

HONOR COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES – NOVEMBER 5th, 2023

- I. **ROLL CALL (21/29 present)**
- A. Tyler Sesker - **Present (via Zoom)**
 - B. Hamza Aziz - **Present**
 - C. Jonathan Swap - **Present**
 - D. Laura Howard - **Present**
 - E. Nishita Ghanate - **Present**
 - F. Rachel Liesegang - **Present**
 - G. David Armstrong - **Present**
 - H. William Whitehurst Jr. - Absent
 - I. Adrian Mamaril - **Present (via Zoom)**
 - J. Stephanie McKee - **Present (via Zoom)**
 - K. Brianna Kamdoun - **Present (via Zoom)**
 - L. Carson Breus - **Present**
 - M. Tim Dodson - **Present**
 - N. Maille Bowerman - Absent
 - O. Alexander Church - **Present**
 - P. Kasra Lekan - **Present (via Zoom)**
 - Q. Lukas Lehman - Absent
 - R. Daniel Elliott - **Present (via Zoom)**
 - S. MK O'Boyle - **Present (via Zoom)**
 - T. Brian Florenzo - Absent
 - U. Lam-Phong Pham - Absent
 - V. Emily Brobbey - Absent
 - W. Sophie Campbell - **Present (via Zoom)**
 - X. Skylar Tessler - Absent
 - Y. Quana Dennis - **Present**
 - Z. Matthew Bonner - **Present (via Zoom)**
 - AA. Brendan Puglisi - **Present (via Zoom)**
 - BB. Jennifer Bowyer - **Present (via Zoom)**
 - CC. Karl Frisch - Absent

I. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

- A. None.

II. **EXECUTIVE REPORTS**

- A. Hamza Aziz, Chair
 - 1. 11/3 AI Panel for Engagement instructors went great – constructive discussion regarding proactive acknowledgment and uses.
 - 2. International Student Days are planned for November 27 and 28. Currently in the planning phase; will have finalized schedule of events by next meeting.
 - a) Working with CAELC, International Center, ISO, Global P2P, and IRC

- b) Hosting a grit tab with Global P2P, an international student's reception with CIOs in Ern Commons on Tuesday, November 28 at 6:30 p.m. for community members to meet with Honor reps.
 - c) Will also be hosting a focus group with IRC students on Monday, November 27.
 - d) Requests that school-specific marketing be coordinated by representatives/
 - 3. Popular Assembly/Honor Week Update
 - a) Meeting with the Karsh Institute student leaders about working together for Honor Week.
 - 4. Working on updating the online case data transparency portal to reflect updated numbers for this term, hope to have it updated by December.
- B. Laura Howard, Vice Chair for Hearings
 - 1. Planning for the November 10 hearing, meeting with randomly selected students and Committee representatives. Working on an appeals information document for students taking the IR and students found guilty at hearings with Carson Breus.
- C. Nishita Ghanate, Vice Chair for Investigations
 - 1. 4 active investigations.
- D. Carson Breus, Vice Chair for Sanctions
 - 1. Working on an appeals appendix attachment with Laura Howard.
- E. Rachel Liesegang, Vice Chair for the Undergraduate Community
 - 1. Honor Week updates—calling it “Honor Week” instead of “Popular Assembly”, per the advice of the Office of the President. We are expecting each school to host at least one event during Honor Week, and would like to have them finalized by the end of this semester.
 - 2. Finals pushes—we have a few more formalized plans for finals pushes this year. Usually, it is more related to tabling, but Hamza Aziz had the great idea for sending an email to students before finals begins with the events Honor is planning. We’re looking into a standing Grit tab for the week of exams for students taking exams that day, making citation formatting a larger service in the Writing Center, providing Blue Books and calculators at the Newcomb help desk, and partnering with Wahoo Well. Asks for representatives to have specific events for their schools.
- F. Tyler Sesker, Vice Chair for the Graduate Community
 - 1. We have approved co-sponsorships for Unsung People, Lighting on the Lawn, and a few other organizations. Is looking over five other proposed co-sponsorships.
- G. Lukas Lehman, Vice Chair for the Treasury
 - 1. None.

III. SUBCOMMITTEE & WORKING GROUP REPORTS

- A. Policies and Procedures Subcommittee
 - 1. Tim Dodson: This week, P&P spoke a great deal about what the role of the reporter at the Panel for Sanction should be. We’ve been thinking a lot about potential Bylaw language for this. We’ve also been talking about pre-hearing conferences, which Laura Howard and Daniel Elliott are working on. This week, we’re meeting with Daniel Elliott to talk about some of the due process considerations.
- B. Faculty Advisory Subcommittee

1. Brianna Kamdoun: Met with the Dean of Students about communication for the Day of Remembrance on November 13.
- C. Community Relations and Diversity Advisory Subcommittee
 1. Tyler Sesker: None.

IV. REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS

- A. Alexander Church, SEAS: The griddle at Pancakes for Parkinson's that Honor sponsored went really well.

V. OLD BUSINESS

VI. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Investigation Holds Over Non-School Days, Continued

1. Nishita Ghanate, VCI, proposed the following amendment:

Currently, Bylaws Article IV: "In general, however, the Honor Committee suspends all hearing- and sanctioning-related proceedings during non-school days."

10/29 proposal: "In general, however, the Honor Committee suspends all **case**-related proceedings during non-school days."

11/5 proposal: "Generally, the Honor Committee suspends all **case**-related proceedings during non-school days, **unless the proceeding can be reasonably conducted over a recess and such continuance is requested by involved parties.**"

Final voted on/passed language: "Generally, the Honor Committee suspends all **case**-related proceedings during non-school days, **unless the proceeding can be reasonably conducted over a recess and is requested by involved parties.**"

- a) Nishita Ghanate: The concern we had heard from most Committee members was that students may want to resume over breaks, so we are proposing to ask the student and the reporter if they want their case to continue, and only continue the case if it is logistically possible on Honor's end. This would also enable us to do a Panel for Sanction for an IR over a break. Hamza Aziz emailed the results of our SO poll. Only 34 advisors and counsel responded to the poll, if we saw the same case numbers as last summer, we would need 60 support officers to staff over the summer. As you can see, about 44% of people said they were willing to staff, and 29% said they were unsure if they would be able to. This would be better for case efficiency and better represent what the student may want. Seamus Oliver is here to speak about his experience advising over the summer.
- b) Seamus Oliver: I worked on 7 of the 15 cases this summer. The initial goal of summer case processing is to improve the efficiency of the system, but it has not. One case went to hearing at the same time as it would've if it had

been investigated in the fall. We need to look at the precedent and how previous Committees addressed the issues of summer case processing, and how UJC approaches this problem. The quality of the advisors themselves did not drop, but the circumstances of summer case processing make it impossible to advise. Every form of scheduling is made more difficult. Over the summer, the availability of students is called into question, and professors do not check their emails, and witnesses are not responsive. Some response interviews were never submitted because people did not check their emails in the time frame. Regarding the quality of the investigation, cases that begin at the end of the spring semester are more difficult, whether it halts or continues over the summer. It is unavoidable that people will lose some of the details. It is worth considering that with the new report intake form, we are getting significantly new information than last summer from the report. Here, completely suspending summer case processing puts us in a point, where by the Community filing the intake form when they do, they can get a lot of information done when the information is recent and fresh. Putting it on hold after this asks the student to respond to the same level of information and specificity, which is not fair to the student. There are real concerns either way, and efficiency should not be one of them. From the fairness perspective, it should be up to the parties involved, but we should get up to at least the student interview, so we can hear from them before it goes on pause.

- c) Hamza Aziz: As far as the UJC question, they pause case processing over the summer, unless it is absolutely necessary.
- d) Brianna Kamdoun: What are the current numbers of advisors and investigators?
- e) Alexander Church: I have real concerns about the questions that investigators are asking of the student, since it takes recall of specific details. I don't think there can be a hybrid of allowing the student interview to happen, then pausing. From the perspective of the student, they should have the right to continue the investigation. Supports Nishita Ghanate's bylaw investigation. Would support only having the student request it, but recognizes the need of the reporter to schedule the reporter interview.
- f) Nishita Ghanate: There are 43 counsel and 42 advisors in the pools, but there are around 10-15 counsel and 15 advisors who actively staff cases.
- g) Hamza Aziz: We have 25 counsel and 25 advisors joining the pool in the spring semester.
- h) Daniel Elliot: Suggests using a word other than "continuance" in the bylaw. Does not have a strong opinion on if it was a failed experience, but is concerned about our consistency to the community, and how we explain that this process works if we change it every year. If we change how our bylaws operate every year, it may hurt buy-in. We should make this record of why we changed it in the first place, and why it failed, so future chairs of the Honor Committee do not go through this same process again.

- i) Brianna Kamdoum: Concerned about the distance from actual court, questions if the reporter and the student can cite their recollection of the events as well if the interviews happened earlier. Also concerned about causing backlogs in November and December with holiday breaks and finals. Not sure if this is the exact change we need, like if we need to adjust recruiting or the design of our pools.
- j) Nishita Ghanate: Understands Brianna's concerns, but prior to the change over this year, case proceedings still worked. At the beginning of semesters, SOs tend to be more available. Given the decline in quality of cases of breaks, it is in our best interest for investigations and hearings to have better quality proceedings.
- k) Alexander Church: Fall break, Thanksgiving break, and spring break are pretty short, so it shouldn't be much of a concern. Because winter break is shorter, there is not much of an issue of recollection of details, but there could be a problem of notifying students, then waiting a month to start case processing.
- l) Alexander Church moves to call the question, with the removal of the word "continuance". Nishita Ghanate seconds it. 13/20 representatives vote in favor, and the bylaw change passes.

B. P&P Items

1. Counsel for the Community/Reporter Role Distinction

- a) Tim Dodson: Not proposing anything for a vote, this is just to put some items on the table that P&P has been talking about. We have been thinking about the role of the reporter at the Panel for Sanction. Currently, the bylaws allow the Counsel for the Community and advisors to make arguments for reasonable sanction, and we've been talking about if these should be separate processes, and if the roles of the reporter and the Counsel for the Community have been conflated.
- b) Hamza Aziz: For a Panel for Guilt, the Counsel for the Community make arguments for the Community, not necessarily the reporter, and call the reporter as their primary witness. This distinction is less clear with the Panel for Sanction, where Counsel are currently being asked to serve as Counsel for the Reporter, not Community.
- c) Alexander Church: P&P has mostly agreed on the proposal to have the reporter submit a written statement beforehand that the student has access to, and allowing the student and the Counsel for the Accused make arguments for reasonable sanctions. Having the Reporter provide a written statement allows us to better provide the constitutional right to the student to hear the reporter's arguments. We can also ask them their willingness to participating in mentorship and amends. It also solves some of the logistical challenges of scheduling the Panel for Sanction. It also helps preserve some of the buy-in of the reporter, who has been heavily involved in the process. There is some consideration on not having Counsel for the Community not attend the Panel for Sanction, but that is a very open conversation.

- d) Mary Holland Mason: Currently, the panelists for the Panel for Sanction are free to ask the reporter questions after their statement, so this is another thing to consider when thinking about the written statement.
 - e) Daniel Elliott: Both sides of the system have engaged in an adversarial process to arrive at the Panel for Sanction, and there is more than one side for what the sanction should look like. We can carve out a special exception for the IR, but counsel for both sides should be present and have the opportunity to speak, as it feels crazy to do something different after the hearing.
 - f) Alexander Church: It's not necessarily adversarial, because they are working in the pursuit of the truth. For the IR, there is not Counsel for the Community. I don't believe they're necessary for after guilty verdicts.
 - g) Daniel Elliott: Adversarial does not mean anger, but it describes the procedures, since counsel are trying to come to a solution by representing the interests of their parties. The US Constitution presumes that a due process hearing must be adversarial.
 - h) Hamza Aziz: Asks about opinions of the reporter attending.
 - i) Nishita Ghanate: There should be equal representation for both sides. Since the purpose of this system is restoration of the Community of Trust, it is our responsibility to also hear from the community, which in this case, is the reporter. They should feel that their trust in the community has been restored as well.
 - j) David Armstrong: the Panel for Sanction considered the reporter's sanctions as a jumping off point for considering sanctions. It can also provide some more context, so they can see how they came to the conclusions they came to, by hearing from the reporter.
 - k) Nishita Ghanate: Perhaps both the student and the reporter both provide written statement, so there is just questions, and equity for both side.
 - l) Seamus Oliver: Likes Nishita Ghanate's suggestion, but it makes it impossible to have the Panel for Guilt and Panel for Sanction on the same day.
 - m) David Armstrong: Why?
 - n) Seamus Oliver: Counsel can't start preparing before the Panel for Guilt before, because it presumes guilt, and the hour in between these meetings is not enough time.
 - o) Alexander Church: Does this format violate the constitutional right of the student?
 - p) Nishita Ghanate: No, because they can still provide their case in a written form.
 - q) Daniel Elliott: Will review this language by next week.
 - r) Hamza Aziz: P&P will continue working on this, and may address it in their pre-Thanksgiving report.
2. Panel for Sanction Argument Scope
- a) Tim Dodson: The Bylaws list what the Panel for Sanction must consider, importantly, aggravating and mitigating circumstances. There has been

conversation if there should be more clear guidelines on what arguments should be made to a Panel for Sanction.

- b) Alexander Church: The role of the Panel for Sanction is to consider the factors of the case and the aggravating and mitigating circumstances, but needs to know that all of the information is relevant and factually accurate.
- c) Hamza Aziz: Moves Committee into closed session.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT

- A. None.

VIII. CLOSED SESSION

The meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m. The Honor Committee will meet in person in Newcomb Hall on Sunday, November 12th, at 7:00 p.m.