Response from Council concerning feedback from members of the Kardashian family:

Honor Council received the previous statement from members of the Kardashian family and amended sections of the abstract prior to its release in response to several of the concerns raised by members of the family about clarity, including those regarding the timeline of events from before the trial began. The new abstract, which reflected some of these changes, was then sent back to members of the family for their approval before it was released. While they did not consent to release, that version of the abstract was released to the community, as the constitutional process dictates. Council asks parties for consent as a courtesy, but is by no means prohibited from releasing an abstract that a party does not consent to.

There were some concerns raised by members of the family that Council decided not to reflect in the revised abstract. First, members of the family were concerned about the statement regarding community harm, which they have characterized as editorializing on the part of Council. Abstracts released by Honor Council serve in part to recount the jury’s discussion and thought process which ultimately lead to the trial resolutions. Thus, abstracts reflect facts from the trial process and the opinions of the jury, and are independent of the thoughts and opinions of Council. Because members of the jury felt that there was a history of harm caused by the family and strongly considered this perceived harm when crafting resolutions, the statement regarding the sense of community harm referenced by the family in their original letter remains in the abstract (although the wording has been slightly changed from the original version).

With regards to the “Hawaiian shirts and miniskirts” party being referred to as a breach of trust with the whole community, Kris felt that a trial was necessary for this very reason. She hoped that a trial jury — serving as representatives of the community — would be the most appropriate body to determine the extent of harm caused by the party. Because the idea of a breach with the whole community was central to why this situation was brought to Honor Council in the first place, it remained in the abstract.

Although the family suggests there was not a breach of trust with the entire community, each breach of the Code is inherently a breach with the community at large. After all, the Code requires everyone to abide by it in order to function — if students ignore the Honor Code, the
Code, and thus the trust, concern, and respect intrinsic to it, cease to function. This is why every trial jury, whether for a social or academic case, discusses a breach of trust with the community at large. As such, the reference to the community is well-founded in the spirit and past documentation of the Code. (For further reading on the subject of community harm, please refer to Section 3.06 of the Honor Code.)

In regards to the concerns about Dean Seacrest expressing that this issue was not worthy of being reported to Honor Council or sent to trial, no member of the Haverford administration, including Dean Seacrest, prohibited Council from running a trial. Additionally, Honor Council trials are a means of educating and restoring trust where other means fail to achieve it.

Moreover, the use of “toxic masculinity” must remain in the abstract because it appears in the set of resolutions to which the jury consented. Council cannot edit the content of resolutions in any way, beyond pseudonymizing them, because resolutions are typically worded with explicit intent by the jury. The notes from the trial were reviewed to see if the word choice could be contextualized in the body of the abstract, but the jury’s discussion did not focus enough on toxic masculinity to justify doing so.

Honor Council is constitutionally obligated to release an abstract for every case brought to Council. While the family’s concerns are significant, releasing an abstract and informing the Haverford community that this trial occurred is a way to hold Honor Council accountable for running a trial whose resolutions were overwritten by administration.

Finally, we wish to remind the community that, although this trial dealt with members of the Kardashian family, we all hold some level of accountability for allowing this party to occur year after year. We would like to ask all members of the community to reflect on their roles in creating safe and inclusive social spaces, and to be willing to hold one another accountable in any way possible.

With trust, concern, and respect,
Honor Council Fall ‘19