Abstract discussions will be held on Wed 9/30 and Thu 10/1 at 7pm in the MCC (Stokes 106).

**Aladdin:**

**An Honor Council Academic Trial**

**Released Fall 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 the release of the abstract. (The addition of this disclaimer began in Spring 2010).

**Key:**
Confronted Party: Aladdin
Confronting Party: Professor Genie
Class: Royal Manners 300
Department: Acting like a Royal
Expert Witness: Professor Magic Carpet

**Summary/Pre-Trial:**

Professor Genie emailed Honor Council to report that he suspected Aladdin of violating the Honor Code on a take-home exam in Royal Manners 300. Professor Genie had worried about Aladdin’s performance in the class up until this point, and had even suspected him of inappropriately collaborating on an earlier assignment. Professor Genie’s statement presented evidence of most of the exam being copied nearly verbatim from outside and online resources. Aladdin initially denied any use of outside sources during the exam, saying he had taken very extensive notes from outside sources prior to the exam while studying. Throughout the trial, Professor Genie was unable to accept Aladdin’s story as truth - and after the jury consulted an expert witness within the [Acting like a Royal] department, they determined that Aladdin had indeed made use of outside sources while taking the exam, informing most of his answers.

Many factors complicated the trial. This was Aladdin’s second violation of the Honor Code, Aladdin had been suffering through emotional difficulties and ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder) when the violation occurred, and Aladdin had already taken a year off of college and felt separation would be harmful as he might not be able to return. Ultimately, the jury came to a set of resolutions including separation, failure of the exam, and resolutions directed at helping Aladdin reintegrate with the campus upon his return. The separation resolution was later
overturned on appeal, and Aladdin was allowed to return to campus in the following semester with edited resolutions.

**Fact Finding:**

Fact Finding portion opened with Professor Genie offering his perspective on the situation. Professor Genie stated that the instance had occurred on a take-home exam early on in the course. While he was grading he noticed an answer matched that of one in an inappropriate resource (the exam instructions forbade the use of outside resources, although the course textbook and any notes were allowed), and was uncharacteristic of previous work. Since this was a Royal Manners course, he explained that there was a lot of writing involved and responses were like essays. He felt that there were too many similarities between the outside resource for this to be a coincidence. Professor Genie was able to find a website where the answer to this problem had come from, and during his research, he found many other websites with answers nearly identical to the work Aladdin had done on his take-home exam. Professor Genie had shown these answers to other professors in the department, who agreed the answers were too close to outside sources to possibly be a coincidence.

Aladdin then began with his account of events. He stated that while studying for this exam he took extensive notes from outside sources including other websites in order to prepare himself. He said that he had used these notes during the exam, and that these notes contained solutions from other sources. Aladdin said it was hard to separate which ideas in his notes were from the class and which came from outside resources, but that he did not look at any online sources or use his textbook during the exam.

The jury then began to ask the parties questions related to the facts of the case. One juror asked Professor Genie to what extent using outside sources on notes would be a violation of the Honor Code. Professor Genie said he had not considered this when writing the exam, but would consider these outside notes acceptable resources. Aladdin responded that he was not trying to violate instructions, but that he felt even copying these notes was not in the spirit of the exam instructions. Another juror asked if the violation was only on one question, to which Professor Genie said that he felt this violation encompassed the entire exam. A juror asked Aladdin how long he had used said outside sources when studying, to which Aladdin said he had used them quite a while and on most assignments to complete them - but only in note form and never outside of instructions. Aladdin said that he had trouble paying attention in the class and used these sources to keep up with the work. A juror then asked Aladdin what kinds of outside sources he had studied from, to which Aladdin said other colleges websites, wikis, and online forums mostly. This same juror asked Professor Genie if he felt these similarities could be accounted for from notes or from these outside resources. Professor Genie felt that Aladdin’s answers did look very similar to online solutions, in ways that were much more than a coincidence, and in ways that simply notes could not have accounted for.

A juror asked Aladdin if he felt that taking these notes while studying was stepping over
the line in terms of including too much information. Aladdin said that he started the exam at 3AM and did not consider how much information his notes had, but that he should have read instructions (saying that outside sources other than notes were prohibited) much more carefully. He said that he should have asked Professor Genie, but that he didn’t really have that kind of relationship with his professors in general. Professor Genie at this point felt he wasn’t very comfortable with the explanation Aladdin was presenting, saying that Aladdin mostly skipped questions that were less standard and answered every other question with nearly verbatim answers from outside sources, something he felt would have been difficult to grab from notes. With that the jury questioning finished, and the jury moved to deliberations.

**Jury Deliberations Part 1:**

For the deliberations, the jury had printouts of the exam instructions, Aladdin’s exam, email correspondence with Professor Genie, and printouts of websites Professor Genie felt the answers to Aladdin’s exam had come from. One juror first said they felt Aladdin was lying during the meeting, and that they trusted Professor Genie. They said that having these exact solutions in the notes would require hundreds of pages of notes, due to the huge number of possible questions that could be asked. Another juror suggested that even if Aladdin’s statement were true, his use of outside sources in notes could still be considered a violation of exam instructions, but if he were lying and used outside sources, the degree of violation was higher.

The jury was overall skeptical that Aladdin had managed to use notes to answer the questions on his exam in such an exact format similar to outside sources. The jury overall agreed that a violation occurred, but there was some divide as to whether or not Aladdin was lying, and if he in fact used outside resources throughout the exam. Some jurors felt that it was obvious that he used outside sources given the similarity of his exam, as it was nearly impossible for Aladdin to get so lucky with his notes as to have the solutions in front of him. One juror suggested looking at Aladdin’s notebook, but other jurors were worried if he were lying that he’d falsify his notebook. Another juror examined the questions Aladdin left blank and could not find solutions online for those he left blank, but that there were for those he answered. The jury examined the exams and sources, and felt with near certainty that Aladdin used the sources while taking the exam, but still felt uncomfortable crafting a statement of violation until hearing from an expert witness. Due to this, the trial chair decided to contact an expert witness to discuss the notion of how likely it was that Aladdin used outside sources while taking this exam based on material he learned in class and Aladdin’s story. The jury adjourned until hearing back.

**Jury Deliberations Part 2/Statement of Violation:**

The trial chair had emailed Professor Magic Carpet, a senior member of the [Acting like a Royal] Department, to be an expert witness. The chair read off his email to the jury in which Professor Magic Carpet agreed with Professor Genie in feeling that Aladdin had used outside sources to complete the exam while taking it. After hearing this and through reflection, the jury
was generally in agreement that Aladdin did use outside sources during the exam and that his statement during Fact Finding was not truthful. The jury wanted the statement to be clear as to what they felt the violation was so that Aladdin could respond in circumstantial.

Thus they came to the following statement of violation:

*Aladdin violated the Honor Code by accessing prohibited outside sources during the exam and plagiarizing from them. (10 jurors consented, 0 stood outside)*

**Interim:**

After the jury had come to a statement of violation, in compliance with guidelines on Informing Juries of Past Honor Council Proceedings¹, a member of the Honor Council Executive Board who was not serving on this trial jury met with Aladdin to discuss the fact that this was his second violation of the Honor Code. They both decided it was relevant to this violation and that it would be shared with the jury by Aladdin during circumstantial.

**Circumstantial Portion:**

Professor Genie was not present for circumstantial portion. The meeting opened with Aladdin offering his reaction to the statement and circumstances surrounding the violation. Aladdin began by saying he was involved in a similar trial prior to taking leave that had involved a violation in an [Acting like a Royal] class involving similar circumstantial factors, which he explained to the jury. This instance went to an academic trial and he was found in violation of the Code, but Aladdin emphasized he never meant to cheat or plagiarize in that instance and had a lot of stress in his life that led him to take time off after that. Further, Aladdin said that in this instance he had been struggling in class throughout the semester, and it was hard with this being his first Royal Manners class since his leave of absence from Haverford.

The jury then moved on to ask some questions. One juror asked Aladdin to elaborate on some circumstances surrounding stress and classes in general. Aladdin said that his leaving Haverford had not been under the best of circumstances and coming back was not easy either, and that all of his classes on how to [act like a royal] were rigorous. Aladdin said that he had been working with deans on issues such as his projected graduation date, but that this had not been resolved. Another juror asked Aladdin to comment on the statement the jury came to in relation to Aladdin’s account of events. Aladdin said it was surprising and upsetting, but out of his control. He felt the jury deliberated a lot and are the experts. Aladdin continued to defend his testimony, but realized the jury didn’t believe him. One juror asked Aladdin to elaborate on his ADD and anxiety, and how they factored into the violation. Aladdin said that he was diagnosed with ADD in high school and was on medication, and that this led to a lack of concentration in class and during exams. He said that he was now taking both anxiety and ADD medications, and

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¹ [http://honor council.haverford.edu/guidelines/previous-violations/](http://honor council.haverford.edu/guidelines/previous-violations/)

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he had to spend sometimes three times as much time completing assignments such as homework or tests because of it (he also did not have accommodations for completing tests or assignments).

One juror asked if Aladdin had any recommended resolutions. Aladdin deferred to the jury on this and could not think of any specifically helpful resolutions. The same juror then asked for his reaction to separation. Aladdin said that would probably be the worst possible thing for him as he had just recently gotten back from leave, and separation may cause him to never come back as his parents wouldn’t allow it. A juror asked Aladdin if he had any ideas for restorative resolutions. Aladdin said that was hard to think about, but he didn’t see how separation would restore trust to the community necessarily, and that he did not see it as restorative to him at all. Aladdin said that resolutions helping him feel more welcome in the community would be helpful restoration wise, as he felt very isolated and did not know a lot of people on campus since coming back from leave. The meeting then ended and the jury moved to deliberations on tentative resolutions.

**Jury Deliberations and Tentative Resolutions:**

The trial chair began this portion of the meeting by further elaborating on the past case that Aladdin had mentioned his involvement in. The jury felt generally conflicted. They felt great sympathy for Aladdin and his situation, but on the other hand he still was not telling the full truth and had committed quite an egregious violation of the Honor Code. The jury was worried he may have been manipulative with some of his statements concerning separation, although a juror said manipulative or not, the statements were probably true concerning him not being able to come back if he were separated. The jury felt the hopelessness and powerlessness that Aladdin presented in circumstantial were also consistent with his words in his initial statement.

A juror mentioned that this case presented a fundamental obstacle to restoration as the jury and the confronting party were on an entirely different page than the confronted party. Another juror said that because Aladdin seemed to accept the statement of violation as something he couldn’t do anything about, it meant that he was resigned to the jury going along with it. A different juror felt this passivity that Aladdin showed - neither agreeing nor disagreeing with it - was the worst thing Aladdin could do. It was mentioned that it made it difficult to form restorative resolutions toward Aladdin or even take his serious circumstances into account when he claimed he didn’t violate the Code in the same way the jury believed. The ADD, anxiety, and coming back to college after a year off could certainly impact confidence about academic work. This combined with the fact he took the exam at 3AM could all play into the violation, but Aladdin seemed reluctant to connect these circumstances to any violation as Aladdin asserted there was no real intentional violation.

The jury then began to discuss specific resolutions. The jury discussed having Aladdin fail the class, but since it seemed he was going to anyway, the jury didn’t want to be overly punitive, so they decided on recommending that Aladdin fail the exam. One juror suggested having Aladdin submit a statement to the new working group on mental health policy, which
would go toward community restoration.

The jury was generally conflicted about separation. They discussed how it might not be beneficial to Aladdin, considering he said it might lead him to never return to Haverford. On the other hand, no juror seemed to be comfortable taking a class with Aladdin until he was fully restored. Jurors pointed out that Haverford might not be a good fit for him, and separation might give him some time to think about whether he really wanted to come back.

Aladdin had said he was just trying to ‘get through’ Haverford, and jurors generally wanted to give him some time off to concentrate on his own emotional health and to reflect on what he wanted out of Haverford, since it appeared as though he was not thriving here. The jury discussed how these violations might have occurred due to his struggles in ‘getting through’ Haverford, but in committing them, he had withdrawn himself from the Code. Some other resolution ideas the jury had included meeting with the OAR about time management, meeting with each of his professors every two weeks, and writing a letter to the community.

When the jury returned to separation, they believed that one semester of separation would be best for Aladdin and the community. Although Aladdin could not see it now, the jury believed that being away for one semester would allow him to recoup his energy and health. Some jurors even felt that one semester may be too little for the community given that this was his second violation and he still was not completely admitting what he had done. Overall, the weight of the room still favored one semester of separation. The jury was also in favor of recommending that the violation be reported to other institutions of higher learning. Finally, the jury also recommended a meeting between Aladdin and Professor Genie.

The jury consented to the following tentative resolutions:

1. The jury recommends that [Aladdin] receive a 0.0 on the take-home portion of the exam in question. (10 jurors consent)
2. Before the end of the current semester, the jury recommends that [Aladdin] meet with Professor [Genie] to discuss the violation. We will leave them the option of having a juror attend this meeting. (10 jurors consent)
3. [Aladdin] will submit a statement to the task force on student mental health talking about his experiences with mental health as a Haverford student. This statement should be completed by [date]. (10 jurors consent)
4. [Aladdin] will be separated from Haverford College for the following semester. (10 jurors consent)
5. At the end of his separation, [Aladdin] will write a letter to the community reflecting on his experience with the trial process and separation. This letter must be completed before his return to Haverford. (10 jurors consent)
6. Upon his return, [Aladdin] will meet with the OAR to discuss studying habits and time management. (10 jurors consent)
7. For the first semester after his return, the jury recommends that [Aladdin] have biweekly
meetings with each of his professors. (10 jurors consent)

8. The jury recommends that this process be considered a disciplinary proceeding for the purposes of reporting to institutions of higher learning. (10 jurors consent)

Resolutions as a whole: 10 jurors consent

Interim:

Upon receiving the tentative resolutions, Aladdin expressed despair over the email concerning the resolution about separation. He felt this would not only crush him, but crush his family, and was worried the jury was not taking this into account. He truly at this point felt he could reconcile himself with the community in a more beneficial fashion if he were on campus. Aladdin agreed to discuss this all during finalizing resolutions.

Finalizing Resolutions/Jury Deliberations Part 1:

The meeting began with feedback from Aladdin. Aladdin agreed with most of the tentative resolutions and felt they would be truly helpful but said he would want to change the resolution concerning separation. He said he understood the goals for separation, but after already taking an extended leave, he didn’t feel that separation would help. He felt that it would instead isolate him from the community further. Aladdin felt that having one month during winter break to reflect, and being able to come back to campus to complete the rest of the resolutions would make his relationship with the community and the Code even closer, and would help along the restoration process. Aladdin suggested having frequent meetings with a member of Honor Council and writing a short response each week to his experiences with the Code and how it affected his life. He also suggested writing a letter at the end of the semester based on these short responses. Aladdin felt that coming back after separation would leave him in a far worse place than he was in now.

A juror mentioned that part of the reason the jury decided on separation was because the jurors and by extension the community felt uncomfortable taking a class with Aladdin next semester before Aladdin had time to reflect and restore himself. Another juror mentioned additionally that the discrepancies between what Aladdin had said throughout the trial and what Professor Genie and the expert witness had said were concerning. At this point Aladdin said that he had convinced himself that the violation was less than it actually was, and that he did in fact use inappropriate resources during the exam. He wanted to make sure this sentiment was shared to the jury during this meeting anyway, and hoped to be fully forthcoming about this with the jury now. Aladdin said that in working with his therapist this past week he was able to come to terms with the violation. He also noted that his therapist had just gotten back from vacation this week, and therefore had been absent throughout the beginning of this trial.

A juror now asked if personal struggles played a role in the violation. Aladdin said that they definitely did play a role to some degree, and that he felt very little self-control at the point
he was taking the exam. Another juror then asked how resolutions might help restore his idea of the Code. Aladdin said he felt they would help restore him to the community, and that the OAR and statement to the mental health group would be especially helpful. Aladdin also mentioned he would have no problem with a resolution directed at him meeting with the Office of Disability Services to assist with test taking. A juror asked Aladdin if he felt Haverford was the right place for him. Aladdin said that he thought a lot about that during leave and took classes at other schools, and he felt Haverford would be better for him than any other place. He believed that Haverford challenged him in ways that other schools would not and that he had built up a support system here. In fact, Aladdin said that if he left Haverford, he might take years off before building up the confidence to go to another school.

The jury wanted to make sure that Aladdin would reflect during any time off and be honest with himself in the future. Aladdin understood and hoped that the resolutions would address this, helping him directly interact with the Code in a better way. A juror asked Aladdin whether he thought, if separation did end up being a resolution, he would ever return to Haverford. Aladdin responded that he did not know, as his family would be opposed to him coming back after further leave. The jury moved to discuss ways Aladdin could better integrate himself with the community including joining Customs and committees around campus. Following this discussion, the meeting with Aladdin ended and the jury moved to deliberations.

The trial chair read an email from Professor Genie to the jury. Professor Genie agreed with all resolutions and didn’t think that Aladdin was ready to come back to Haverford based on the fact that Aladdin had not come forward with the truth yet to his knowledge. He thought that Aladdin had the potential to be an ideal Haverford student, but needed some time away. At this time, the jury was generally conflicted on separation. On one hand, some jurors were happy that Aladdin had had a change of heart, told them the truth, and had an enthusiasm for restoration. On the other hand, some jurors worried this was too little too late and simply a last ditch effort to avoid separation. The jury discussed that this was a serious violation and his second trial, so separation could easily be warranted on those grounds.

Some jurors were willing to forgive Aladdin and thought reflection over winter break would be enough. Overall, the jury was split down the middle on this topic. Members of the jury suggested a ‘trial semester’ in which Aladdin would take all courses pass/fail, but still for credit. Jurors expressed concern with any arrangement like this as an opportunity for cheating still presented itself. However, it was getting late and the jury was split, so they adjourned for reflection.

Final Resolutions/Jury Deliberations Part 2:

The jury resumed the discussion of separation. Some jurors were uncomfortable with separation at this point, but most jurors stated they would consent to it. One juror worried that they were only considering what was good for the community at this point rather than what was good for Aladdin. This juror was open to separation, but also open to other resolutions to replace
it. The jury began to discuss potential alternatives to separation. First they discussed having Aladdin be on academic probation and write weekly reflections on the Code. They felt that this still presented the problem of trust with the community not yet being restored while Aladdin was on campus, that there was something preventing his restoration at this point, and that separation may be the tool to overcome this. One other juror expressed opposition to separation as they did not know how much mental health played into this, and knew that separation would probably not benefit Aladdin. This juror wanted to find another solution.

Still, jurors pushed back and expressed the idea that Haverford may not be the best place for Aladdin right now and that having him partially removed from the community could be helpful for him. They felt his first trial experience had been negative for him and wanted him to take something out of this one. A juror then stated that separation would be hard for Aladdin and maybe not completely restorative, but thought that he removed himself from the community already by committing this violation, and that resolutions without separation would not do enough to lead to Aladdin’s satisfactory return to the community. Another juror added that separation would be better for the community.

At this point, the jury agreed to separation with some discomfort, knowing that the trial goals would not fully be met without it. They discussed having the jury reconvene before Aladdin returned to discuss how his separation went. The jury then consented to the following resolutions:

1. **The jury recommends that [Aladdin] receive a 0.0 on the take-home portion of the exam in question.** (10 jurors consent)

2. **Before the end of the current semester, the jury recommends that [Aladdin] meet with Professor [Genie] to discuss the violation. We will leave them the option of having a juror attend this meeting.** (10 jurors consent)

3. **[Aladdin] will submit a statement to the task force on student mental health talking about his experiences with mental health as a Haverford student. This statement should be completed by [date].** (10 jurors consent)

4. **[Aladdin] will be separated from Haverford College for the following semester. In order to return, [Aladdin] must meet with the jury at the end of the following semester.** (9 jurors consent, 1 stands outside)

5. **During his separation, the jury recommends that [Aladdin] write periodic reflections on the Code and his experience with separation.** (10 jurors consent)

6. **At the end of his separation, [Aladdin] will write a letter to the community reflecting on his experience with the trial process and separation. This letter must be completed before his return to Haverford.** (10 jurors consent)

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2 Also known by the Committee on Student Standing and Programs (CSSP) as Regular Academic Warning. For details on the requirements of Regular Academic Warning, please visit [http://www.haverford.edu/academic_affairs/cssp/academic_concern.php](http://www.haverford.edu/academic_affairs/cssp/academic_concern.php)
7. Upon his return, [Aladdin] will meet with the Office of Disability Services to discuss accommodations and other resources. (10 jurors consent)
8. Upon his return, [Aladdin] will meet with the OAR to discuss studying habits and time management. (10 jurors consent)
9. For the first semester after his return, [Aladdin] will have monthly meetings with a member of the jury. (10 jurors consent)
10. For the first semester after his return, the jury recommends that [Aladdin] have biweekly meetings with each of his professors. (10 jurors consent)
11. The jury recommends that this process be considered a disciplinary proceeding for the purposes of reporting to institutions of higher learning. (10 jurors consent)

Resolutions as a whole: 9 jurors consent, 1 stands outside

Post-Trial:

At the conclusion of the trial, Aladdin expressed further despair via email to the trial chair that he would be separated. Aladdin decided to appeal the resolutions on substantive grounds to the President of the College. As the semester was coming to an end, the appeal was expedited and a meeting arranged quickly. In his appeal, Aladdin detailed the emotional harm that separation may cause him and his family. He expressed that he truly wanted to restore himself to the community and become a full member of Haverford again, but felt inhibited to do that after the trial. He expressed deep concern with the separation resolution and offered to do anything in its place, as he didn’t feel it would benefit him or the community.

The President of the College met with Aladdin individually first to discuss this appeal, and then with the trial chair and jury liaison. The President expressed initially a feeling that Aladdin’s appeal was not substantial enough to warrant any change in resolutions. He said that in order for him to overturn resolutions of a jury he would either need to see a procedural violation or a decision made by the jury that was so unreasonable, it warranted intervention. In this case though, he saw neither being the case. Yet, he found himself pondering the appeal deeply after meeting with Aladdin.

During his meeting with the trial chair and the jury liaison, the President said he saw this as a possible opportunity to truly give Aladdin a second chance at life at Haverford, and was truly moved by his remorse, emotional difficulty, and circumstances. The trial chair expressed a similar sentiment and said that they were also uncomfortable with the separation resolution when they consented but didn’t see the jury being able to consent on alternate resolutions involving accountability and restoration. The jury liaison expressed that many jurors felt strongly about separation being included in the resolutions. These jurors wouldn’t trust having Aladdin in class until he was fully restored to the community, and they also felt he couldn’t be sufficiently held accountable without time away from Haverford. The trial chair supported potentially upholding the appeal, only in the case of alternate resolutions being added to hold Aladdin accountable.
Following this meeting, the President took some time to thoughtfully consider the appeal before making his decision.

In the end, the appeal was granted by the President and alternate resolutions were imposed. These resolutions were final and were sent to the parties. They are as follows:

1. The jury recommends that [Aladdin] receive a 0.0 on the take-home portion of the exam in question.
2. Before the end of the current semester, the jury recommends that Aladdin meet with Professor [Genie] to discuss the violation. We will leave them the option of having a juror attend this meeting.
3. [Aladdin] will submit a statement to the task force on student mental health talking about his experiences with mental health as a Haverford student. This statement should be completed by [date].
4. [Aladdin] will be placed on Academic Probation for the following semester.
5. During the following semester, [Aladdin] will write periodic reflections concerning the Honor Code and the Haverford community. These should be written at least once every two weeks.
6. [Aladdin] will write a letter to the community reflecting on his experience with the trial process and resolutions. This letter must be completed before the end of the following semester.
7. At the beginning of the following semester [Aladdin] will meet with the Office of Disability Services to discuss accommodations and other resources.
8. At the beginning of the following semester [Aladdin] will meet with the OAR to discuss studying habits and time management.
9. For the following semester [Aladdin] will have bi-weekly meetings with a member of the jury.
10. For the following semester, the jury recommends that [Aladdin] have biweekly meetings with each of his professors.
11. The jury recommends that this process be considered a disciplinary proceeding for the purposes of reporting to institutions of higher learning.
12. [Aladdin] will meet monthly with the President for the following semester beginning in early February and continuing until early May.
13. The Trial Chair will write a letter in response to these revised final resolutions to be appended to the abstract.
Aladdin’s Letter to Community

Dear Haverford Community,

This is a letter that no one ever wants to write, but one that I have perhaps dreaded less than most who find myself in my position. Let’s start with the worst of it; last year I broke the trust instilled in each of us by the community at large by using unauthorized materials during a test. During a long and emotional trial, I admitted to what I had done and the healing process began.

The road that led to this event is a long and winding one that goes through dark forests of mental illness and abandonment by people and by institutions, one that stretches back over a decade. I detailed much of this in the other letter I was asked to write in regards to mental health and Haverford College. Suffice it to say that I felt trapped, abandoned by those who cared about me and afraid to disappoint those I cared about.

This has been a process that I would wish on no one, but one that I do think was good for me. I have done more critical self-reflection in the past year than ever before in my life. At one point I was going to be separated as part of these proceedings and if there is one thing I am more thankful for than anything else in this world is that [The President] did not allow that to happen. Being at Haverford, surrounded by the community that I was trying to become part of again was by far the most important aspect of my healing. The thought of trying to understand what it means to be part of Haverford while being away from Haverford is one of the hardest things I’ve ever tried to wrap my head around. I believe I am in a much better place now, and am coming off of my best semester at Haverford yet.

I hope that this community has it in their hearts to accept me back into the fold, as it seems most who know of this have done. I messed up, I know that and I take full responsibility. There can be no excuses and no justifications, and that is as it should be. I am now working hard to encompass the ideals that I think Haverford strives to be, both in the remainder of my time here, and my future outside of these walls.

Thank You Haverford

Trial Chair’s Letter to the Community

Often times in life, we are simply not prepared for what comes our way. Was a jury of 10 students prepared to take on a case involving complicated issues of mental health, a recurring violation, a murky truth, and the value of separation? Perhaps not - but I’d like to believe each and every one of us came out of this case a little more thoughtful, a bit more compassionate, and more appreciative of the true restorative value of a trial. I know I did.
Though, when I walked out of finalizing resolutions, having consented to a resolution separating [Aladdin] from the college for one semester - I couldn’t help but feel disheartened and conflicted. A lot raced through my mind - should I have really consented to that? Was that the best we could do? I rationalized, after all it was only a minority of us on the jury who felt there was an alternate set of resolutions that could avoid separation and still hold [Aladdin] accountable.

The jury grappled with many complicated issues when coming to its resolutions. We didn’t know if we could trust [Aladdin] to live within the Honor Code without taking some time off to reflect. We weren’t sure if it was even healthy for [Aladdin] to be on campus given all he was going through. We felt an obligation to hold [Aladdin] accountable for his second violation, and were unsure if he was genuine after having not been fully truthful for a portion of the trial. Despite [Aladdin]’s pleas to be listened to - his despairing emails to me - his lengthy conversation with the jury during finalizing, it seemed almost inevitable the jury would end up where it started, with separation.

So when it came time for me to consent to the resolutions, I looked around and saw a jury that had made up its mind after reflection, I saw a set of resolutions that wasn’t holding [Aladdin] accountable without separation, and I saw no way to make them so to the juries content. I know we as a jury wanted to believe that separation would be truly restorative for [Aladdin] and that this time off would allow him to form a closer bond to the community in the future, but we could have full well been wrong. I don’t know if we were truly prepared to be making the decision that we did. Yet we made it, and in that present situation and without greater context, it may have been the best we could do.

It wasn’t easy to write the email to Professor [Genie] and [Aladdin] with the final resolutions. Often times I’ll come out of a trial feeling the confronted party truly was on a path of restoration to become closer to the community and to hold themselves responsible for what they had done. This time I was unsure if [Aladdin] would ever come back to Haverford, if we had set his life off track, or if we had shattered his sense of community. All [Aladdin] ever asked for in his emails to me was to have a voice, it’s not easy to make a group of 10 people listen to you in such a grave situation, and I know this set of resolutions would make him feel as if we as a jury simply didn’t hear him. [Aladdin] appealed the resolutions to the President of the College without much cause for an appeal by conventional standards.

The President had told me before and told me again that he almost always respects the decision of a jury - unless there was a procedural violation or the resolutions were so unreasonable given the situation, they required overturning. He also told me that in this case, he didn’t see either of those things. I didn’t either - was the jury really unreasonable to separate [Aladdin] given the
seriousness of this case and the potential benefits of it? I don’t think unreasonable would be the word, but I still had a nagging feeling inside that we didn’t do the right thing.

After all, [Aladdin] had already taken time off, a year actually. He described it as isolating in a way - after he took classes at other schools and spent a year away from Haverford, it just wasn’t as fulfilling. When [Aladdin] returned to Haverford, he was met with quite a bit of isolation and difficulty. He was tasked with reintegrating himself into a community that had kept living their lives at Haverford, while he had not. What would make time off restorative now? I remember conversations with the jury about this, when we had to consider restoration for the community versus restoration for [Aladdin] - was it better for the community to have [Aladdin] take time off even if it isn’t necessarily good for [Aladdin]? I held then and I still hold now that separation isn’t truly restorative if it isn’t for both the party and the community.

This case dealt with [Aladdin] struggling through ADD and other emotional difficulties, feeling isolated on campus after taking time off, and the moral blurring of lines caused by desperation. I’m all too aware of that feeling. Early on in the trial, I’m not sure [Aladdin] took responsibility and truly wanted to restore himself fully to the Haverford community - but by the end I saw a certain determination and yearning hope to. The President told me and the jury liaison that after having read the written appeal, he was almost certain to deny it, but once he had a conversation with [Aladdin] - he felt obligated to consider it. No, it did not meet his usual criteria for granting an appeal - and appeals are very rarely granted. Yet there was a real chance here to make a difference in [Aladdin]’s life, to give him a voice, and a chance to redeem himself here. There was a real chance for pure restoration. Isn’t that the purpose of what we’re doing in a trial? Beyond everything, the end goal is to help and foster a path to restoration for one who has breached the Code. With that in mind, I had no way to defend the separation resolution, except to talk about why the jury came to it. The jury liaison and I discussed potential alternate resolutions to separation with the President, and I lent my support to these alternate options. With that, our appeal meeting together ended, and we could only wait for a final decision.

When the appeal decision came in, I felt a sense of relief. Yes, the resolutions from a trial I chaired had just been overturn - and no, I can’t speak for the entire jury, but I still came out of this feeling like a real positive difference in [Aladdin]’s life had been made. I really felt a semester on campus of deep reflection, frequent meetings with a member of the jury, writing reflections, and integrating himself further at Haverford meant so much more for bringing him closer to the community and the Code than separation would have.

This letter is not meant to be an attack on separation as a whole - by all means, I still truly believe separation can have restorative value. I believe taking time away from the craziness of life at Haverford and truly considering all things in life - your health, your happiness - can be a
great restorative process in some cases. This brings me back to times in our life when we really aren’t prepared to tackle what comes our way. This case may have been one of those times for the jury, but it is in those times that you can walk away having learned a thing or two. I know I did - and this difficult experience isn’t one I will soon forget.

Sincerely,
The Trial Chair

(This letter is not meant to reflect the whole views of the jury, and is written from the perspective of one person on the trial)

Appendix 1: The President’s Letter Granting Appeal

Dear [Aladdin],

I am writing to inform you that I have decided to grant your request for appeal of Honor Council Final Resolution Four requiring that you be separated from the College for the [date redacted] semester. I believe that an Honor Council appeal should only be granted under exceptional circumstances and when there is a compelling reason to do so. I am attaching to this letter a document entitled "Revisions to Final Resolutions" which outline in full what will be required of you to continue the process of restoration to the Haverford community.

My decision to grant your appeal is based on my belief that both you and the College will benefit from your ongoing engagement at Haverford as you undertake the serious work of restoration to our community. By fulfilling the resolutions while you remain on campus you will have access to substantial support from your classmates as well as members of the faculty and administration. It is my hope that in the months and years ahead you will learn from this experience and fully embrace the support structure that is here to help. Through your individual effort, the support of others, and a commitment to being accountable, I am confident that you can achieve much at Haverford while contributing to our community.

I wish you well and look forward to seeing you in the spring.

Sincerely,
The President

Discussion Questions:
1. When is separation restorative? Does a student taking a leave serve the same purpose as separation from the community?
2. How can juries address the role that mental health plays in a violation?
3. Do you believe that the fact that this was a second violation should have played a role in the trial?
4. Do you agree with the result of the appeal? Why or why not?
5. How does a party revealing they’ve been dishonest about the violation throughout the trial affect the process? What, if any, impact should that have on the resolutions?
6. Should a member of the Haverford community be expected to be comfortable teaching or taking a class with a confronted party whom they feel has not been fully restored to the community?