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 did not consent to the release of the abstract.

Key:
Confronting Party: Professor Tahani
Confronted Party: Eleanor
Friend and classmate of Eleanor: Chidi
Course: Hosting 211
Previous class of Eleanor’s: DJ 101

Summary/Pre-Trial:
[Eleanor] reached out to Honor Council at the end of the semester at the request of [Professor Tahani] Professor Tahani later contacted Honor Council informing them that she had suspected two students, [Chidi] and Eleanor, of cheating on an exam for [Hosting 211] but after speaking with both of them, she believed that Eleanor was cheating on her own, and Chidi was not involved. After both Professor Tahani and Eleanor submitted statements to Honor Council, it was discovered that Eleanor had graduated from Bryn Mawr right after finishing the class with Professor Tahani. Honor Council initially decided to drop the case, at the advice of the Dean of the College, because Eleanor had already graduated. However, Professor Tahani really wanted the case to go to trial, in order to hold Eleanor accountable. Therefore, there was delay in holding the trial, which did not happen until the end of the following semester.

Due to some complications with scheduling, the jury met with Eleanor alone first at a fact-finding meeting, and then later with Professor Tahani. Due to a heavy caseload at the time, Honor Council consented to run this case under extenuating circumstances with a jury of nine instead of ten.

Fact Finding Meeting I
At the first meeting, Eleanor stated that she had not violated the Honor Code. She met with Professor Tahani to discuss her results on the exam, and Professor Tahani brought up concerns about her test and Chidi’s having very similar answers. Eleanor explained that she and Chidi were close friends who saw each other often and studied together for the class, and even
though they had sat next to each other during the exam, she did not look at Chidi’s paper. According to Eleanor, Professor Tahani told her at their meeting that her test grade would stay as it was, and her final grade would be calculated based off of her score on the exam. When grades were released for the semester, Eleanor noticed that her grade in Hosting 211 was much lower than expected. She then reached out to Professor Tahani to inquire about her grade, and Professor Tahani replied that she gave Eleanor a 0 on that exam because she felt that Eleanor had cheated off of Chidi. Eleanor told the jury that she had not cheated, and was frustrated that Professor Tahani had changed her grade without contacting her.

In her statement to Honor Council, Professor Tahani laid out several reasons that she thought Eleanor had cheated, including an incident that occurred previously in another of Eleanor’s classes, DJ 101. When the jury asked Eleanor to elaborate on the incident, she explained that she had shared a turntable with another student, and a third student brought it up to the professor. According to Eleanor, the professor for DJ 101 decided that a violation had not occurred.

After Eleanor left the meeting, the chair read accounts of two expert witnesses who had been shown copies of the exam. Both concluded that the same question was suspiciously similar on Eleanor and Chidi’s tests, and probably grounds for further investigation, but neither could say beyond a reasonable doubt that cheating had occurred.

**Fact Finding Meeting II**

The jury met with Professor Tahani alone. She explained that when grading all the exams, there was a strange similarity between two. She finished grading all of them and came back to look, finding that they were almost identical. She told the jury that she then met with both students. Chidi had seen the exams and looked surprised and concerned, looking over both exams and admitting that they were similar. When Professor Tahani asked him if another student could have copied off of his exam, he said that he and Eleanor had shared a watch during the test to keep track of time.

When speaking to Eleanor however, Professor Tahani noted that Eleanor did not spend time looking at the exams, repeated that she had not cheated, and offered to take another exam to resolve the issue. Professor Tahani told the jury that Eleanor claimed she only looked away from her paper to look at the clock on the wall (contradictory to Chidi’s claim). Professor Tahani also raised the issue of Eleanor’s situation in DJ 101 in which she was suspected of cheating and had not gone to Honor Council. According to Professor Tahani, when she asked Eleanor who the professor was, she avoided the question by saying it was a visiting professor at Bryn Mawr who would be impossible to contact. Later, when Professor Tahani was writing her statement to Honor Council, she looked at Eleanor’s transcript to find DJ 101 at Bryn Mawr and could not find it; however, she did find that Eleanor had taken DJ 101 pass/fail at Haverford. Professor Tahani believed Eleanor had taken the class pass/fail to cover up the Honor Code violation. She was convinced at that point that Eleanor was attempting to deceive her and decided to drop any
concerns with Chidi.

The jury asked if there was any scenario that might explain the similarities between the exams, sharing the reports from the expert witnesses. Professor Tahani pointed out several specific things that jumped out to her about the tests and also explained that if they (or the expert witnesses) saw the range of responses on the other exams, they would see how incredibly similar Eleanor and Chidi’s tests were. Professor Tahani agreed to send some other tests to help provide the jury with context.

**Jury Deliberations I**

Since there were many contradictions between what Eleanor and Professor Tahani said in their fact-finding meetings, the jury started by going over the different version of events that each party explained. First, the chair recounted a previous conversation with Eleanor in order to review what happened in her initial meeting with Professor Tahani. In that conversation, Eleanor shared that she did not recall agreeing to share a watch with Chidi, but that she did take her watch off during the exam because she found it uncomfortable to wear during tests. She offered more context on the DJ class issue in response to Professor Tahani’s distress about it, noting that Professor Tahani must have had a misunderstanding about the class, since she had never taken a DJing class at Bryn Mawr and did not claim to.

The jury was beginning to feel discomfort around all of the inconsistencies, but was concerned that the basis for Professor Tahani’s belief that Eleanor specifically had cheated seemed tied to the DJing class, as well as other unclear details. The jury decided to focus on the most concerning pieces of evidence that a violation had occurred, which were the tests themselves. They began to look through the ~30 exams Professor Tahani had provided and agreed that Eleanor and Chidi’s tests were far too similar for it to be coincidental or caused merely by studying together. They then discussed whether it appeared Eleanor was the one who had cheated. Based on what Professor Tahani had pointed out, as well as the fact that Chidi’s test had a lot more detail and explanation, the only reasonable explanation seemed to be that Eleanor had cheated. The jury consented to the following statement of violation.

**Statement of Violation**

*We believe, based on the evidence presented to us, that it is beyond a reasonable doubt that [Eleanor] violated the academic portion of the Honor Code when taking this test. Based on testimony from expert witnesses, as well as careful consideration of a large sample of other tests from the class, we noticed that there were extreme similarities between the two tests in question. In alignment with the opinion of Professor [Tahani], we believe that there was copying and not collaboration because [Eleanor’s] exam was much less thorough than [Chidi’s], including sections where she showed no work at all. Additionally, we considered the fact that the two students in question sat next to each other during the exam (8 jurors consent, 1 stands outside in absentia).*
Circumstantial Portion

The jury met with Eleanor who continued to assert that she had not violated the Honor Code. She had two main concerns about the jury’s decisions. The first was that she felt the jury was largely basing their conclusion that she had cheated on Professor Tahani’s judgement, which she felt was not fair because they had only spoken once about the incident. The second was that the thoroughness of Chidi’s exam was considered evidence that Eleanor had cheated. Eleanor explained that her time in academic competitions when she was younger had fostered a less detailed style of solving problems that would explain her exam. Furthermore, Eleanor felt it was reasonable that Chidi had copied her approach to the problem alone and then filled in the rest on his own. Eleanor expressed a great deal of frustration about Professor Tahani’s limited communication with her and felt confused as to what led Professor Tahani to her conclusion that Eleanor had cheated.

Jury Deliberations II

The jury looked back at the exams with Eleanor’s reflections in mind. They found several areas that still seemed concerning despite the explanations. The first was that for one question, Chidi’s answer included a clear argument for his conclusion, while Eleanor had reached the exact same conclusion, with no other work shown. The similarity of their answers for this question was unique among the tests. Overall, Chidi’s answers were much more detailed, and there were mistakes in Eleanor’s work that would have led her to different answers than Chidi’s if she hadn’t been copying.

The jury began discussing resolutions. Since Eleanor had already graduated and the jury felt uneasy that the trial had gone as long as it had (months past Eleanor’s graduation, including the case being dropped, conflicting narratives, strangeness involving the DJ 101 incident, inability to talk to Chidi), they decided to focus on resolutions geared toward restoration. They decided to support Professor Tahani’s choice of a 0 on the exam. Since Eleanor and Professor Tahani went to separate fact-finding meetings, and had not communicated or met with each other through the whole trial, the jury thought it was especially important that they participate in a mediated meeting, to attempt to resolve some of their disagreements about the case and restore the relationship. The jury also wanted Eleanor to submit a letter to the community, reflecting on the process. The jury made a statement reflecting the frustration that they and Eleanor had felt with the way Professor Tahani characterized Eleanor and the role of other unclear factors (including her assumptions about the DJ 101 class incident) in her determination that Eleanor was guilty, before the trial began. They were also concerned with Professor Tahani’s failure to communicate with Eleanor. They consented to the following tentative resolutions.
**Tentative Resolutions**

1. While we ultimately support [Professor Tahani's] decision to give [Eleanor] a 0 on the exam, the jury would like to express concerns about the process [Professor Tahani] used to decide that [Eleanor] was guilty and to give her a 0. Even though we agree that [Eleanor] violated the Honor Code, the jury was concerned about the role of unrelated details in [Professor Tahani’s] conclusion that [Eleanor] was guilty of a violation. Furthermore, at no point throughout the process did [Professor Tahani] communicate with [Eleanor] after the initial conversation, despite efforts on [Eleanor’s] part to reach out, which we also found problematic (9 jurors consent).
2. If [Professor Tahani] is willing, the jury strongly recommends that [Eleanor] and [Professor Tahani] engage in a conversation mediated by [Eleanor’s] dean and/or a member of Honor Council (9 jurors consent).
3. [Eleanor] will write a letter to the community by [a specified date] reflecting on this process (9 jurors consent).

**Resolutions as a Whole: 9 jurors consent**

**Finalizing Meeting**

The jury met for a final meeting with Professor Tahani on Skype and Eleanor calling in on a phone. Due to technological deficiencies, it was difficult for Professor Tahani and Eleanor to speak to each other throughout the meeting. In the discussion, Professor Tahani expressed a great deal of concern with the first resolution and spent a long time reiterating how she came to her decision. She explained to the jury that she understood her expectations as a professor, and that she felt it was her right to look into the case a bit before presenting it to Honor Council, to know how to proceed. She urged the jury not to take Eleanor at her word about what had happened, nor assume what Eleanor was thinking. The jury discussed how their feelings were based both on Eleanor’s account and Professor Tahani’s own explanations as they understood them, trying to reassure Professor Tahani that they had considered both sides of the situation. Professor Tahani also urged the jury to consider a harsher stance on the grade change. Eleanor did not express particular concerns about the resolutions but maintained her innocence along with restating her frustrations about the way Professor Tahani communicated with her prior to the trial.

After the parties left, the jury felt unsatisfied with the way the meeting had occurred. They did not want to change their resolutions qualitatively but wanted to incorporate how they felt about their conversation with Professor Tahani. Ultimately, the jury felt uncomfortable with the characterization of Eleanor by Professor Tahani throughout the trial, particularly the assertion that the jury should not trust Eleanor’s word at the times when there was no evidence contrary to what she had said. They felt there was a huge gap in understanding between Professor Tahani and Eleanor which they hoped could be at least, diminished. They consented to the following set
Finalized Resolutions:

1. While we ultimately support [Professor Tahani's] decision to give [Eleanor] a 0 on the exam, we as a jury were concerned by [Professor Tahani’s] characterization of [Eleanor] as an individual. While we agree that [Eleanor] committed a violation of the Honor Code, attempting to balance our duty as jury to trust confronted students to the greatest extent possible was made difficult by [Professor Tahani’s] insistence that [Eleanor] was an inherently untrustworthy person. We hope that moving forward [Professor Tahani] and [Eleanor] can come to a better understanding of each other and the events that occurred (8 jurors consent, 1 stands outside in absentia).

2. If [Professor Tahani] is willing, the jury strongly recommends that [Eleanor] and [Professor Tahani] engage in a conversation mediated by [Eleanor's] dean and/or a member of Honor Council (8 jurors consent, 1 stands outside in absentia).

3. [Eleanor] will write a letter to the community by [a specified date] reflecting on this process (8 jurors consent, 1 stands outside in absentia).

Resolutions as a whole: 8 jurors, 1 stands outside in absentia

Statement on Reporting:
Given the many ambiguities in this case and the jury's desire for this process to be restorative, we recommend this incident not be reported to other institutions of higher learning (8 jurors consent, 1 stands outside in absentia).

Post-Trial:
Both the confronted and confronting parties appealed on different substantive grounds. After consideration of both appeals, the President of the College did not grant either request.

Discussion Questions:

1. To what extent is it necessary for a professor who suspects a student of cheating to investigate the incident on their own?

2. How should students who have already graduated be held accountable for actions that had violated the Honor Code during their time at Haverford? What should happen if a graduated student decides not to participate in the resolutions made by the jury?

3. How should the jury deal with academic cases in which the confronting and confronted parties do not agree about whether a violation occurred?