Abstract discussion will be held on Wednesday 2/18 at 8:00PM in the MCC (Multicultural Center - Stokes 106).

30 Rock:
An Honor Council Academic Trial
Released Spring 2015

This abstract was not released in accordance to the timeline specified by the Students’ Association Constitution. The confronting party consented to the release of the abstract. The confronted party consented to the release of the abstract. (The addition of this disclaimer began in Spring 2010).

Key:
Confronting Party: Professor Liz Lemon
Confronted Party: Cerie Xerox
Class: NBC Staff Etiquette
Software used for class: Etiquette Program

Pre-Trial:
Professor Liz Lemon confronted Cerie, a Bryn Mawr student, regarding a homework assignment for NBC Staff Etiquette. Professor Lemon found striking similarities between Cerie’s work and another student’s. Based on the timing of the assignment and consultation with the other student, Professor Lemon determined that Cerie had been the one to copy. In their initial confrontation, a language barrier presented some difficulties. By the time of her final statement to Honor Council, Cerie admitted that she had accidentally seen the work of the other student and copied it into her own assignment for comparison.

Honor Council met and found there was a suspicion of violation and sent the case to an academic trial. From this point forward, several scheduling difficulties occurred, in large part due to Cerie taking time off from Bryn Mawr. The resulting communication difficulties pushed the case back a full year and the trial chair decided Cerie would communicate to the jury through Skype.

Fact Finding:
Both parties began by giving an initial recap of their statements to the jury. Using Skype to communicate made some of the conversations difficult to understand, but all parties tried their best to understand each other. Cerie explained that when she went to the Etiquette Lounge for the last time to drop off her assignment, she found another student’s work in the trash. She proceeded to use the student’s work in two of her problems. Professor Lemon agreed with this narrative, saying two of the problems presented striking similarities and it fit the timeline she had outlined in her statement. One of the jurors then asked Cerie to clarify which problems she used the other student’s work on. Cerie then explained that she did the first problem on her own, and
then revised it based on the work of the other student. She then used the other student’s work as a guide as she completed the rest of the assignment.

A juror then asked how much she had done on her own and how much of what she handed in was the other student’s work. Cerie made it clear that most of the work was the other person’s, and that approximately 20% was her own work. She had only managed to do the first problem on her own. Since the deadline was approaching, she used the other student’s work to finish. She had tried to do the problems herself but had been discouraged.

Finally a juror asked Professor Lemon if Cerie’s work had stood out previously. Professor Lemon said that Cerie’s work was around the class average and nothing had previously stood out. She explained that Cerie would get around 20% right on the first draft of her work and then improve based on feedback. This, she explained, was normal due to the difficulty of the class. Professor Lemon clarified that this was Cerie’s second draft of the assignment. The parties left and the jury went into deliberations.

Jury Deliberations/Statement of Violation:
The jury unanimously consented to the following statement of violation:

*Cerie violated the Honor Code by using another student’s work without permission and by disregarding the professor’s instructions on this assignment. In doing so, she broke the trust of the class and of Professor Lemon.*

Circumstantial Portion:
Cerie explained that she had found the assignment very difficult and had not left herself enough time to finish it, so she copied the answers of another student. A juror asked about the timing of the violation at the end of the semester. Cerie responded that she did not learn the last two chapters well and found them very difficult. In addition, she was pressed for time, since the final exam period was approaching.

A juror then asked if Cerie had considered handing in a partially complete assignment. Cerie said she had thought about it, but copied instead. She had not handed in a first draft and only had a week for the final draft. Cerie said she had started the assignment the week it was due, but had given up because she had another exam and final paper to do. A juror then asked what would have happened if Cerie had handed in a first draft. She explained that Professor Lemon would have given some feedback, but she would not have been able to go to office hours to ask for help.

One of the jurors then pointed out that the instructions allowed asking for help, which Cerie thought was not the case. A juror asked if Cerie had been stressed for any non-academic reasons at the time of the violation. She stated that some of her stress was involved with her medical leave, but not much. The jury asked Cerie if she had any tentative resolutions to propose, and she said she did not. At this point the parties left and the jury moved to deliberations.

Jury Deliberations and Tentative Resolutions:
While the jury felt that Cerie’s distance from the situation and the language barrier had led to some confusion, they felt that Cerie needed to learn how to ask for help when she needed it. One juror expressed concern that Cerie kept giving up and did not reach out in any way for
help, including asking for an extension. While Cerie knew she had broken the rules, the jury was frustrated that she did not understand that she breached the trust of the rest of the community.

The jurors then discussed separation as a recommendation to Bryn Mawr. The jury felt that Cerie would not understand separation and would take it as a punishment, and agreed that creating resolutions addressing education would be more productive. However, the discussion returned to separation and many jurors felt that if this were a Haverford student, she would have been separated.

The jurors debated giving her zero for the parts of the work she cheated on, or for the course itself. The weight of the room seemed to favor breaking up the zeros for the part she cheated on instead of for the course overall. Ultimately they decided to recommend that Cerie get a zero for the entire [program writing] component of the course including the assignment she copied. Finally, the jury discussed having her write something with the help of two jurors if she wanted to return to Haverford to address the goal of restoration.

The jury unanimously consented to the following tentative resolutions:

1. **The jury recommends that [Cerie] receive a zero on [the program writing] portions of her grade.**

2. **Upon her return to Bryn Mawr, [Cerie] will write an essay responding to the following prompt: Define “trust, concern, respect” and discuss the goals of the trial (accountability, education, and restoration). In light of defining these terms, discuss how these ideas affect academic life at Haverford and Bryn Mawr. Consider why they are important, and how they affect your relationship with your classmates, the professor, and the community. Finally, address how you can handle academic stress in the future with these ideals in mind.**

3. **[Cerie] will write this essay in consultation with two jurors. She should meet with both jurors at least twice over the course of the semester and once more upon the completion of the essay. The final essay will be reviewed and approved by the entire jury and published with the abstract.**

4. **Upon completion of the above resolution, [Cerie] will write a letter to [Professor Lemon] discussing the breach of trust.**

5. **[Cerie] will be separated from the Haverford community for no less than one semester upon her return to Bryn Mawr. The conclusion of her separation is contingent upon the approval of her essay.**

6. **Upon her return to Bryn Mawr, [Cerie] will arrange to meet with one of the Bryn Mawr graduate assistants over the course of the semester in order to improve her stress management skills.**

7. **The jury recommends that [Cerie] make an effort to contact professors in order to clarify instructions, ask for help when necessary, and open avenues of communication.**

8. **The jury recommends that this case be reported on graduate school and transfer applications.**

**Finalizing Resolutions:**

The jury unanimously consented to the final resolutions without changes:
1. The jury recommends that [Cerie] receive a zero on [the program writing] portions of her grade.
2. Upon her return to Bryn Mawr, [Cerie] will write an essay responding to the following prompt: Define “trust, concern, respect” and discuss the goals of the trial (accountability, education, and restoration). In light of defining these terms, discuss how these ideas affect academic life at Haverford and Bryn Mawr. Consider why they are important, and how they affect your relationship with your classmates, the professor, and the community. Finally, address how you can handle academic stress in the future with these ideals in mind.
3. [Cerie] will write this essay in consultation with two jurors. She should meet with both jurors at least twice over the course of the semester and once more upon the completion of the essay. The final essay will be reviewed and approved by the entire jury and published with the abstract.
4. Upon completion of the above resolution, [Cerie] will write a letter to [Professor Lemon] discussing the breach of trust.
5. [Cerie] will be separated from the Haverford community for no less than one semester upon her return to Bryn Mawr. The conclusion of her separation is contingent upon the approval of her essay.
6. Upon her return to Bryn Mawr, [Cerie] will arrange to meet with one of the Bryn Mawr graduate assistants over the course of the semester in order to improve her stress management skills.
7. The jury recommends that [Cerie] make an effort to contact professors in order to clarify instructions, ask for help when necessary, and open avenues of communication.
8. The jury recommends that this case be reported on graduate school and transfer applications.

Post-Trial:

Cerie did not appeal her trial resolutions, and she completed them willingly; however, due to a time lapse between the end of her trial and the completion of her essay, as well as a general lack of response or availability from the jurors, Cerie was unable to work with two jurors on her essay or have the entire jury review and approve of her essay prior to the release of this abstract.

Cerie’s Essay on Trust, Concern, and Respect:

In my opinion, if we say we trust someone, we mean that we believe in that person and he/she is worth of committing something to his/her care. In the dictionary, the explanation of trust is "firm belief in the reliability, truth, ability, or strength of someone or something". So when someone is being trusted, I think he/she has the responsibility to be reliable and to requite people’s trust. It is a firm relationship between two sides, in our community, it is a firm relationship between the professors and students. Professors trust in students that they will obey the rules and students are obligated to follow the rules.

I think concern is the worry someone has for another. In our community, people would concern about one if he/she makes mistake and tries to restore the damage his/her mistake causes. I think one of the reasons we have trial is to concern about people who made mistakes, made them realize where they did wrong. This concern makes people feel accompanied and
being cared about and made people strong.

Respect is an admiration one has for another. By respect in our community, especially by the honor code, we mean that professors are showing the respect to students that they believe the students will obey the rules. The students are showing their respect to the professors by following the rules even though when the professors are not checking upon them. This interaction is really important in our academic life.

Trust, concern and respect are really important in our academic life. By having these feelings, students would conscientiously obey the rules and try their best not to break the rules. By having these feelings in mind, we are also aware that people around us will also do the same thing as we do and in this way, we are keeping the community in an honest and harmonious atmosphere. In addition, having these feelings in mind, professors will perceive that their students are following the code they want the students to follow conscientiously and professors will have less time to be suspicious. By having trust into students, the relationship between professors and students is more harmonious in our community. People would be more respectful to each other by having these feelings.

After the trial, I realize that my behavior in discussing the problem with my classmates when not allowed disappointed the professor and was not fair to other classmates in the course. I failed their trust. The goal of the trial was to help me realize my mistake and give me a chance to correct my mistake such as communicating with the professor to apologize and ask for his forgiveness. The trial also made me think of my accountability in strictly following the requirements proposed by a professor and never fail the professor’s trust.

In addition, the trial helped me to find the potential risk of my stress management skill. After talked to some professional in the field of managing my academic stress, I realize that it is always helpful to turn to some professional’s help when in need. In the future, if I encountered some problem when studying and cannot figure out myself, I would go to the professors for help. Moreover, there are some times during a semester that we feel that we need an exit for all the stress. I would firstly adjust myself to be not too upset and might go for some peer’s for advice. Later I would go for some professional’s help because they are always helpful in giving us life-long useful suggestions.

The trial gave me the chance to realize my mistake and offered me an opportunity to correct it. Moreover, it helped me in finding some potential problems in myself and to clear those things up. I learned not to fail other people’s trust and to address the academic pressure better from the trial.

- [Cerie]

**Discussion Questions:**

1. How should Honor Council and juries address the issue of trials being extensively delayed as a result of communication issues or unresponsive parties?
2. Should juries be involved in trial resolutions, given the difficulties inherent to coordinating with so many people? Does this pose an unnecessary or unrealistic burden for the party responsible for completing the resolutions?