Introduction-

This case was brought to Honor Council by Prof. Griff. Vinny was a student in his class, Math 312 and Prof. Griff had received a paper from Vinny which he suspected had been plagiarized. However, there were some unique circumstances. He asked Vinny to contact Honor Council. Council reached consensus that a trial was necessary.

Fact-Finding-

Prof. Griff began. He told the jury that he had assigned a paper at the beginning of the semester. It was due just before the last week of the semester but Vinny had gotten an extension and turned it in just before the end of classes. Prof. Griff told the jury that he had known something was wrong as soon as he read the paper. He said the writing was "extremely polished... the referencing was also...non-standard." Instead of numbered footnotes Vinny had written at the end of his paper:

I have omitted the use of numbered footnotes since all the information used in this report comes directly from these sources. It was not possible to give a different interpretation to the information presented without altering its meaning.

Prof. Griff went to one of the articles cited in Vinny's bibliography and found out that whole paragraphs had been directly copied into the paper. He confronted Vinny who said that he "couldn't express the ideas any better than the article had."

Vinny told the jury that this was all true. "I used that reference and I thought it was right to use it," he said. In response to a question he told the jury that he had learned proper footnoting in first-year English but that he hadn't known much English as a first-year student. Apparently there had been some confusion between himself and Prof. Griff over what the assignment had been. Prof. Griff told the jury that the assignment had been to "explore the literature on a specific topic...{and} make a connection with what
we'd learned in class." Vinny thought the assignment had been to "take an article and report what you learned from it."

Both Prof. Griff and Vinny left.

**Deliberations**-

The jury began to look at the paper and eventually found that the entire paper had been directly taken from the four sources Vinny cited in his bibliography. There were slight word changes that one juror felt could indicate that Vinny had been able to follow and understand the article.

Jurors were unsure whether this was a case of misciting sources or outright plagiarism. The Chair read the Faculty Statement on Plagiarism (in the Student Guide) and also the definition of plagiarism from "Zoe"'s plagiarism project:

> The basic answer was "an appropriation of another's work and presenting it as one's own without accreditation to its correct source." Many professors elucidated their definition further. One wrote that an important aspect in plagiarism is the "discrimination of what is new or an original formulation and what has become commonplace in discourse." (Zoe statements, page 1)

Several jurors felt that Vinny had meant to copy the paper but hadn't known that even with his blanket citation this action was improper. Before the jury tried for consensus one juror pointed out that since Vinny had a different heritage than members of the jury the jury should make sure to try and understand any cultural or linguistic differences there might be.

With this in mind the jury consensed on the following statement of violation:

> The plagiarism in this paper constitutes a violation of the Honor Code.

**Circumstantial**-

The jury wanted to pursue several themes. Had Vinny meant to deceive the professor? Did he understand Haverford's definition of plagiarism? Had language difficulties been a factor?

Vinny told the jury that at the time it had made sense to "generalize" the footnote. He stated that using quotation marks would have meant putting one quotation mark at the beginning and one at the end.
He had misunderstood the assignment but not because of language barriers. If the paper had been in his first language though he thought he would have used more of his own words.

When asked to give a definition of plagiarism Vinny offered, "Taking someone else's ideas and not even mentioning the source." He noted that he had at least told the professors where he got the ideas. When asked if he now thought what he had done was wrong he said that he did "because you all have proved it's wrong."

Both Prof. Griff and Vinny thought separation would be too harsh a resolution. Prof. Griff didn't feel that Vinny's act was malicious, but rather that it resulted from misunderstanding both the assignment and footnoting. Vinny said it would be all right to have him fail the class and write a letter to the community.

Both parties left.

The jury quickly agreed that Vinny had plagiarized intentionally but not deceptively. He had meant to do what he did, but he was ignorant of the fact that this was unacceptable. However, jurors were very unsure about what was an appropriate response to this ignorance. Was it enough just to show Vinny what he had done wrong or did Vinny need to be held accountable for it?

The language factor was also discussed for a long time. Some felt it was an issue since Vinny had indicated that he did thing more clearly in his first language while others felt that "a senior should know that copying is wrong," and reminded the jury that Vinny himself had said that English wasn't a problem anymore. The issue was left unresolved with one juror saying, "it's presumptuous to say what we can or can not factor in (referring to Vinny's statements about language)."

The jury began to consider resolutions. As usual they looked at the three goals of resolutions: Education, Responsibility, and Accountability. Separation was the most contentious of the proposed resolutions. Most jurors did not feel strongly either way but several were concerned that the jury was losing touch with Vinny and the idea that he had not meant to deceive Prof. Griff. They also felt that many education resolutions would also deal with accountability.

After a break the jury reconvened. Jurors disagreed about the seriousness of the violation. Some felt that it wasn't intentional while others felt that even if he didn't understand the assignment Vinny should have known that direct copying was unacceptable. This juror though separation would drive home the magnitude of what had
happened. Another countered that incompetence wouldn't be helped by time off.

The jury began to look at whether or not there was a breach of trust with the community. Again the jury was divided. One juror said, "I can't trust students when I know someone could get away with this." Others felt that since the act was not meant to be deceptive there was no breach of trust.

In order to move forward the jury turned to less divisive issues. It was quickly agreed that Vinny would fail the paper and rewrite it in close consultation with Prof. Griff if he agreed. The jury then opened the question of failing the class but many felt that the issue of failing was inexorably tied to separation. At this point the jury was divided into thirds. One third felt separation was called for, one third felt separation was too harsh, one third was unsure. Was voluminous plagiarism, though not intentionally deceptive, grounds for separation? The jury felt that what it wanted was something between failing the class and separation.

Break.

One juror suggested that "ignorance can merit separation...I don't think it's an issue of how serious the plagiarism was... it might be about the quality of the student... In order to go to Haverford you have to be able to learn to footnote..." Other juror reacted strongly to this statement, some pressing for separation. On the other hand, some felt strongly that it was not the role of the jury to judge Vinny's academic quality.

At this point some jury members wondered if a language barrier or cultural difference accounted for Vinny not understanding foot-noting procedure. The juror who had raised the question of separation for ignorance wondered if the jury was saying that the options were either a) he did it intentionally and should be separated or b) he was a student of a different academic quality and/or background which accounted for his ignorance. The jury agreed that this was not the case. Jurors felt strongly that it was not appropriate to "second guess" admissions. One juror said, "We need to address the issue of plagiarism and what he did, not who he is."

The jury again turned to the issue of intent. Many now felt the a punitive resolution was not warranted in this case and the jury as a whole recognized that it was moving away from separation.

With this in mind the jury was able to reach consensus that Vinny should fail the class. The jury felt this would show Vinny
that he had done something very wrong while at the same time being fair to the students who had done honest work.

There now seemed to be one more issue to deal with. Should the jury make Vinny tell his recommendors and or professors what had happened? These two ideas seemed to address different aims. Jurors felt that Vinny's recommendors had a right to know since there names were on the line while Vinny should tell his professors in order to take responsibility for his actions and hear their views on the incident. To answer this the jury made up a list of pros and cons:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pro</th>
<th>Con</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Profs have right to know</td>
<td>post-trial effects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendors names on the line</td>
<td>As serious or more so than separation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>addresses faculty concerns</td>
<td>substitution for separation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vinny takes responsibility</td>
<td>punitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>establishes faculty trust</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>profs won't arbitrarily change recs.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>facilitates meeting with profs</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>repairs trust with profs</td>
<td></td>
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Breaking confidentiality was an extremely difficult issue. Many jurors talked about the needs of the faculty while others brought up the ideal of being able to close the door once a trial has happened.

Eventually the jury felt that others concerns outweighed the issue of confidentiality and reached consensus on the following set of resolutions:

1. The jury recommends that Vinny fail the paper.

2. The jury recommends that Vinny fail the course.

3. Vinny will re-write the paper after reading several sources on plagiarism and proper footnoting. The jury suggests that he do so in consultation with the professor, although the professor's participation can not be mandated. The sources will be provided by the jury.

4. Vinny must meet with the professors who wrote him letters of recommendation to discuss the facts of the trial. The goals of this are to facilitate Vinny's understanding of the faculty's attitudes toward his actions as well as the professor's general concerns about plagiarism. {If no one has written a letter of
recommendation, he must speak with two professors of his choice, one of whom must be in the department of his major.} (one juror stood outside) \{ taken out later.

More Deliberations-

Before making the resolutions final some jurors wanted to examine resolution four more thoroughly. It was decided to take out the second clause out of deference to some jurors concerns that confidentiality should not be broken just to get feedback and that there were other ways to address accountability and education.

Presentation of Resolutions-

Vinny and Prof. Griff agreed with the resolutions. Prof. Griff said that after hearing the jury's reasons he understood resolution 4. Both Vinny and Prof. Griff agreed that a letter written by Vinny might be helpful. The following resolution was added:

5. On the professor's suggestion and with Vinny's consent, Vinny will write a letter to the jury, Prof. Griff, and those professors who wrote him letters of recommendation. This letter, to be submitted two weeks after the completion of the re-write, will summarize his reactions to the trial process and express his understanding of the effects of plagiarism.

The jury reached final consensus.

Appeal-

Vinny appealed on the grounds that failing a class would jeopardize his ability to attend Haverford. Vinny was on academic probation and if he failed a class he would be asked to leave school. The appeal was denied. The president told Vinny that if he wished he might make a case for an exception to the Committee on Students Standing and Programs.