Introduction:

Wesley, a Haverford student, was confronted by his advisor, Professor Yar, because she felt that Wesley had been dishonest in several discussions regarding his course work both with her and with Professor LaForge. A discussion between Wesley, Professor Yar, and Professor LaForge resulted in Professor Yar requesting that Wesley contact Honor Council. After hearing the concerns of all parties involved, Council reached consensus that a trial would be necessary to address the suspicion that Wesley had violated the trust of his Professors by lying to avoid his academic responsibilities.

Fact Finding Part 1:

A) Professor Yar

Professor Yar read her statement which gave a chronology of the events and outlined her concerns. First she stated that Wesley had a chronic problem of handing in his assignments late, and that the case should be considered within that broader context. Professor Yar then went on to describe the specific events which lead to her confrontation. The four incidents she brought up were that Wesley: 1) lied about the due date of his Physics mid-term, 2) manipulated and lied to Professor LaForge, 3) failed to turn in his physics mid-term, astronomy paper, and Gamma Quadrant research paper, sighting computer problems, and 4) lied to Professor Troi.

Throughout the semester Wesley was required to meet with Professor Yar to discuss his academic progress. On Thursday, at one of these meetings, Professor Yar got the impression that Wesley had a physics mid-term due Monday for Professor LaForge's class. Professor Yar also knew that Wesley had a short astronomy paper due on Friday for her class, as well as a large research paper on the Gamma Quadrant due Monday. Wesley failed to turn in his astronomy paper on Friday.

That afternoon Professor Yar had a discussion with Professor LaForge. During this talk Professor Yar learned that Wesley's physics mid-term was actually due Friday instead of Monday, and that he had not been able to turn it in because of computer problems. At this point Professor Yar felt that Wesley had lied to her about the due date of the physics mid-term.

She then questioned Professor LaForge about the progress of Wesley's Gamma Quadrant paper because LaForge and Wesley were supposed to be meeting regularly to discuss the paper. Professor LaForge informed Professor Yar that Wesley had said that he was working with her and that everything was fine. Considering that Wesley had not met with Professor Yar to discuss the Gamma Quadrant paper, Professor Yar felt as though Wesley was also misleading and lying to Professor LaForge.

By late Monday evening Wesley still had not turned in any of his three assignments. On Tuesday evening Wesley talked with Professor Yar and she confronted him about lying to both her and Professor LaForge. On Wednesday the two had another conversation during which Wesley explained that he hadn't handed in his work because of computer problems.

Professor Yar also found out that Wesley had supposedly lied to Professor Troi about getting extensions for her course on feelings and fantasy.

Professor Yar finished by reemphasizing that Wesley had developed a pattern of misleading and lying to his professors, that this was a violation trust, and thus, a violation of the Honor Code.

B) Wesley

Wesley began by stating that the issues surrounding his work for Professor Troi had been resolved, and that Professor Yar's accusations regarding his work with Professor LaForge were unfounded. He also said that Professor Yar had misunderstood him regarding the due date for his Physics mid-term, thus he had not lied to her. He then shared his version of the events from Thursday afternoon till Tuesday morning.

Wesley stated that during his Thursday meeting with Professor Yar he had said he was anxious about his two papers that were due Friday, and that he would know Monday if he had made it through all the deadlines.

On Thursday night Wesley worked on his physics mid-term and astronomy paper until 11:30 PM at the Sharpless computer center. Because the computer cluster was going to close at mid-night he went home to do his work by hand. Wesley figured that he could type in all of his notes at 8AM when the computer center re-opened.
However, by early Friday morning, Wesley realized that he would not be able to finish typing out his work between the time that Sharpless opened and when his work was due, so he decided to try using his own computer. He was reluctant to do this because his computer had been giving him problems. Wesley said that he put his floppy disk into his computer, the computer said his disk was unreadable, so he ejected the disk and continued to work by hand.

Later that morning (Friday) he went to Sharpless to finish his work. However, when he put his disk into the computer his disk was empty. All of the work he had done the night before was gone. At this point Wesley panicked and began typing furiously to finish what he could so that he would have something to turn in. Around 11:30 he decided that the situation was hopeless and went to academic computing. They were unable to help him at that time so he went to Professor LaForge's class, told him about his computer troubles, and then returned to academic computing at 3:00. At this point Wesley spoke with Data, a computer expert from Academic Computing, who said that the disk appeared to have been initialized or erased. Nothing that he had written could be recovered. Thus, both the work done on Thursday night and done on Friday morning were lost.

Jury Deliberations I

Initially the jury felt frustrated because many of the issues which Professor Yar had brought up were about Wesley's interactions with other professors. Also, many of them seemed to be word against word debates. However, the jury did feel that something seemed "fishy".

The jury was uneasy about finding Wesley in violation for something which seemed to center on vague discussions. However, the jury thought that the story about the computer errors had inconsistencies that ought to be examined. The jury made a list of the concerns they needed to address: 1) the problem with Professor Troi, 2) whether Wesley had been misleading Yar and LaForge about the guidance he was receiving for his Gamma Quadrant paper, 3) the discussion between Wesley and Professor Yar regarding the due date for the mid term, 4) what happened to the Astronomy paper, and 5) the whole computer story. Finally, the jury decided to try and contact LaForge and Data to see if they could provide any useful information.

When the jury reconvened they first discussed the results of the Chair's discussion with Professor LaForge. LaForge said that in their conversations Wesley had given him certain impressions about things, but that Wesley's later explanations as to what he meant seemed possible; he conceded that he might have simply misunderstood. At this point the jury decided that several of the issues could be laid to rest. 1) The problems with Professor Troi involved other people and to take Professor Yar's word for what happened seemed irresponsible. 2) In much the same way, the debate as to what exactly went on between Wesley and Professor LaForge seemed inappropriate without Professor LaForge coming forward and saying that he had a problem with Wesley's behavior. 3) As to whether Wesley had misled anyone about his Gamma Quadrant paper or the due date of his mid-term, it seemed that all the jury could really say was that he had been irresponsible. There did not seem to be any way to substantiate Professor Yar's belief that Wesley had mislead anyone. 4) The same held true for his astronomy paper, in no way is it a violation of the Honor Code not to turn in work, its only a violation to lie about why you didn't turn it in. Thus, the only issue left was number 5) the whole computer story.

Next, the jury began discussing the explanation that Wesley had given to his professors and to the jury as to why he had not turned in his work (see fact finding I, section B). According to Data the only way for Wesley's disk to be completely empty, despite his claim that he had been working "feverishly" both Thursday night and Friday morning, was for the disk to be erased or initialized. The only other explanation was that the disk had been damaged, however Data was able to confirm that the disk was not damaged. While it is possible to accidentally to erase a disk, this process takes two or more steps, and is only possible if the disk is readable. Wesley had said that when he had used his own computer late Thursday/early Friday his disk was unreadable and that he only had to go through one step to eject his disk. Furthermore, the problems Wesley had with his own computer didn't explain why the work he had done Friday morning at Sharpless had been lost. Considering that the jury had not focused on this part of Wesley's statement, the jury decided that they needed to ask him some more fact finding questions.

Fact Finding II:

The jury asked Wesley to repeat the events from Thursday evening till Tuesday morning in as much detail as possible. The story was basically the same as the time before. He emphasized that it
took a long time for his computer at home to eject his disk, and it was during this time that he believed that his files had been erased. He said that he saved onto the same disk that he had used the night before because it was the only one he had with him. A juror asked if he was sure that he had saved onto the disk and Wesley replied that he had checked the first three times that he saved to make sure that it was saving onto the disk with no problems. Another juror then asked if it was true that there was nothing, not even new files, on his disk when Data looked at it. Wesley said that was correct and agreed, when asked, that this seemed strange. He said that it was possible that because he was tired he might have accidentally saved onto temporary storage but that it was true that there was nothing on the disk when Data had looked at it. That was all that the jury needed to know so Wesley left and the jury continued its deliberations.

Jury Deliberations II:

At this point the jury was finding Wesley's story difficult to believe, but they were still looking for plausible explanations. The most nagging thing was that Wesley's explanation didn't seem to account for the work that was done Friday morning. The only possibilities seemed to be that the work was on temporary storage or that it has been accidentally erased when he left Sharpless Friday morning. With this in mind a group from the jury went to the Sharpless computer center and looked through the temporary storage files. They first confirmed that temp. storage had not been erased, and then searched for documents by Wesley. They were unable to find anything by Wesley. Second, they checked out the options for erasing and initializing disks and discovered that the erase option does not exist on the Sharpless computers. Also, the only way to re-initialize a disk is to go through a three step process, one could not accidentally do this while shutting down. Finally Data spoke and reconfirmed that 1) the disk Wesley gave him on Friday was not damaged in any way, 2) a disk that cannot be read by a floppy drive cannot be erased without going through three separate confirmations by the writer, and 3) it would not be possible to accidentally erase a disk at Sharpless, the option doesn't exist. One juror asked Data if there was the slightest possibility that the story Wesley had told us, as he had told it to us, could be true. He replied that it was not possible, Wesley would have had to accidentally complete many other steps. At this point most of the jury was convinced that Wesley had lied both to his professors and to the jury. However, a few jurors had a fundamental distrust of computers and wanted to go make sure for themselves that it was virtually impossible to re-initialize a disk no matter how tired you were.

When the jury reconvened they were able to come to a preliminary consensus on the following statement of violation: Wesley lied to his professors and to the jury in his explanation as to why he did not turn in his work on Friday. This decision was reached with the provision that Wesley would be given one more chance to explain the inconsistencies of his story before a final consensus was reached. Both Wesley and Professor Yar were informed of the decision.

Circumstantial:

Wesley began by stating that he stood by his earlier comments, he did not agree with the jury's findings, and he did not know what else to add. Juror's explained to him the parts of his story that seemed impossible, most notably that the files that he wrote on Friday morning could not be located anywhere after he stated that he checked three times to make sure that he was saving correctly onto his disk. At this point Wesley denied that he said he had checked and confirmed that it was saving onto his disk. He said that maybe he had saved onto temp. storage, at which point jurors informed him that they had already checked temp. storage. Furthermore, one juror pointed out that he had confirmed that he was saving onto the disk in response to a direct question the last time he had spoken to the jury. Wesley said that he didn't have another explanation for what had happened, and that if he had said that he had checked that he was saving properly that that was untrue. Wesley refused to recognize that he had committed any violation of the Honor Code and he did not have another explanation for what happened, therefore the circumstantial portion of the trial ended.

Jury Deliberations III:

After a short period of time the jury was able to reach final consensus on the statement of violation with one juror recorded as standing outside because of his fundamental distrust of computers. Next, the jury began the process of formulating resolutions keeping in mind that the goals of trial resolutions are education, repairing the breach of trust, and accountability.
The first issue to be discussed was separation. It seemed clear that Wesley was a long way from dealing with what he had done since he still refused to admit that he had done anything wrong. Furthermore, the violation of lying to professors goes directly against the section of the code that states that "we are responsible for proper conduct and integrity in all of our scholastic work" (Honor Code III A). Finally, our community is structured on the assumption that all of its members are deserving of our trust. In such an atmosphere the violation of that trust immediately calls into question that persons ability to participate in the community. After considering all of these factors it was decided that separation was an appropriate resolution. The other issues that seemed to need to be addressed were: 1) the breakdown in the personal relationship between Professor Yar and Wesley, 2) Wesley's failure to meet his responsibilities as a member of the community, 3) Wesley's lack of respect for the trial process and the jurors involved. To address these concerns the jury found the following resolutions:

1) Wesley will be separated from the community for one semester.
2) Wesley will write a letter of explanation to Professor Yar as a first step to a suggested mediation.
3) Wesley will complete the astronomy paper that he never wrote to the satisfaction of his professor.
4) Wesley will write a letter reacting to this experience which includes but is not limited to the following topics: extensions, academic integrity, reactions to the resolutions, and student/teacher trust.

It is expected that Wesley will take an appropriate and substantial amount of time to reflect on these events before attempting to fulfill these resolutions.

These resolutions were consensed upon by the jury and we began our 24 hour waiting period. One juror was recorded as standing outside of consensus for all resolutions and a second stood outside for the fourth resolution.

Presentation of the Resolutions:
Wesley was out of town and therefore unable to meet with the jury. Therefore the jury reached final consensus on the resolutions with the understanding that they might need to meet again upon Wesley's return if he so requested. This did not turn out to be necessary.
The jury's decision was appealed and upheld.

Questions:
1) Do you feel that the resolutions reached by the jury were proper given the nature of the violation?
2) Should the jury have considered Professor Yar's concerns about Wesley's behavior with other Professors?
Letter to the Haverford Community written by Wesley whose abstract was already sent to you last semester.

Letter to the Haverford Community

What sort of ethical arrangement do you make with each of your Haverford professors simply by joining his/her class? What obligations rest upon your shoulders as a class member? What does a paper due date really mean?

How many little lies have told today? this week?

What are you willing to sacrifice for the sake of speaking with a friend for a few hours, getting pizza, sleeping badly? That is, does procrastination ever seem worthwhile in retrospect?

I have been asked to write to you because I am guilty of lying to two of my professors. In some sense, the purpose of this letter is to try and repair the trust that I have broken. I am tremendously sorry for taking advantage of all those who once trusted me. There are few experiences worse than when a teacher you respect and who is generally tolerant tells you that he/she no longer believes what you are saying. These words I give to you certainly cannot be judged reliable without some reflection. I lied systematically to two professors and Honor Council among others—two professors I greatly admired and with Honor Council, an institution that I respected and headed by someone who I similarly held in high regard. Why turn to a criminal for advice on ethical matters? I certainly wouldn't. Telling you, the community, and the principals in my case—professors, Honor Council people, dean and others—that I have deep regrets about what I have done and that I want to show I am in the process of reforming—who would be convinced at first hearing that I meant it? Some perhaps never will. I believe many will be willing, grudgingly, to accept my apology—I at least hope as much. What I am eloquently getting at is that I don't believe that this letter would do all it could if it remained simply an apology.

Everyone has problems with procrastination and the sad part is, as far as I can judge, it seems to get worse as you move along at Haverford. Now, I really believe that if I had gotten help with my problem putting things off, I would have been able to circumvent the problems I encountered—failed classes, probation, and eventually, the honor trial. Haverford has great resources waiting for students who need help in this area—a special Study Skills group, free student psychological counseling, and the deans and professors are often quite helpful as well. I was too proud and too foolish to get this help when it could have saved my academic life, and probably my ethical life as well. Don't make the mistakes I've made. As of right now, I have only regrets to remember the majority of my time at Haverford.