Town Hall April 25th: Academic Code

These minutes reflect the interpretations of
Questions/comments? Email hccosecs@hc!

(Moment of Silence)

Emily Chazen ‘18: thanks everyone for coming, we wanted to make the space open and make sure people have an opportunity to weigh in and work through larger issues and work as a community to figure out what we want to achieve with the new code. There was a lot of confusion and tension, so the goal is to bring everyone back together. Everyone is invited to stay the entire time, but go if you need to. 5 minute Q and A for anyone, the next 10 minutes will be just faculty sharing thoughts and opinions, then next ten minutes will be just for students (quaker style). The next ten minutes will be just for staff members. The next however long that goes is open discussion for everyone, be respectful. There’s a limit of 45 seconds to say your piece or ask your question for the first sections.

Faculty: question to SPC is why are we in such a rush to do this? The faculty conveyed substantive concerns, and the clearness committee has been reestablished to talk about issues next year, but could we talk about this specific issue next year? Why the rush to do this very important issue in such few days?

Arlene Casey ‘19: the timeline in the student’s constitution means Kim Benston has to make a decision by May 7. The old honor code has already failed and was extended only as an interim procedure. If we don’t ratify a new code by May 7th we don’t have a student run code going forward at all. We need to do this on a short timeline in order to preserve self-governance going forward.

Emily Chazen ‘18: Just a starting point, we want to open a channel to start substantive change, not looking to make radical change right now but we are trying to open pathways for future students (everyone not graduating).

Q and A (5 minutes)

Student: can someone explain the legal issue stuff? There’s a lot of confusion about that

Emily Chazen ‘18: There were three paragraphs added to describe what discrimination was, also confrontation occurs then student should go to faculty directly. First, running up against Title 7,9 and other laws pertaining to what should happen when breaches of acts or acts of discrimination
occur, so we misdirected people and made it seem like the appropriate channel to handle those concerns would be to talk to professor directly especially if they were the one concerned. There were legal concerns about Title 9 and the confrontation process.

Student: it helps, but I don’t know how we can still say that confrontation is a thing in the social code without that also being an issue in the same vein.

Arlene Casey ‘19: concern about mandated reporting, if student went to other faculty as third party confronter, might be mandated to report colleague, could put student in a situation they didn’t want to be in, because of legal obligations

Student: Follow up, from Emily Chazen’s initial response, was the idea of the old honor code that students should confront professors in violation of Title IX? Was this always an issue?

Emily Chazen ‘18: Old old code didn’t have anything language-wise about that, it was not accounted for. Now we put this in, and now they run up against each other and might cause problem

Arlene Casey ‘19: concern comes more from when faculty and staff might breach, students have different ways that happens, but gets more complicated with employees of the College

Student: could you talk about the process of writing the new new code? How was faculty involved, students council, SPC, honor council, etc? Will Kim Benston even sign it?

Emily Chazen ‘18: we sat yesterday and spent 2.5 hours with some faculty, provost, president, SPC, HC, working to balance everyone’s opinions, felt very collaborative, felt like everyone was working together to do something great with the code, everyone has access to it and can comment (please don’t change directly though)

Student: you said that some of the legal issues arise because faculty are employees of the college, how does this come into play when students are employed by the college?

Arlene Casey ‘19: most student employees are not mandated reporters, certain students are, some staff at womxn’s center, some customs folk, in general student employees are not

Staff: are the dean’s office not mandated reporters? If a student goes to that faculty member and says a faculty member behaved in a racist or sexist way (which happens all the time), why is that not reported?
Arlene Casey ’19: My understanding is that our Title 9 procedures is that students should report to deans or provost, largely concern in bringing in other faculty or coming into conflict with set in stone Title 9 procedures, rewriting tried to structure so that students have resources to consult to know which path to take to report discrimination so that it doesn’t come into conflict with other policies

Emily Chazen ‘18: Title 9 does call deans mandated reporters, they’re confidentiality level 3, what that basically means is that should a student go to a dean with an issue they do have to report it. CAPS is confidentiality level 1 so they’re sort of the only ones who don’t have to report it.

Faculty Comments (10 minutes)
Faculty: I was at the meeting last night and was very impressed how many people showed up and the goodwill people put into the process, even more impressed people got this document active for people to comment on, the comments have been fascinating, I’ve learned a great deal, I want to praise members of SPC, and maybe all of us for trying to work together on this, I don’t know where it’ll end up, but I think this is really a genuine effort to cooperate

Faculty: I wanted to add one comment on the confusion about legality. I am not a lawyer, but I am about precision of language, which I think is the key issue. Faculty, not staff or student employees, are legally bound by the faculty handbook to abide by academic code. By the transitive property, we become legally bound to everything verbatim in the academic code. What does it mean to foster a safe classroom? Not saying it shouldn’t be a goal but when faculty become legally bound to foster a safe classroom this is problematic. This is why, when you scroll through the document, many comments from faculty are clarifications about what things actually mean.

Faculty: Section of faculty handbook, I don’t know why it’s there, but it describes how anyone even students who have procedures, I don’t think students are aware, there are procedures for students to follow if there is discrimination or harassment, I think that’s partially why faculty are concerned, there’s also another section saying what to do

Faculty: I want to articulate that - cross the gap between issues and things we are legally bound to do and the things we want to have in our classroom. We are actively trying to bridge that gap together. I want to thank everyone for the flexibility to work on this language. I want to articulate a shared commitment as a faculty member to make space for everyone to flourish. It’s a journey and I’m learning how to do it better every year from you guys. We as a faculty are committed to that project. Thank you for the changes to the code that encourage us to be more committed to these goals and work on these spaces we create as lifelong learners.
Faculty: I was part of the group who worked on the code yesterday, want to respond that part of what the new code says is aspirations, there’s no way we’ll get there in one jump, if you consider this our best effort to strive, I think that’s what’s meant, I think students should know provost talks about honor code with every candidate

Faculty: I don’t have a question, I want to thank you, like [Faculty], for forcing this conversation. I recognize that there is a lot about classroom teaching that we are not perfect at and that Haverford has to be a slightly different institution than what it is now in order to be what we aspire to be and I thank you for pushing this conversation.

Faculty: in line with what people say, I’ve learned a lot, I also want to say if you feel uncomfortable in classroom please don’t hesitate to come talk to us, I’ve learned this semester students who feel uncomfortable and come talk to me it’s been helpful to work together in discussing what makes them uncomfortable so please come talk to us

**Student Comments (10 minutes)**

Emily Chazen ‘18: please no applause, keep it quaker, do the thing

Student: I really appreciated hearing from faculty, made me feel a lot better about previous confusion, to be reciprocal if it’s not clear, because of how most students understand honor code it is aspirations, we had these issues because of placement, if there’s thought that students put this in the code as a way to “get you fired” that wasn’t there at all, I think it was really to make sure students feel safe in classroom spaces and working toward that, students understand confrontation and I think that’s part of where concerns came from

Student: I think this process has been really good, more conversation between faculty students and staff is good. I have problems with the new code but even if I didn’t I would vote no because I have serious qualms procedurally. I think it’s totally not fair to have this code voted on online, we need to have a vote at plenary. I encourage others to vote no or abstain.

Student: second [other student], concerns about process of developing new new code, also I want to know, I realize things have been very rushed and stressful, it is surprising to me that it took so long for the legal concerns to come up, many people reviewed code, why are we in such a rushed procedure now, I think this week is the first time that most people are hearing that there are federal, legal ramifications

Student: I think there’s a lot of confusion in this process, people trying to figure it out as it goes, everyone’s doing what they can, not everything clear right away, also have process concerns, I understand those concerns and don’t think it’s ideal the new new code was made by a small
Student: I’m not an expert on confrontation but I wanted to say that in my view it’s just a conversation. I get that it’s difficult to understand this, the way I read the old new code was that it was encouraging students to have those conversations with professors but I think there might have been some misunderstanding since I just read it as encouraging people to talk to their professors. I hope there’s a way to word this where it’s not about getting anyone in trouble.

Student: first want to agree with sentiment that we can have more process with more people’s input, make code more meaningful in rewriting it, come face to face with limitations, one is that Plenary only meets once a semester, we don’t have to think about these things every day, doesn’t feel like a lot of accountability in such a big space, seems like affirming our core ideals

Student: I want to echo concerns made about process, even before special plenary there’s a lot of concern about time and getting things done according to a timeline. There’s other concerns and I appreciate the work that has been put in by SPC but we shouldn’t rush things and end up with a code that doesn’t meet our needs because of time pressure.

Student: as we have commentary about process, one of best parts of code is revision and we can revise many times, we are making code for community not for lasting for centuries, I think this process of bringing students/staff/faculty together is unprecedented, if we take same way for where we’re in a new situation I think it’s appropriate to act in a way we haven’t before

Student: I think I understand the process concerns, but this is about the best process we could have right now. We should think about process concerns in the future we shouldn’t let that get in the way of us having the code as an important part of our community.

**Staff Comments (10 minutes)**

Staff: Also part of Staff Association Executive Committee, the conversation around code is inherently one among students and between students and faculty, but when read what was written there were things written about staff, but not a lot of staff here, I want people to think about how aspirations include or don’t include people who are unseen on campus, here morning, nights, weekends, when people are doing other things, often staff are not included in conversation of community aspirations, what does that say about our community, and how can we include the staff, there is a body that is representative of the staff (Staff Association
Executive Committee), encourage students to come to this, I think it’s telling there are many people not in this room, not in the conversation

Staff: I’m closer to staff than anything else. I’ve worked with a lot of students here. I have admiration for student self governance. This is a difficult time but it’s been amazingly impressive to see us all come together. The only way to fix the timing issue would be to alter the constitution. It’s a difficult situation, which is a good one, but it has restrictions that we are seeing now that are frustrating because it makes it hard to come together. I want to address the legal issue. It’s not new, it existed in the previous code. It’s not just title ix, it’s just that we just had our training on that so we are sensitive to that. In the student’s guide it tells you clearly what the procedures are. The language of the old new code made this explicit in a way because it allowed other people to come into the conversation. No one realized this was affecting this, but that’s why these things are challenging, it’s hard to know when something goes from being uncomfortable to discriminatory. This process in the new new code could be a way to keep things intact but not discount the fact that some people may be part of the problem and offer ways that we can continue to perfect. I appreciate the comments that we don’t want the great to be the enemy of the good. We will continue to work on this, it’s been an amazing experience.

Staff: In the Haverford I attended in the 80’s, there were two times when the entire community came together, the time I was here, the attendance at these things was pretty small, there are classes during the day, when you put people in the same room it seemed less important so I invite people to consider whether the entire community of Haverford needs to have a time to come together, I also have a wish that all students/faculty/staff/admin particularly staff that works with students that they all sit and think about what are the steps we can take to communicate to students that we understand and our policies and practices fall unevenly on people in community given many factors, including ones we don’t fully understand/appreciate and need to learn about, that’s what I’ve heard students saying is that something in our heritage of how we do things at Haverford comes from white supremacy, comes from process designed to perpetuate that structure, the students are calling on us that we need to learn about this and take risks (even jobs) we need to question things, values, one of those is academic freedom, haven’t heard anyone question academic freedom, have heard questions about how it is performed understood and protected though, it seems as though protection from having to engage in these conversations of how our community experiences things differently in structural ways, I hope we all do some homework and continue over long period of time and show real willingness to learn, to risk, to experiment, find new ways, if we learn something then that’s a gift, I just want to thank students raising this issue, sometimes the process involves not doing the right thing, thank you

Emily Chazen ‘18: open to whole community
Open Discussion

Student: question about the amendment we passed right at end of plenary about President Benston’s power to accept or not accept resolutions, with new resolution accept, reject, or accept with revisions, I was wondering if that is in effect yet and whether or not we could use that as a way to get out of the bind we’re in, I don’t think that went directly into the code, if that is already in effect, why couldn’t president accept our amendment to code with stipulations for revisions and then we would deal with them at next plenary while still getting code passed

Riley Wheaton ‘20: this is a good question, the students constitution is article 3 of the constitution, the presidential powers is in article 4. In order to have a legitimate honor code it needs to be approved by ⅔ of the student body and approved. If he were to approve the honor code with stipulation for change, basically accepting the stipulations means you kick the change down the road and we need to have an honor code that the students approve of and then kim needs to approve it

Daisy Zhan ‘20: Riley, the amendment we passed it goes into effect in fall, it’s not here now but goes into effect in the fall

Arlene Casey ‘19: not necessarily, but because president benston hasn’t approved that yet it isn’t in effect so it’s not super applicable.

Student: Is there anyone on SPC willing to speak more to process concerns? I wonder what you guys make of procedural concerns that it’s something entire student body is supposed to write

Emily Chazen ‘18: so what it’s worth, the whole student body doesn’t write the honor code. We logistically do most of it and the student body votes on it. That’s how it will work now, given the extenuating circumstances we’re doing a “digital plenary”. This is below U.S. law and we gotta do what we gotta do. We’re gonna have an open forum that will act as a special-plenary type space so people can voice concerns and we aren’t just throwing it at people

Riley Wheaton ‘20: I would also say that we are not going to move this through real Plenary so students are not able to do certain things like amendments or debate

Emily Chazen ‘18: no we are doing that, open forum does allow people to bring amendments, they won’t be perfect exact structure, but there will be opportunity for that
Alex Stern ‘20: what I’m seeing as the major difference between a traditional and digital plenary is that we won’t have the conversation together right before we vote. I wonder if plenary is actually a useful space for discussion and it seems like this might be a good process in light of that.

Devin Louis ‘18: We’ve thought a lot about these process concerns, have similar concerns that it’s not ideal, not something we’d actively choose in other circumstances, but at this point we’re trying to facilitate what student body wants

Emily Chazen ‘18: there are some seats in the front if anyone wants them.

Student: it’s not just that we aren’t following the constitution it’s that just having an in person plenary is important. That process is critical to have a valid honor code, it would be better to have an interim procedure. Could we have another special plenary this semester?

Emily Chazen ‘18: we theoretically could, but I don’t think people would show up

Arlene Casey ‘19: logistically it would be impossible, money/time/energy exhausted a lot of resources already, would be impossible to do it in 10 days since it was already so difficult in 3 weeks

Student: would faculty staff and admin be invited to the open forum so we don’t have a repeat of this language issue?

Emily Chazen ‘18: the way we have it set up now, not looking at schedule technically, open forum for students, then reconvene with faculty/staff after and discuss if we can come to system, it’s hard to get even 30 to edit together, so breaking it down is better

Arlene Casey ‘19: it’s useful to have a student-only space to mirror the plenary space.

Student: What would happen if we just don’t ratify code now and President rejects, do we hold special plenary at some point, what would happen in interim year?

Arlene Casey ‘19: we would have an admin-imposed set of guidelines in the interim. We could hold special plenary in the fall, but in the meantime it would be up to Kim Benston and the admin to come up with guidelines and that’s that.
Emily Chazen ‘18: other thing is that I hope President Benston would accept all of our other things and reject academic code, then put in all other things, but restore old academic code, I think this is better with faculty/staff input

Student: thank everyone for hard work, for people who are invested in it, however I do want to stress it’s not just a question of process concerns, it’s a question of constitutional issues that I’ve been considering since first ratification through this whole process, I think we need to think intentionally about what we’re doing and precedents we’re setting, I think if we were serious about engaging this issue under an intentional community in the tradition that we supposedly value we would figure out a way to have another special plenary and engage with each other on a real level, plenary does have problems, but I think we need to think about what we’re doing as a community because these are larger community concerns

Student: this situation is not totally unprecedented. The honor code has failed before, and there are some faculty members in the room who might be able to speak to that and how that worked out in that instance.

Student: to respond to [student], I tend to think that the process of writing comments in google doc, I think that process allows people to engage more thoughtfully and considerately with material rather than gathering in room, people can do so at their own pace, I think there’s advantages of doing the process in a google doc

Student: Concerns with academic code, is there any discussion about including them in the writing of it in the future

Student: one of the questions that I’ve seen raised is whether or not the goals of the students and the concerns of the faculty are reconcilable. Is the honor code the right vehicle to regulate classroom behavior? The ambiguity of the code is its strength, but when we are talking about the faculty concerns I don’t know if ambiguity is an option. If we find out that we can’t find a common solution, is there a fail safe in place? Is there something in place?

Emily Chazen ‘18: most faculty I talked to about changes were pretty cool with them, I think we were too concrete and rigid, and I think increased flexibility of getting something

Devin Louis ‘18: many people were willing to work with us and we’re not at the point where things are irreconcilable
Student: In this forum I want to urge that there be an admin voice in the room, one of the reasons we’re in this situation, students are not legal experts, want to make sure we don’t do something where it conflicts with legality things

Student: one thing I want to reflect on is that everyone in this room who is a student had to say that you supported the honor code in order to enroll here, and yet a new cohort comes in and suddenly there is a problem.

Student: firstly I want to respond that just because you like code enough to enroll here doesn’t mean you need to keep liking it, one thing we agreed was that special plenary was needed, we knew we were running the risk of losing the code, I worry this is a stopgap that’s stopping us, I worry this process is trivializing the risk we ran and took upon ourselves, I think it concerns me that it needs less now that we’re implementing this, reiterate question SPC why is this the first time we’re hearing about legal ramifications? This went through lots of people, not trying to target anyone specifically

Emily Chazen ‘18: I think the answer to your question is we don’t know. People missed it along the way and then someone noticed and was like oh shoot. One thing I want to say about the procedural concerns, and I want to echo Alex Stern ‘20, we need to decide whether we care more about making spaces for students or upholding the constitution. If the code is going to continue to be a document that supports students who hold positions of power. If we want equity we need to think about what it means to be in this classroom and a member of the community. We can’t get caught up in the procedures. There’s disagreement among SPC if there’s room in the constitution for this. There’s enough wiggle room in my opinion that we can make magic happen.

Riley Wheaton ‘20: one thing about constitution is that it’s very specific, any amendment needs to be at a plenary, what we’re doing right now is unconstitutional, we can talk about benefits and harms, the reason we have constitution and plenary is that everyone can be heard in the making, we agree to abide by honor code and constitution, the way we change those agreements is important, we want all students to feel heard, we are moving beyond constitution into space where not all students may be heard, when we send this vote 75% needs to engage and 66% needs to vote yes, heartens me that ⅓ need to agree to this code

Student: I want to speak to what Emily Chazen ‘18 said and some of the things that I’ve heard that seem to separate the social code from the academic code. Part of what we did at special plenary is recognize that academic spaces are inherently social. The axes of power that we are concerned with are still present in the classroom and we need to make sure our marginalized students are protected.
Student: It’s a sad reality we can’t force people to care as much as some people, it’s good to have plenary, but most people don’t engage the whole time, it sucks not everyone cares, but I feel like generally people care about code, so people are okay with this grey area process because we want a code even if it’s not perfect now and we can work on it, I think we don’t want admin to write something, I think people would prefer student code even if outside constitution process, I think we shouldn’t be so concerned with process, not that many people engage anyway

Joe Spir ‘20: while I don’t think we’re a fully engaged community, one way or another we all spent hours and hours at special plenary talking about listening. It took so much out of us and that doesn’t happen at a lot of other places and that speaks a lot to us as a community. You know that I am strict about the constitution but how I’ve seen this engagement in past weeks and the fact that we can hold conversations like this is important. We can’t lose something we’ve worked so hard for, especially when what is at stake is something that is so important.

Student: I want to address earlier topic of what we want or don’t want in terms of precision of language in academic code, could someone speak to what processes are in terms of changing faculty handbook? If concern is that we want some ambiguity because of the way their handbook binds them to it, if we could look at tweaking how the handbook binds them to it, maybe that addresses it more directly

Faculty: it’s a complicated question, it was mentioned recently that when faculty come to haverford they accept the position and if there’s an academic honor code in place then they are bound to follow it. Otherwise it won’t work. To change the faculty handbook can take a long time and is not something that is done easily. We reach consensus on it and it takes a lot of dialogue and may not always work. It’s not a simple process. If you think this is difficult, come to a faculty meeting.

Student: on the text of the new new code, thank you everyone for putting in labor, I was a little disappointed with new passage about identities, I think the old one we passed at special plenary had stronger language for protecting people with marginalized identities

Student: I had a similar question about the faculty handbook but wanted to know if there was a similar handbook for staff or a method of changing that.

Faculty: The previous time I know the code failed was 10 years ago in ‘07 it was very different circumstance, I think it failed to pass, judgement of Honor council was that we had no code for 2-3 weeks, then there was paper ballot to reinstate code, in that case there was no question of significant revisions, I don’t think there was a special plenary
Riley Wheaton ‘20: the code also failed in ‘13 also interpreted didn’t have code for a few weeks, now we have transition period, also ‘98 ‘02 ‘07 ‘13

Faculty: I wanted to talk to the students, I don’t feel like the conversation that’s being had from the faculty is not representative of the tone of faculty meetings. I’m much more in favor of the code than the faculty. They are unanimously against the old new code and I want to say why that was. The reason these legal issues came up was because in discussion about the honor code two threads were happening. On one hand it said we need to have this paragraph from the social code in the academic code about student-student interactions and on the other thread it said we are trying to address faculty-student confrontation. The old old academic code was about plagiarism. The old social code was about student interactions. The consensus of the faculty and admin was that they felt they could give students self-governance power and they could take that away. It became clear that the conversation was about faculty student interactions and that was not happening and these roadblocks started getting thrown out. I’m not opposed to having more input from students in faculty-student interactions, but I want to read from the faculty handbook directly. Any part of the honor code that applies within the classroom applies to faculty regardless of its in the academic or social code. The faculty will never accept a student-led version and all aspects of the code.

Faculty: I’d like to speak about tone of full faculty, students and faculty can have differing perspectives, I had a very different sense of the room than my colleague just now, I think that the faculty care deeply about code, I think they respect students as civic partners as what we do at academic institution, where and when and how we make this a space where people feel respected, not marginalized, I think the questions that came up at faculty are where does governance happen how does it happen how do we think about various competing claims we have to work through together, I don’t want students to think that the faculty think students are “too revolutionary”, there are issues we all need to work on such as shared governance, for my colleagues and staff colleagues if we didn’t value and respect students then we wouldn’t be here, there would be some other process where President tells people what to do and faculty tell students and staff what to do, and this can happen at other institutions, I want us to hold ourselves to high standard to think about what shared governance means

Student: Concrete question, I accidentally proposed a friendly amendment by suggesting an edit to this document? How does this work? Help? Is this document something that we can contribute to or vote on?

Emily Chazen ‘18: good question, we’re going to figure that out and we’ll get back to you as soon as possible
Soha Saghir ‘21: since we’re in the process of drafting it like we were three weeks ago, we’re just a point where we are keeping suggestions in mind so we can incorporate things rather than treating them as friendly amendments.

Student: I know President has 5/7 deadline to approve old code or not, does he need to abide by deadline regardless of timeline of online special plenary, since students approved code at plenary, I think it’s important President responds to that decision and owns that decision

Emily Chazen ‘18: can i ask for clarification? Does he have to decide regardless of where the code is at?

Arlene Casey ‘19: my understanding is that if we pass these changes then President will make decision on this new new code and will not have to make one on the special plenary passed one, if student body does not vote to make these changes then President makes decision on code passed at special plenary, I understand that that code would not be passed because of concerns (legality, etc.)

Emily Chazen ‘18: that’s correct, I want to let people know we are going to end the forum at 8.

Riley Wheaton ‘20: there’s an hc-all email that lays out the process

Student: I wanted to comment on how amazing I think this process is and how many people we have engaged. There’s nothing mandatory about this and I’m really excited to hear the perspectives of faculty and staff because that’s been missing and I didn’t realize it had been missing and I’m glad we are hearing each other’s voices more.

Student: first every member of SPC is my personal hero, but also I want to speak to what John mentioned about deadline, I kind of feel blindsided by this process, I know you all have sought input at every step, I think that we are bypassing tradition of actual plenary in terms of making this binding process, why haven’t we applied constitutional hand-waving to deadline too

Student: I can take these questions to another forum, but i want to thank everyone who is here and is not here and engaging with this. That’s not the whole community, but the people who care. I want to pose some questions to the student body and community at large: why is special plenary committee, an unelected group of students making these decisions on behalf of the student body? Why have we not invited faculty and staff into these conversations about the code before and what spaces will we open up to discuss issues of governance in the future?
Soha Saghir ‘21: SPC is not making any of these decisions, it has been planning with HC and SC, there was Arlene’s email that said that ⅔ of student body needs to vote in favor, if not then we don’t go to online plenary and President will need to vote on old code

Emily Chazen ‘18: explains SPC appointed by SC which is an elected body

Trevor Larner ‘19: this is not how things would go if we could redo it

Daisy Zhan ‘20: [student] wants me to make an announcement asking people to put their dishes away before 8 to respect the DC staff

Eyasu Shumie ‘21: about constitutional concerns, ultimately constitution is valuable document, but it’s up to student body to give it power, if it’s inhibiting us from doing what we want to do then we should question, if people boycott then changes will largely be the same, by having this vote and giving students ability to vote on changes, but without these things the document we worked with faculty on will be the best possible outcome, when in reality President can put forth other code like interim document or old code, we should question significance of old code, I think that it’s worrying because of precedent, but SPC is also planning fall plenary action so this doesn’t happen again, part of the reason this is happening is there are issues of not reaching out and we’re planning to work on this in the future but for now this is our best option

Student: the main reason I came here was to hear from faculty about concerns, I also feel somewhat blindsided probably because of process, in the decisions surrounding academic code there is no input from faculty generally, we are not aware of opinions before, so I appreciate hearing them now, also for me it’s complicated because there seems to be disagreement within faculty, we don’t need to address right now, also faculty involvement for academic honor code and is that something the faculty feel as though should happen, is there a forum you believe expressing input would be valuable and could be implemented, seems to be a disconnect, a lot of the student body not aware of this or expected this and I think it should be addressed, not sure if that should be joint academic code or something else

Staff: I want to say to the comments about the trivialization of the process at no point in the last 10 years that I’ve been on campus has there been such a commitment to the honor code. Folks running around from dorm to dorm are not on par with the level of engagement for what people want to see the code accomplish here at haverford. I don’t want that to be lost. As Riley pointed out, there seems to be an issue every 5 years where the code doesn’t get ratified, that’s fine. I just don’t want that to be lost. In response to a question about a staff handbook, it’s more a collection of procedures and policies which is illustrative of the difference between the staff and faculty communities. On the question of faculty and staff involvement, there’s a change in jurisdiction
and the honor code here is going deeper into the classroom than previous codes that I’ve seen and it’s been much more contractual in the past. That’s very different that what we are seeing now in relation to conduct and conversations in the classroom. Staff aren’t in here, but we are still invested in the student honor code. But it’s not for us, it’s a student honor code. Every honor code is made by a self-selected group of students. As anyone who has ever been involved in a group project knows, this is quite difficult. I want to applaud the large group of folks who have come together to hammer this out and any suggestion that this should have been written by the entire student body - I just would question that.

Student: new new code, are we confident would this be passed by faculty?

Emily Chazen ‘18: I don’t want to commit to anything but for right now my heart is saying yes. We’re in pretty good shape.

Arlene Casey ‘19: several faculty involved in this draft, and we are continuing to solicit feedback, the final draft voted on by student body, we’re hopeful that this will not be an issue again

Kim Benston: I’m the many-time-before mentioned Kim Benston. every time I hear that it has a slightly comical ring to it. If there were time I would want to acknowledge every voice I heard because I’ve learned from every voice. The last thing I want to do is impose anything, but at the same time I want to acknowledge the distinctive issues here concerning what teaching is about and what academic freedom is about that are difficult for us to navigate under these circumstances. Academic freedom is a mandate to take risks. The opposition between taking risks and supporting academic freedom is a false one. The problems with the new code emerged in good faith during a process that is compressed relative to the ratio of the complexities. We want to affirm these values regardless of the code we have in place. The code is a principle guide, not an answer to how we interact. It’s a human document, it will be flawed, but there are boundaries beyond which those flaws go that affect people’s lives and the work that they are here to do. We are having this moment of pause and collective deliberation that is provided for by the constitution. I asked the special plenary committee to look at this creatively and to address the concerns of the body. The student body will ultimately affirm or deny the values within the code. I don’t know if I can go as far to say that this is likely to be ratified or not ratified, but it does suitably put in a place from which we can depart to work together and see ratifying the code as an instigation but not a solution to the issues we face. If the code is not ratified, it’s not the end of self-governance, let us continue to work on those things. I appreciate the energy and effort that are on display here and I take it from you you will continue to debate and determine the propriety of the process and if it can bear the weight of the moment and I hope it will because the moment is serious and the last thing I want to do is impose an administrative code - it’s a pain, it’s not the
role I want to play, it’s not what expresses this community’s ideals. Let’s embrace that this is what haverford is, whether we think it’s good or bad or constitutional or not we are about pursuing those questions.

Student: Will all of what happened here be shared with the community?

Arlene Casey ‘19: yes, HC co-secretaries have been taking notes and they will be published on the HC website

Eyasu Shumie ‘21: I just want to say that there’s been a lot of talk about making institutional changes beyond the code by the faculty and administration. These conversations are going to lead to things on a level, it’s not just about aspirational things but we want to show that we care and it can be helpful to make sure everyone sees what we are talking about.

Emily Chazen ‘18: We’ll close with a moment of silence. Thank you everyone.

These minutes reflect the interpretations of Allison Wise ‘20 and Liana Shallenberg ‘19, Honor Council Co-Secretaries.
Questions/comments? Email hccosecs@hc!