

Honor Council

H A V E R F O R D C O L L E G E

Discussion Minutes from 4/23/15

Community Members Present: Brian, Erin, Rebecca, Brandon, Maddie, Brett, Katie, Natalie, Melissa, Chris, Michelle, Professor Jen Lilgendahl, Robin, Professor Maud McInerney, Professor Judy Owen, Audra, Jean, Adina, Lauren, Katie, Natalie, Ben, Gabe, Professor Linda Gerstein, Damon, Dela, Kyle, Professor Darin Hayton

A. Pizza, Professors, and the Code

1. Brian: How does the Code impact the way you teach at Haverford?
2. Professor Owen: Enables us to teach in creative ways, trust students to do things properly, treat students as colleagues.
3. Professor McInerney: Have many friends at other institutions who have to proctor exams; it is nice not to have to do that here.
4. Brian: Does anyone think the Code affects the way students and faculty interact outside the classroom?
5. Professor Lilgendahl: Trust spreads. Took students to conference and believed that they would represent Haverford well.
6. Professor Owen: For instance, if there is an open bar, I trust that students will not get drunk; they will act appropriately.
7. Dela: Being able to trust that your professors will believe circumstances, things you need to explain, like if asking for extension.
8. Ben: Could the professors speak about drawbacks with the Code?
9. Professor Gerstein: Very aware of how much anxiety the Code causes her students. Her students seem to be ones on trials. But I don't see any alternative. It confuses students.
10. Professor McInerney: Council is not static; Councils change year to year and sometimes let people off too easy, other years take a much harder stance. However, I have been here long enough to see these ups and downs, and do not see some cases where student is let off too easy as part of a larger downhill slide.
11. Robin: Do you think less experienced professors might not get that initially?
12. Professor McInerney: Absolutely. It's strange to us at first. But given presentation on Honor Council as part of faculty orientation.
13. Gabe: Would it better to have a formalized person who always sits on trials (ie not a student)
14. Professor McInerney: Don't know. That's something for you guys to figure out.
15. Professor Lilgendahl: I do worry about how time consuming trials are for students. But then, you all have energy that knows no bounds.
16. Professor McInerney: It might be the emotional costs more than the time costs sometimes.
17. Professor Owen: Perhaps the confidentiality causes distress and exhaustion because something's wrong but can't talk about it. Sometimes some of the confidentiality is too much. Sometimes they should be able to talk to their professors. I don't know if they're allowed to or not, but that needs to be made clear to them.
18. Irene: We are allowed to speak to professors about serving on a trial, but maybe that is not always made clear/people may not want to.
19. Dela: Also depends on the role of the student involved in the trial. Harder to talk

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- about if confronted party.
20. Professor Owen: Also hard on temporary faculty; have impression that disproportionate number of cases occur in classes taught by temporary faculty; should make sure that temporary faculty have permanent professor to act as a support person.
 21. Robin: I think perception about trials being a lot of work is probably growing, in terms of people's awareness. People have resigned saying this is too much work for us.
 22. Dela: How many years of people not resigning does it take for perception to go away?.
 23. Professor McInerney: Also the emotional pressure, not just time commitment. Remember student who was member of Honor Council and fell apart because felt part of system who was doing right thing but really painful because cases she was dealing with were so serious
 24. Professor Owen: What are the support systems for members of Council?
 25. Melissa: A lot more difficult for community jurors, because members of Honor Council have each other, but community jurors don't. They signed up not knowing how intense it would be. They can ask for extensions and talk to CAPS, but other than that, it's hard.
 26. Robin: Council member can tell professor that they are on council; community juror cannot say.
 27. Melissa: But you can tell professors that you are on a trial. I feel supported by fellow members of Council when have to make difficult decisions, but community juror can really only talk to other jurors or CAPs
 28. Irene: Jurors can talk to people outside Haverford community (such as parents, friends at other colleges).
 29. Rebecca: I feel like that is not well explained; I would not think I could talk to my parents.
 30. Irene: It's talked about in preliminary meeting.
 31. Brian: Going back to question about who supports students (I was co-chair who resigned); one of my professors noticed I was going through a lot of stress; he was able to ask about what I was going through. I was happy to be living in a community where people can ask about and understand these responsibilities. The fact that people look out for each other is a really good thing.
 32. Damon: I think the fact that you are expressing this concern for us is huge. Universally have had wonderful working with professors in these kinds of situations.
 33. Professor Lilgendahl: As the psychology professor; lots of research shows that not being able to disclose emotional material is really taxing, both emotionally and physically. Whole Code for community is wonderful, but also requires a lot of integrity from people; can be challenging.
 34. Daniel: Because we live in a small community, possible that juror may know person on trial.
 35. Professor McInerney: That can happen with us too. Years ago a confronted party in big case revealed themselves to me. Became very hard for me. Had to go through mental loops to make sure adjudicating final work in fair manner.
 36. Robin: I am sure it is taxing for professors to participate in a trial as well.
 37. Professor Gerstein: Managed to avoid it for 49 years. Don't take anything personally. Don't care if cheating, you're problem not mine. It finally got thrown in her face. Couldn't avoid it anymore, it was plagiarism from Wikipedia. It didn't take anything out of me. Had to confront because asked dean what to do. It was the jury and student who got things taken out of them. Didn't consider it attack on her, but rather sign of weakness for the student.
 38. Professor McInerney: Slightly different experience; been confronting party in two cases. Real problem for me was that I had to go to a meeting late at night; some

- professors probably do not confront because there is no way they will be able to attend a meeting. I did not take either case personally, but I was offended that students were dumb enough to think that I would not catch them.
39. Professor Hayton: Faculty have lives off this campus. Many of us don't live here. Incredible burden to have to go home and come back late at night. In both cases involved in, didn't take it personal. There are many understandable, if not justifiable, reasons why someone might plagiarize. Not interested in why it happened, that's what you can deal with. Part of Honor Code that take personally - we as students will conduct ourselves with integrity in all our academic work. Can take the form of being gently deceitful. I don't think less of students for plagiarizing.
 40. Daniel: How do people get caught for plagiarizing? I thought with honor system wouldn't be checking for complete originality.
 41. Professor McInerney: It is very easy when reading someone's work to notice when they don't sound like themselves.
 42. Professor Gerstein: Or you ignore it.
 43. Professor Hayton: You may also sound more sophisticated than you normally do.
 44. Professor Lilgendahl: It does mean that it's probably the most egregious cases that get adjudicated. In terms of emotional toll on faculty, wouldn't think of it as personal attack, but what's stressful is the contemplation of confronting a student. That is scary. Stomach turns when realize this is what you're going to have to deal with this week. Hard to think that going to be person to start process that will be one of most difficult things in student's college life.
 45. Professor Gerstein: What really turns my stomach is being an observer of social Code violations, such as watching my students mistreating each other. Sometimes Honor Council can handle it; other times they do not handle it as well. I keep away from campus Saturday and Sunday night. Social Code part really upsets me.
 46. Professor McInerney: Between students and staff also.
 47. Natalie: Are you talking about cases that go to Council or things that don't?
 48. Professor Gerstein: I don't know; I stay away from it. 30 years ago I dealt with a lot of things; students would come to me.
 49. ??: Shocking at We Speak to hear multiple students speak about being let down by how social Honor Council cases handled. As freshman, shocked to see flaws in social Code.
 50. Professor Gerstein: Of course this is not utopia, this is life.
 51. Robin: A lot of students bound by the Code ignore social things they see. If more students stepped up and confronted, the social Honor Code would work
 52. [many people leave - several students and Professor Gerstein and Professor Hayton remain]
 53. Question: How have you actions here been shaped by code
 54. Professor Hayton: Social and Academic Honor Codes end up being relatively separate for me; if i saw something that struck me as a social violation, I wouldn't have a problem confronting it, but the way I've structured my life here that doesn't happen. As for academic half, I try to treat people as if they are being honest to me (and always have) until I have a reason to think otherwise; I stres integrity and conduct over plagiarism. The cases I've been involved in have been mistakes. In some ways it just dovetails with the way I live my life.
 55. Student: I don't think many people act that way; there was a situation where I felt like I was being assumed guilty and had to defend innocence; that was emotionally taxing. Professor felt need to be harsh since Honor Code gives people leeway. Interesting power dynamic there. Painful to realize that there were professors who didn't believe that the Honor Code works.
 56. Professor Professor Gerstein: Faculty is not homogenous; I have heard about that thing so many times. Sometimes a mistake and sometimes cheating; our behavior is affected by xperience. Especially in subjects assumed to be more anxiety

causing for students Honor Code can be a shock for Freshmen coming in from high school

57. Professor Hayton: Want to highlight that Code doesn't mean everything a student says is taken at face value, rather space for student and faculty, sometimes painfully for both, to work toward resolution. Code is set of guidelines for confronter and confronted to work through process. Unfortunate that your experience felt antagonistic, but also proves that Code is providing that space. Student: I do think that Honor Code worked in this case, what I had a problem with was lack of mutual respect in that situation, felt like I was fighting an uphill battle; less of a dialogue
58. Dela: It seems like the things you mentioned that have to do with showing that you did solve the problem. Those conversations are the things that I see as real evidence of Code; when the student cannot provide proof. Honor Council academic trials almost always aren't about proof; involve taking things on faith
59. Professor Hayton: Faculty come to these encounters with the experiences they've had. It's a shame that this was a harsh interaction, but no un-understandable.
60. JAMES: Reminds me of Project Runway abstract where two students kept asserting that they did not collaborate. Jury found that they had and both were separated.
61. Irene: Often comes down to what seems more likely. If someone can find story that makes more sense than the story that they cheated; if you can explain how you got to answer; seems more likely that student is telling the truth
62. Professor Hayton: I understand that. I've come across a lot of watertight explanations that aren't true. Honor Council has to work through those
63. Professor Professor Gerstein: A way of thinking about what Honor Council does is that often there are students that are in trouble and Council repairs relationship between students who are in trouble and the society around them. Some kind of healing or teaching or community repair; that's what Honor Council does that's so perfect, they're not the police. It's about teaching moments.
64. Brian: Question I wanted to ask; one thing that gets talked about in trials is how to restore breach of trust between student and professor and it's hard to know whether professor sees this in same way as jury. To what degree do you feel you need to be restored with student
65. Professor Professor Gerstein: It's the student who needs to be restored; I see it in terms of whether they have learned from it or not
66. Dela: Are there variables that determine how you might feel about student in different cases
67. Professor Professor Gerstein: Part of being professional adult is trying to eliminate some of that. I don't think that faculty member are whom Honor Council needs to concern; the student who have mis-stepped are the ones who are vulnerable
68. student: idea is that resolutions should make it so that there is trust in that relationship again
69. Professor Hayton: In cases I have had, didn't feel that relationship with the student had been damaged. Perfectly understandable; student had done nothing else to raise suspicion. Student shouldn't have to fight to regain trust for a mistake (last minute stress and desperation). Wasn't a damaged relationship with me.
70. Professor Professor Gerstein: Violation of social contract
71. Dela: Does degree of forthcomingness of student during trial make a difference
72. Professor Hayton: Yes. In my experience students have been relatively straightforward; comes down to integrity and conduct; student taking responsibility for the conduct that wasn't ideal is what is important. Rest of issues student needs to restore are between student and community
73. Brian: So do you see this as more important in more malicious violations,
74. Professor Hayton: In those cases ideals of institution are harmed
75. Professor Professor Gerstein: We as an institution can accept that. We are trying

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- to get those people who are sliding back.
76. Brian: What about the situations you have mentioned where students have simply been dishonest?
 77. Professor Hayton: It's troubling when I have a long conversation trying to work through an issue where I then find out a student was being dishonest. I don't know how to deal with those.. Not academic dishonesty, just lying. For me Honor Code is all about conduct and integrity; bears on philosophical project that this institution is engaged in. All institutions deal with plagiarism; this is what distinguishes our institution. That kind of thing is off putting.
 78. Brian: Trying to think of what to do in that situation. I think it's kind of a teachable moment. Could tell student that they are not going about this correctly. Not Honor Council issue; just confronting about not acting as a member of our community should.
 79. Robin: Reminds me of time where professor talked to me about doing poorly in a class. Relates to the "concern" part of Code. That professor had reached out to dean who talked to other professors. Was only doing poorly in that class and had confrontation/conversation. That was a really good example of community telling me they weren't going to let me fail. That affected me a lot.
 80. Dela: (to professor Hayton) I was struck to what you said about reaching out to other professors; this situation was completely factual but having been involved in Honor Council, I'm wondering about professors communicating about students if cause breach of trust
 81. Professor Hayton: My experience is that confidentiality is maintained if student violates the Honor Code. Can't imagine myself ever doing that. If student so egregiously violating code, I would hope that Honor Council would take appropriate measure to make sure that that is not a problem.
 82. Dela: What about cases where student demonstrates a massive lack of understanding of academic integrity; student doesn't seem to know how to follow Honor Code
 83. Professor Hayton: Either Honor Council will make it so community is protected from this, or breaches will be so blatant that they are obvious.
 84. Professor Professor Gerstein: Professors really do have faith in code. There are complaints about little things but by in large its a joy.
 85. Rebecca: How is teaching at Haverford different than at other schools.
 86. Professor Professor Gerstein: I've seen people at each other's throats
 87. Professor Hayton: Taught at larger institution with academic honor code that was not adjudicated by students. As a simple set of guidelines for not cheating, it worked pretty well, still self scheduled exams, etc. Probably more violations since bigger institution and also because there is a competitiveness among the students that does not manifest itself in the same way here. Works okay as set of guidelines to keep people from cheating, but doesn't have corresponding social half.
 88. Robin: A friend at another school described biology as cutthroat.
 89. Professor Hayton: How is it that students perceive faculty to enact the Code?
 90. Robin: I see that there is a department-wide feeling of this is way Code is done in econ department, this is way it is done in linguistics, etc.
 91. James: Some departments give take-home quizzes; others give them in class.