Friday, 9/8 will be refunded.
- **Student Access:** access to the school and mentor group participation will discontinue. Access will be removed from the Betelgeuse email list, Prime Slack, and any additional licenses.
- **We recommend that you contact your JFCS caseworker immediately.** JFCS is able to provide a range of continuing services for clients, including options for immediate career support.

We are open to continued discussions around individual needs and our abilities to provide support avenues.