After the Dark:  
An Honor Council Academic Trial  
Released Fall 2019

This abstract was 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 to the release of the abstract.

Key:
Confronted Party: Petra
Confronting Party: Professor Zimit
Class: Philosophical Bunkers 111

Summary/Pre-Trial:
Petra contacted Honor Council regarding a potential violation in Philosophical Bunkers 111, taught by Professor Zimit. Both parties submitted statements, and Honor Council consented to send the case to an Academic Trial. The potential violation centered around a failure to cite an outside source used on a reading reflection assignment. This trial was run over the summer, due to the number of cases brought to Council that semester.

Fact Finding:
Due to scheduling conflicts, the jury met separately with Petra and Professor Zimit. Petra began by admitting that she had indeed plagiarized on her assignment and felt that she and Professor Zimit were on the same page regarding what happened. There had been some confusion about the exact due date of the assignment, because of Professor Zimit’s policy of setting the submission cutoff on Moodle to the day after the actual due date of the assignment. Professor Zimit did this in order to give students some leniency if something came up and they needed to submit a little bit late. Petra, however, misinterpreted the timeline and began working after the true deadline had already passed, which caused her to feel very stressed and, ultimately, to plagiarize.

Petra said that procrastination had been an issue for her earlier in her college career as well, stemming from extenuating personal circumstances. Petra also said she had difficulty reaching out to professors asking for extensions. The jury wondered if this might be occurring because Petra lacked a support network on campus. This concern ultimately informed several of the resolutions drafted by the jury.

When the jury met with Professor Zimit, he corroborated much of what Petra had said.
about the violation. One notable discrepancy between their accounts was that Professor Zimit did not seem to be aware of the ongoing personal circumstances in Petra’s life. Due to the personal nature of the matter, however, it is understandable that Petra would not have shared this information with Professor Zimit.

**Jury Deliberations/Statement of Violation:**

The jury and the parties unanimously agreed that a violation of the Honor Code had occurred. Because of the ongoing personal circumstances and ambiguity about the cause of the violation, the jury wished to keep the Statement of Violation concise. The jury consented to the following statement:

**Statement of Violation:**

*Petra* plagiarized on a reaction paper and thereby violated the Honor Code. (8 jurors consent, 2 jurors stand outside in absentia)

**Circumstantial Portion:**

Professor Zimit was unable to attend the circumstantial meeting but provided his input prior to the meeting in the form of suggested resolutions. Professor Zimit expressed distaste toward the idea of a grade change in the course, saying that he felt Petra had already been held accountable for her actions. He also felt that a meeting with Petra would not be necessary, since they had already met during the semester and seemed to be on the same page. Professor Zimit felt that the resolutions for Petra should focus more on education and restoration, emphasizing time management.

During the Circumstantial meeting, Petra reiterated that she had trouble with time management, in part because her home life often interfered with her sleep schedule. She said that she had trouble reaching out to on-campus resources since she did not always feel comfortable with her professors and deans. Furthermore, she expressed confusion about when it was acceptable to ask professors for an extension on an assignment.

The jury then discussed possible resolutions for Petra. She was open to having a mediated conversation with Professor Zimit, but felt that it was unnecessary, as they had already discussed the violation. Petra suggested that the resolutions require her to make more connections with her professors and communicate more with her dean. The jury discussed a series of possible resolutions with Petra, including meetings with the OAR (for time management), her professors (to get to know them), and her dean (as a support structure). Petra and several jurors expressed concern that burdening her with many mandatory meetings could accidentally compound her stress by taking up too much of her time. As a result, the jury decided to keep the frequency of these meetings low.

Finally, Petra expressed that she had trouble finding a supportive and understanding community because of her introversion. The jury largely agreed that it can be difficult to make
new friends, but was unsure how to incorporate this into resolutions.

**Jury Deliberations and Tentative Resolutions:**

After hearing Petra and Professor Zimit’s input, the jury began to draft some of the resolutions that they felt would be most helpful for Petra. During the course of the discussion, the topic of the experiences of international students was brought up. The jury felt that Petra’s identity as an international student possibly played a role in the circumstances of this violation, specifically with regard to Petra’s discomfort in asking for help. Thus, the jury decided to include a resolution recommending that Honor Council address these issues.

With regard to the Statement on Reporting, the jury was divided as to whether or not this case should be reported. While it was a case of plagiarism, the surrounding circumstances and the fact that Professor Zimit did not want this to be a punitive proceeding led many jurors to feel that it should not be reported. The jury made sure that the statement reflected this division.

**Tentative Resolutions:**

1. [Petra] will meet with Bryn Mawr’s Dean of Academic Support at the beginning of the [redacted] semester in order to discuss her concerns about time management. (8 jurors consent, 2 jurors stand outside in absentia)
2. [Petra] will meet with each of her professors during the first month of the [redacted] semester. (8 jurors consent, 2 jurors stand outside in absentia)
3. [Petra] will meet with her Dean once per month during the [redacted] semester. (8 jurors consent, 2 jurors stand outside in absentia)
4. The jury recommends that [Petra] continue the meetings in Resolutions 1-3 beyond the end of the [redacted] semester if she finds them helpful. (8 jurors consent, 2 jurors stand outside in absentia)
5. The jury recommends that during the [redacted] semester, Honor Council host discussions centered around ways in which the Code could better support people from diverse backgrounds, including one pertaining to international students. (8 jurors consent, 2 jurors stand outside in absentia)

On the resolutions as a whole: 8 jurors consent, 2 jurors stand outside in absentia

**Statement on Reporting:** The jury agrees that this was an act of plagiarism. Some members feel that this trial would constitute a disciplinary hearing at another institution, while many feel that it would not. (8 jurors consent, 2 jurors stand outside in absentia)

**Finalizing Resolutions:**

Professor Zimit was again unable to attend due to scheduling conflicts, but confirmed via email that he thought all the resolutions looked helpful. Additionally, he commented that Resolution 5 was a good step towards having an important, larger discussion on campus. Petra
had only minor clarifying questions regarding the resolutions, but felt that they would be helpful for her overall. The only change made between tentative and final resolutions was a minor rewording of Resolution 5.

**Final Resolutions:**

1. [Petra] will meet with Bryn Mawr’s Dean of Academic Support at the beginning of the [redacted] semester in order to discuss her concerns about time management. (8 jurors consent, 2 jurors stand outside in absentia)

2. [Petra] will meet with each of her professors during the first month of the [redacted] semester. (8 jurors consent, 2 jurors stand outside in absentia)

3. [Petra] will meet with her Dean once per month during the [redacted] semester. (8 jurors consent, 2 jurors stand outside in absentia)

4. The jury recommends that [Petra] continue the meetings in Resolutions 1-3 beyond the end of the [redacted] semester if she finds them helpful. (8 jurors consent, 2 jurors stand outside in absentia)

5. The jury recommends that Honor Council host discussions during the [redacted] semester centered around ways in which the Code could better support people from diverse backgrounds, including one pertaining to international students. (8 jurors consent, 2 jurors stand outside in absentia)

*On the resolutions as a whole: 8 jurors consent, 2 jurors stand outside in absentia*

**Statement on Reporting:** The jury agrees that this was an act of plagiarism. Some members feel that this trial would constitute a disciplinary hearing at another institution, while many feel that it would not. (8 jurors consent, 2 jurors stand outside in absentia)

**Post-Trial:**
The resolutions were not appealed.

**Discussion Questions:**

- What is the impact of extenuating personal circumstances on a jury’s thought process concerning violations of the Honor Code?

- How can Haverford better center conversations about the Honor Code around the experiences of international students?