

Honor Council

H A V E R F O R D C O L L E G E

Public Minutes from February 24, 2008

Members Present: Daniel, Carolyn, Katie, Lily, Cody, Jamey, Nick, John, Anastasia, Sydney, Sarina, Luke, Jackie, Susanna, Benji, Katia, Jake

Guest: Jason McGraw

I. Moment of Silence

II. Public Portion

A. Discussion of Committee Goals:

- (1) Abstract committee: to release quality abstracts
- (2) Student Outreach: t-shirts; organize a mock private-portion
- (3) Faculty Outreach: organize pizza, profs, and the Code; organize a mock-trial for profs
- (4) Diversity committee: to work closely with Emilyn Sosa; to create discussions about whether or not the code works for everyone on campus; to solicit outside opinions on the “multicultural jurors list”; for honor council members to act as liaisons to affinity groups on campus

B. The student body ratified the Honor Code! Yay! Jason McGraw suggests asking students who did not fill out a ratification card why they decided not to participate

C. The Co-Chairs met with Haverford coaches to discuss the relationship between athletes and the Code in recruitment and on campus

D. Discussion of whether or not Council (specifically the Librarian) should search for and examine trends in people brought to trials, and what purpose that information should serve. The following are several key points brought up during the discussion:

(1) Part of the Honor Council Librarian’s constitutional duties is to report trends.

(2) One of Honor Council’s most important functions is educating the student body about the Honor Code; examining such trends would better enable Honor Council to determine who the Honor Code is not working well for. One example of a trend we are already aware of is that of a proportionately large number of first-semester freshmen violations, and because of our awareness we have been able to implement programs (HCOs, etc) to help make the Honor Code more accessible and work better for this group of people. We have an obligation to educate, and it seems wrong to think we can make better decisions about how to educate from ignorance, without this additional information, than from knowledge. If we discover a group of people for whom the Honor Code is statistically not working—that the

These minutes reflect the opinions of Sydney Keough and Lily Steiner, the Council co-secretaries (skeough@hc or lsteiner@hc) and are neither approved nor reviewed by the rest of Council. Questions/comments? Email **Code@hc!**

Code is failing them—then it seems to be our duty to examine why and come up with solutions.

(3) Seeking trends does not seem fair to individual people. Honor Council and the various procedures (trials, etc) in place to deal with violations are set up such that they are meant to deal with individuals and take into account those individuals' relative circumstances; examining trends takes away from this focus on the individual.

(4) However, the point was also made that knowledge of trends would never be used in a trial situation—would never be brought up in a circumstantial portion or used as a means of helping to determine if a violation occurred; knowledge of trends would serve a purely educational purpose.

(5) There needs to be a great deal of discussion and some tough decisions made about exactly what type of information Council should focus on in determining trends; what kinds of trends are we looking for? What year people were in? What courses they took? What extra-curricular activities they participated in? Gender? Race? Age?

(6) The data may not tell us anything meaningful in any case; there are many cases of honor code violations that do not result in trials—that are never even brought to the attention of Council. Additionally, statistics can often misrepresent reality or even be directly inaccurate.

*Discussion to be continued at next week's meeting during the Public Portion. Public Portion is, by definition, open to the public. Council would love your input. Sunday, 5 pm, Swarthmore Room in the DC.

III. Private Portion and Moment of Silence