Sunny-Side-Up and Professor Pancake
A Case Brought Before Honor Council
Released Spring 2011

This abstract was completed in accordance with the timeline in the Constitution.
The confronting and confronted parties were given the opportunity to review this abstract prior to its release.
(The addition of this disclaimer began Fall 2010).

Introduction

Sunny-Side-Up contacted Honor Council, saying that she believed that she had violated the Honor Code during the previous semester. She was taking Frying Pan Technology with Professor Pancake and was working on the first take-home test. She finished the test within the time limit, decided that one of her answers was blatantly incorrect, and went back after time ended to scribble it out. Realizing that she was still changing an answer after time ended and thus violating the Honor Code, she erased as much of the scribbling as she could from around the answer, traced over her original answer in bold and wrote a note next to the problem explaining what she had done.

She then took the test to Professor Pancake and told him that she had gone back outside of the time limit to scribble out her answer and uncover it, and that she probably shouldn't get credit for anything in that problem. Professor Pancake decided to give her credit for the problem because her answer was correct.

Her statement to Council concluded with the following:

“At the time, I was disgusted with myself and still think that my intent was an infringement of the Honor Code, even if my action would only have lowered my own grade by obliterating the correct answer. I strongly believe that I am highly unlikely to ever do something like this again and never expected myself to do anything like it in the first place, but it was a violation of the Honor Code on some level, so please do as you see fit.”
Honor Council’s Discussion

Honor Council discussed whether or not it was suspicious that Sunny had violated the Honor Code. One Honor Council member said Sunny did not, because she gained no advantage by going over time. Another Honor Council member disagreed because he believed that simply by not following the rules of the test, Sunny had violated the Honor Code. Most Council members agreed with this sentiment. Honor Council consented to a suspicion of violation.

The entire Council immediately agreed that the issue should be dropped. The sense of the room was that the goals of education, restoration, and accountability had already been achieved. When one of the Co-Chairs asked whether any other action needed to be taken, several Council members mentioned a desire to thank Sunny for coming forward, saying that it was very Haverfordian of her. Council then consented to dropping the case. One of the Co-Chairs emailed Sunny about Council’s decision and thanked her for her honesty.

Council would like to note that it is not an anomaly for a case reviewed to result in a suspicion of violation and then be dropped. Normally, an abstract is not released in these circumstances. However, Council members felt that it would benefit the community to hear about this case.

Discussion Questions

1. Did Sunny need to report herself to Honor Council?
2. Was Honor Council right in coming to a suspicion of violation?
3. Was Honor Council right in dropping the case?