Welcome to The Honor Newsletter! This twice-a-semester update is your one-stop-shop for all things Honor.

I. Congratulations, Class of 2014!

THE HONOR MEN

The University of Virginia writes her highest degree on the souls of her sons. The parchment page of scholarship—the colored ribbon of a society—the jeweled emblem of a fraternity—the orange symbol of athletic prowess—all these, a year hence, will be at the best the mementos of happy hours—like the withered flower a woman presses between the pages of a book for sentiment’s sake.

But…If you live a long, long time, and hold honesty of conscience above honesty of purse;
And turn aside without ostentation to aid the weak;
And treasure ideals more than raw ambition;
And track no man to his undeserved hurt;
And pursue no woman to her tears;
And love the beauty of noble music and mist-veiled mountains and blossoming valley and great monuments—
If you live a long time and, keeping the faith in all these things hour by hour, still see that the sun gilds your path with real gold and that the moon floats in dream silver;

Then…Remembering the purple shadows of the lawn, the majesty of the colonnades, and the dream of your youth, you may say in your reverence and thankfulness:

“I have worn the honors of Honor.
I graduated from Virginia.”

- James Hay, Jr., 1903

II. Overview of Current Honor Cases

24 students have been reported to the Honor Committee since the beginning of 2014. Of these cases:

- Two have been dropped.
- Five have ended with the student submitting an Informed Retraction.
- Thirteen remain under investigation.
Four have led to a formal accusation after a full investigation, and, if they have not already, will proceed to trial if the students do not Leave Admitting Guilt.

Two have gone to trial, resulting in two not guilty verdicts.

III. Conscientious Retractions and Informed Retractions

Two students have had the courage and integrity to come forward and file a Conscientious Retraction since the previous newsletter. (To learn more about filing a CR, click here.)

CR 1: In April, a student filed a CR for cheating on a quiz by looking at the paper of a neighboring student.

CR 2: In April, a student filed a CR for stealing a bicycle.

Five students have filed Informed Retractions since the previous newsletter. Due to the rules relating to anonymity, review, timing, and other relevant procedures that are set forth in Section IV.H.8. of the Honor Committee By-laws, only one public summary has been approved for publication. (To learn more about the IR, click here.)

IR 1: In April, a student filed an IR for submitting an altered syllabus from another academic institution for the consideration of transfer credit.

IV. Honor Trials

Five public summaries of trials have become publishable since the previous newsletter. Note: all public summaries are written using the masculine gender for purposes of confidentiality.

Trial 1: A student in the College of Arts & Sciences was accused of cheating on five homework assignments in his economics course. The case was reported by the course professor.

The Community argued that the Accused Student turned in the work of other students from past semesters and presented it as his own. The reporter gave almost identical assignments from semester to semester but changed a few stylistic details so as to differentiate them; he testified that the Accused Student’s homework matched the assignments from previous semesters, including variable names, capitalization of variables, and so on. The reporter also provided homework assignments from a previous semester’s group, and the Community pointed out identical typos and arithmetic mistakes between the previous semester’s group and the Accused Student’s assignment.
The Accused Student argued that the course provided strict guidelines and formatting for responses to the homework questions, which accounts for why the answers were so similar. He also claimed that he had accidentally used data from a previous semester when completing his assignment and that he had unintentionally borrowed a friend’s computer for a couple of the assignments, which explains some similarities. The Accused Student also argued that many of the similarities between the assignments were a coincidence.

A panel of randomly-selected students found the Accused Student guilty.

**Trial 2:** A student in the College of Arts and Sciences was accused of stealing another student’s iPhone. The case was reported by a school administrator.

The Community argued that the Accused Student obtained and sold the phone for personal gain without permission from the phone’s owner and without consulting a third party to identify the phone, thus proving beyond a reasonable doubt that he committed the Act of Stealing.

The Accused Student argued that he did not intend to steal the phone, and that he took the phone home in order to charge it to identify the owner. The Accused Student argued that he was unable to identify the owner due to the phone’s lack of a SIM card or other identifiable features, and thus he only sold the phone because he did not know he had any other options.

A panel of randomly-selected students found the Accused Student not guilty on the basis of Act and Knowledge.

**Trial 3:** A student in the College of Arts and Sciences was accused of cheating on a final exam by looking up answers on her cell phone. The case was reported by a student.

The Community argued that the reporter’s eyewitness testimony that she observed a student two seats over from her take her cell phone out of a backpack, type on her phone, and erase answers on her final exam proved beyond a reasonable doubt that an Act of cheating occurred. The Accused Student argued that she had been misidentified, pointing to numerous discrepancies in the testimony. The reporter saw a student using a bluebook; the student used a green book. The reporter said the student used a pencil during her exam; the accused student used a pen. The student introduced evidence that her hair color does not match the color described by the reporter and that her clothing and accessories on the day of the exam, likewise, were different from those described by the reporter.

A panel of both randomly selected students and Honor Committee representatives found the Accused Student not guilty on the basis of Act and Knowledge.

**Trial 4:** A student in the College of Arts & Sciences was accused of Lying in an Honor proceeding.

The Community argued that differences between the Accused Student's initial interview and his testimony at trial showed that he committed the Act of Lying beyond a reasonable doubt in order to
The Accused Student argued that he had been under pressure during the original interview to provide an explanation for the alleged collaboration, and he did not intend for the original explanation of the event to be taken as fact.

A panel of randomly-selected students found the Accused Student not guilty on the basis of Act and Knowledge.

**Trial 5:** Three students in the College of Arts and Sciences were accused of cheating on a midterm and final exam by communicating about the answers with each other during each exam.

The Community argued that the eyewitness testimony of a classmate stating that the three students mouthed words to each other when the professor left the midterm proved that the three students committed the Act of cheating on the midterm beyond a reasonable doubt. Further, the Community argued that the eyewitness testimony of two classmates, who claimed to have seen the students mouthing words and pointing to each other on the final exam, proved that the students committed the Act of cheating on the final beyond a reasonable doubt.

The Accused Students argued that the testimonies of their classmates were not persuasive, as neither classmate could confirm what the Accused Students were communicating to each other during the exams. Rather, the Accused Students argued that their communications concerned matters that had nothing to do with the contents of the exams. In addition, the Accused Students argued that the lack of similarity between their exams and the difficulty involved in communicating the complex course material through mouthing and hand gestures provided reasonable doubt to whether cheating occurred.

A panel of randomly-selected students founds the Accused Students not guilty on both the midterm and final on the basis of Act and Knowledge.
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