

Honor Council

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

THE MAGIC SCHOOL BUS ABSTRACT DISCUSSION from October 5, 2010

Members Present: Connor, Anna, Alex, Florencia, Noah

Members Absent:

Guests: Mickey, Jacob A, Janela, Christy, Jacob H, Steven, Conrad, David, Mary-Clare:

1. Introductions
2. Moment of Silence
3. Read Introduction
 - a. What is this
 - i. Jacob H: Reads a lot differently than a lot of the other different academic abstracts. Usually it's someone in the middle of the exam or its sort of a deliberate thing. This is taking place under different circumstances the usual.
 - b. What would be appropriate course of action for this case
 - i. Noah: This seemed weird because it's sort of a violation against the wording of the Honor Code but on the other hand they weren't trying to break the Honor Code. They didn't know that it would matter.
 - c. Anna: It seems in this case there was an in-class exam. Then they talked about it and then they found out they had a take-home portion of the exam. A large part of the complications of the case is that the professor may not have made it clear that there was a take home portion of the exam. To what extent is this the professor's problem?
 - i. Steven: Student's responsibility to clarify instructions
 - ii. Florencia: Professor wasn't there
 - iii. Conrad: Ms. Frizzle said that the syllabus said there would be a take-home portion after the in-class portion. His impression is that it's the student's responsibility in every case to read the syllabus of the class they're taking
 1. Anna: But is that an Honor Code violation to not read the syllabus?
 2. Jacob H: The made an assumption as to why they couldn't discuss the test. They made the wrong decision. They did not know they were breaking the Honor code like this.
 3. Mickey: Well, to be honest, the instructions aren't in a very clear place
 4. Jacob A: Well it said the instructions in bold. If it's in bold he would notice it. He figures you should notice a bolded statement at the cover of your test
 5. Anna: The top of the exam said that you couldn't talk about the exam before Tuesday at 3 pm while the take-home portion was only designated on the syllabus
 - a. Janela: Well the violation of the Honor Code was that they spoke about the exam before the instructions said so. They did not break it by not knowing about the take-home.
 - b. Mary-Clare: Honor is very contingent on intent but the intent was not to cheat. They did not mean to give anyone an advantage on the test. Yes,, it's not good and you should try to be more aware but it seems to be more of an illaware or a mistake.

These minutes reflect the opinions of Hilary "Miss Scarlet" Schwartz and Alex "Mister Green" Tonsing, the Council co-secretaries (hschwartz@hc or atonsing@hc) and are neither approved nor reviewed by the rest of Council. Questions / comments? Email code@hc!

- c. David: He thinks people just have to be vigilant
- d. Anna: What's the difference between intent and nonintent in an academic violation
 - i. David: intent is worse but they both are violations
 - ii. Mary-Clare: She believes that it was a complete oversight rather than a clear case of intent
 - iii. Jacob Horn: The teacher seemed to be less offended by the incident because it didn't help them on the test. He thinks it's interesting because it's not a major issue because the students didn't do better between the in-class and take-home portions. He's confused by the idea of the student not being more punished because they didn't do better while they would have been more punished if they were helped. Is that right?
 - 1. Jacob A: It's still cheating. It shouldn't matter whether they did better or not. It's still a violation.
 - 2. Conrad: to what degree is it considered dishonorable to make a mistake like this?
 - 3. She thinks it's a mistake that anyone can make.
 - 4. Conrad: We shouldn't be expected not to just try not to cheat; we should be expected to actively not cheat. It should be an active process, not passive. We should think about how hard someone is trying to avoid not cheating.
 - 5. Florencia: Yes we're not supposed to but (if they didn't know about the take-home) she doesn't think it's necessarily cheating
 - 6. Connor: If trust is broken it doesn't really matter why trust is broken. You have to trust them not only to not be malicious but you have to trust them to not be careless. But intent is still important. If someone is doing it with malicious intent then it's more offensive. It breaks the trust more.
 - 7. Conrad: When there's intent to cheat you have to try and succeed to cheat. Because carelessness is a passive thing it can happen to anyone and accidentally cheat. He thinks that's why we don't see it as seriously.
 - iv. Discussion of how important it is to read your syllabus
 - 1. Ms. Frizzle meant for the students to know there would be a take-home with the same questions but she forgot to have the test administrator to give out the test.
 - 2. Connor: Student's should expect the professor won't tell them anything and a professor should expect the students to not know anything. But maybe more responsibility should be placed on the student.
 - 3. Conrad: Ms. Frizzle said she wanted the test administrator to remind the students there would be a take-home portion. Not tell them. Remind them
 - 4. Janela: The professor should have given the students more instructions and explained in more detail but the responsibility does not lie on her to do that
 - 5. David: The instruction itself was clear it's just the reason was unclear. They broke the rules because they assumed the reasons were one thing and they weren't.
 - 6. Conrad: in this community we expect processes like this to be pretty open. We expect to know to some degree why something is that way and not just that it's happening. He understands why Arnold would disregard something he didn't understand
 - 7. Anna: It's true Haverford is good at explaining why we are doing something so it makes sense that if you're given an arbitrary rule I could totally see violating the exam.

8. She thinks it's a misuse of the honor code to be extremely pedantic. She doesn't think this violation undermines community trust in a serious kind of way.
- e. What do you think of it going to a mediation?
 - i. Florencia: Generally academic violations go to an academic trial but generally uncomplicated misunderstandings go to a mediation. The problem was not one of violating the community's trust but clarifying between the parties what happened. That's the beauty of what Honor Council does. It's not cookie-cutter
 - ii. Jacob H: The professor never said that this restored her faith but it gave her the opportunity to reconsider her fear before the mediation started. The fact that it was a mediation probably help diminish that fear more than a trial because the mediation allowed Ms. Frizzle to conceptualize what happened rather than just assume the worst of the intent regarding the violation.
 - f. How do you think the mediations went?
 - i. Mary-Clare: She said ideally and that she liked they talked to the class
 - ii. David: Now the rest of the class knows better for the next class
 - iii. Christy: It seems this was particularly well suited for mediation because there were just so many misunderstandings
 - g. Do you think mediation addressed all of the concerns that were brought up?
 - i. Connor: It did
 - h. Talk about students speaking to class after mediation. Was it OK?
 - i. Jacob A: If they wanted to.
 - ii. Janela: It depends who the third party was. If Arnold didn't want to talk then it wouldn't make sense because it all kinda started with Arnold. It also seems more OK that they broke their confidentiality because there was not really a harmed party or a victim.
 - iii. Jacob H: If they had chosen not to break their confidentiality to the class, would this abstract be able to come out on time?
 1. Explain release statement: This means it met the timeline Honor Council agreed on.
 - iv. Conrad: Especially concerning the email from the professor, he's wondering if it would have been appropriate to tell the class that this had happened. He would expect the professor to at least remind the class about the take-home portion and the expectations regarding discussing the questions.
 - i. Read Mediation Statements
 - j. What do you guys think after reading the mediation statements?
 - i. Anna: One of the things that stood out to her is the idea that Arnold had read the instructions felt uncomfortable with Wanda when she talked to him about the exam and that Wanda wished that he had told her. Is Arnold not telling Wanda that she was violating the Code important?
 - ii. Florencia: If you're uncomfortable you should definitely speak up, especially in this case
 - iii. Conrad: Got impression from Intro that Arnold was initiating first conversation with Wanda.
 - iv. Florencia: She thinks that Wanda started a conversation but Arnold brought up the questions
 - v. Christy: We see how well the mediation went and they decided to break their confidentiality so they thought it was important to share. She sees Wanda not understanding why it needed to go to Honor Council
 - vi. Janela: Seems like Wanda was the most regretful. She gets Wanda's point that she didn't think it needed to go to mediation but she also said she got the least out of it.

- vii. Florencia: Knows that issues like this go to the professor and not Honor council all the time even though that shouldn't happen so Wanda may have been confused by the situation.
- viii. Anna: Her favorite part of the abstract is Ms. Frizzle's comment about the students' enthusiasm for learning!

k. Final Comments

- i. Connor: thought Wanda was a little brusque. She was saying that she didn't think mediation was necessary.
- ii. Conrad: Wanda's statement seemed to be passive aggressive. Compare Arnold and Carlos' statements. Arnold seems to be more troubled by the fact that he may have accidentally done something wrong. It doesn't reflect poorly on Carlos.
- iii. Janela: Thinks it would annoy her if he didn't sound more apologetic than the other two.

l. Moment of Silence