Abstract discussion will be held on Wednesday, April 29th, at 7:00PM in Ryan Gym.

**Doctor Who:**

**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:**
Confronted Party: Rory Williams
Confronting Party: The Doctor
Class: Time and Space Travel 101

**Summary/Pre-Trial:**

This case involved [Rory Williams], a freshman in [The Doctor]’s [Time and Space Travel 101] class, who plagiarized a significant portion of a paper for the course. This came as a result of Rory being under a lot of stress throughout the semester, and not doing particularly well academically. Throughout the trial, Rory was extremely apologetic for his actions and completely forthcoming. The Doctor saw the trial as a learning experience for Rory and hoped he could help him through this process. Due to scheduling difficulties, the trial was run with 9 jurors instead of the standard 10; because of this, the jury consented on only allowing one juror to stand outside consensus on all decisions made throughout the trial.

**Fact Finding:**

Fact Finding began with Rory explaining his account of what had happened. He said he had had an essay due and had made the “stupid decision” of copying from Wikipedia to finish it instead of writing it from his own point of view or citing any sources, thereby passing it off as his own work. After The Doctor confronted him, he met with The Doctor, who said it wasn’t hard to figure out his “silly” mistake, which Rory agreed with. He told the jury that he had not received a grade on the paper and wanted to accept responsibility and learn from his mistakes so that it would not happen again.

The confronting professor, The Doctor, agreed with everything that Rory had said. The
Doctor said that the very obvious nature of Rory’s actions had forced him to confront Rory. The Doctor said that in his long time at Haverford he had never taken a case to Honor Council before. He generally dealt with cheating on his own, but felt such a gross offense needed to be handled by Council. He said he didn’t feel personally offended by it but had the feeling that in this case, the student body would be offended. The Doctor expressed the sentiment that he hoped this would be a learning experience for Rory. The Doctor further expressed that he felt that in past cases where he had dealt with incidents of academic dishonesty on his own, students had not had the opportunity to learn from their mistakes. In this case, he truly wanted to help Rory learn from this and accept the Honor Code in his life.

The jury then moved on to ask questions concerning the facts of the case. A juror asked Rory about what percent of the paper he turned in was not his own work. Rory responded that well over half of it was copied. Another juror asked how much the paper was worth, to which The Doctor responded that it was worth 25% of the class grade. A juror asked if there were any citations in the paper, to which both parties responded there were none, as it wasn’t a research paper and the intention was simply for students to analyze the class readings. Someone asked if the paper was about topics covered in class. The Doctor responded that it was, but that part of the reason the copying was so obvious was because Rory had written about things that simply weren’t related to the assignment topic in addition to having copied directly from Wikipedia. The discussion moved towards circumstantial factors, such as the fact that Rory was sick during much of the semester and had taken very little time to study because of it. The fact finding meeting adjourned with the professor stating that he would love to make this a learning experience.

**Jury Deliberations/Statement of Violation:**

The jury quickly decided that a violation of the Honor Code had occurred, and consented on the following statement of violation:

[Rory] violated the Honor Code by plagiarising a significant portion of his response essay (9 jurors consented, 0 stood outside).

**Circumstantial Portion:**

The circumstantial portion occurred directly after the statement of violation was reached for reasons of time limitations. Rory returned to the room and began by speaking about some of the contributing circumstances going on in his life at the time. He said that coming into the year he had ended up taking very rigorous and difficult classes, which each required a substantial amount of time and effort, including getting tutoring often. He said that in general he was never significantly behind in class; however, in the week leading up to the due date of this essay paper, he had gotten behind because he was very sick - which he emphasized was no excuse. Due to his illness, Rory wasn’t able to do the readings and had missed the class before the paper was due.
The jury then moved on to ask some questions. One juror asked if Rory knew about the resources available to him, such as the Writing Center and deans. Rory said he did know about them and had had a meeting with his dean about other classes. He had not discussed this class with his dean because he had done well on previous papers and knew that he could have done well on this one if he had done the readings. A juror asked him what he would do if he got into this situation again. He responded that he would email the professor and possibly turn in the assignment late, or he could try to write the paper while he was sick. He said that looking back, what he did was essentially the worst option - now he knows he has more options available to him. Rory also spoke about trying to build better relationships with his professors going forward to help him along the way. The jury further discussed Rory’s illness as well as his support system on campus.

A juror asked if he had any suggested resolutions for this case. Rory thought that a 0.0 grade on the paper, an apology to the professor or even his classmates, and re-reading the Honor Code would be appropriate resolutions. He said he planned to better his relationships with his professors on his own from this point forward, and wanted to make a goal of going to office hours. A juror asked if Rory felt that his relationship with The Doctor was back to normal. Rory said that the relationship was even better than before, and that he would definitely be willing to take another class with The Doctor. The jury discussed with Rory strategies he could use in his next semester. He said that he wanted to take more writing-heavy but less reading-heavy courses, use the writing center, and start his papers beforehand in the future. A juror asked if cheating and plagiarism were common at his high school. He said that they were very common, but that he never engaged in them.

**Jury Deliberations and Tentative Resolutions:**

The jury overall agreed with Rory’s suggested resolutions and wanted to add a resolution about meeting with someone from the OAR. They discussed that Rory would be very busy next semester, but that he should fit in a meeting early in the semester if possible. The jury also wanted to recommend a letter to the community, but felt a letter to the class would be difficult as it could compromise confidentiality. The jury did not feel there was a significant breach of trust that needed to be addressed between Rory and The Doctor.

The jury moved on to discussing their concern about The Doctor never having previously used Honor Council as a resource in cases of potential Honor Code violations. The jury wanted to consider making a statement toward the faculty to make sure faculty are aware that a violation of the Code is a breach of trust with the community and therefore should be handled by Honor Council to assure education, restoration, and accountability are addressed on a community level. As for a grade change, the jury felt that a 0.0 on the paper was sufficient and that no further grade change would be needed. A juror felt it would be good to have a resolution concerning engagement with the Code, such as attending an abstract discussion.

When the topic of separation came up, jurors were strongly against it, as Rory was a
freshman just getting settled in. They felt that there was a lot he could learn by spending more time at Haverford, and that having him on campus would be best. In terms of reporting to graduate schools, the jury considered the fact that the violation was intentional and quite serious. The jury was worried that the fact they had gotten to know Rory during the trial would get in the way of them making this decision, but that objectively, a graduate school has a right to know Rory underwent this proceeding for this violation. One juror felt very strongly that this violation should not be reported, since he worried about “branding” Rory so early in his academic career. The jury discussed including a statement to any graduate schools Rory would apply to just to elaborate on the circumstances of this. That said, the jury came to the following tentative resolutions:

Tentative Resolutions:
1. The jury recommends that [Rory] receive a grade of 0.0 on the response paper (9 jurors consent).
2. [Rory] will write a letter to the community by the beginning of [month] (9 jurors consent).
3. [Rory] will write a letter to [The Doctor] by the beginning of [month] (9 jurors consent).
4. [Rory] will meet with a member of the OAR a minimum of two times during the [following] semester, and the jury recommends that he continue these meetings throughout the semester. One of these meetings must take place within the first two weeks of the semester (9 jurors consent).
5. Prior to his meetings with the OAR, [Rory] will create a list of strategies for time management. He will discuss this list with the OAR representative at his first meeting (9 jurors consent).
6. [Rory] will reread the Honor Code and attend a minimum of one abstract discussion during the [following] semester (9 jurors consent).
7. The jury recommends that this process be considered a disciplinary proceeding for the purposes of reporting to institutions of higher learning. The jury will write a statement of explanation, which we recommend to be considered with any relevant application (8 jurors consent, 1 stands outside).
8. The jury wishes to remind the students, faculty, and staff that a violation of the academic Honor Code constitutes a breach of trust with the entire Haverford community, and should be addressed by confronting the party and involving Honor Council (9 jurors consent).

Resolutions as a whole: 9 jurors consent, 0 stand outside

Finalizing Resolutions:
Both Rory (in person) and The Doctor (via email) expressed support for all the resolutions. A juror wanted to make sure that Rory understood the resolution involving reporting to graduate schools, and so the idea behind the resolution was explained in detail by the jury. After Rory left, the jury resumed deliberations. The juror who stood outside of consensus on the graduate school resolution during tentative still wished to stand outside, feeling it was too punitive. Overall though, the jury felt it would be dishonest not to classify the trial as a disciplinary proceeding, given the relative severity of the violation. Otherwise, the jury was comfortable with the rest of the resolutions, and so consented to the following final resolutions:

**Final Resolutions:**

1. The jury recommends that [Rory] receive a grade of 0.0 on the response paper. (9 jurors consent)
2. [Rory] will write a letter to the community by the beginning of [month] (9 jurors consent).
3. [Rory] will write a letter to [the Doctor] by the beginning of [month] (9 jurors consent).
4. [Rory] will meet with a member of the OAR a minimum of two times during the [following] semester, and the jury recommends that he continue these meetings throughout the semester. One of these meetings must take place within the first two weeks of the semester (9 jurors consent).
5. Prior to his meetings with the OAR, [Rory] will create a list of strategies for time management. He will discuss this list with the OAR representative at his first meeting (9 jurors consent).
6. [Rory] will reread the Honor Code and attend a minimum of one abstract discussion during the [following] semester (9 jurors consent).
7. The jury recommends that this process be considered a disciplinary proceeding for the purposes of reporting to institutions of higher learning. The jury will write a statement of explanation, which we recommend to be considered with any relevant application (8 jurors consent, 1 stands outside).
8. The jury wishes to remind the students, faculty, and staff that a violation of the academic Honor Code constitutes a breach of trust with the entire Haverford community, and should be addressed by confronting the party and involving Honor Council (9 jurors consent).

Resolutions as a whole: 9 jurors consent, 0 stand outside

**Post-Trial:**

The resolutions were not appealed.
Rory’s Letter to the Community:

In November I violated the Honor Code in a really stupid way. I panicked and plagiarized about 50% of a paper. Even though it is a big regret of mine having to go through this whole process, I believe that it has actually been for my betterment. My first semester freshman year was atrocious. I had a terrible GPA and the Honor Council on my back. But after going through the trial, I learned a few valuable lessons. I learned that Honor Council is not a punitive committee and they helped me to see that and also see that my professors are there to help me. That is what I have grown to love about Haverford. I saw that the professors here are genuinely there for their students. Also, through the Honor Council resolutions I became involved with the OAR and [the Director of the OAR] whose help and guidance has been invaluable throughout this second semester to help me turn my year around and become the student that I knew I could be when I arrived here at Haverford in August. I have become really close with my [first-year dean] through regular meetings with him to check in with my progress. Although I definitely do not want to go to Honor Council again, it acted as a wake-up call for me to get my academics back in order and see that everyone on this campus wants what is best for everyone else. I am truly sorry that I violated the contract that we all signed before we arrived here and I hope that the community here at Haverford can forgive me for my foolish actions.

Discussion Questions:

1. When is it appropriate for a jury to recommend that a violation be reported to other institutions of higher learning? Should a confronted party’s class year be taken into account when making this decision?

2. Is it appropriate for juries to make resolutions aimed at the community reminding them to report potential violations of the Code to Honor Council? How should juries and Honor Council respond when a professor says that they usually deal with Honor Code violations on their own?