

Honor Code Task Force

Student-Faculty Conference

April 6, 2009

Outline

- Charge and Purpose
- Key Issues
- Proposed solutions
 - Each followed by brief Q&A
- General Q&A

The Charge

“The Ad Hoc Honor Code Task Force will define the purposes and goals of the Honor System, recommend desired outcomes and specific implementations of the Honor System, and recommend a process by which the success of the Honor System can be continually assessed.”

Key Issues

- Workload of BoC members
- Timeliness
- Turnover and consistency
- Transparency and fairness
- Education of students and faculty
- Public confidence in the judicial system

Proposed Solutions

- Membership changes
- Training for representatives
- New positions and roles
- Better outreach to community

Major Membership Changes

Presented by Lucas Hartsough

Membership Changes

- Goals:
 - Reduce workload of members
 - Shorten timetable for resolution of cases
- Current composition:
 - 1 secretary
 - 1 representative per house
 - 2 at-large representatives
 - 1 off-campus representative
 - 11 total representatives

Membership Changes

- Proposed changes:
 - 2 secretaries
 - 2 representatives per house
 - At least 3 at-large representatives
 - BoC may fill vacancies with appointments
 - Up to 20 representatives

Training for Representatives

Presented by Chris Watson

Training

- Goals:
 - Ease transition for new representatives
 - Encourage discussion among reps
 - Develop consistent approach to decision-making
 - Increase public confidence in process

Training

- Proposed changes:
 - Mandatory training for new representatives
 - Training involves elaborate mock hearings
 - Opportunity for discussion about past decisions
 - UCC-type component

New Roles on the BoC

Presented by Sierra Petersen

New Roles

- Goals:
 - Better guidance for defendants
 - Ensure that defendants have full opportunity to state their case
 - Focus investigation
 - Focus decision-making process

New Roles

- Current process:
 - Professor or TA expresses a concern
 - Chair and Secretary conduct brief investigation before full hearing
 - Defendant informed that he/she is under investigation
 - Full Board examines/analyzes evidence and hears testimony
 - Board decides what happened

New Roles

- Proposed changes:
 - Appoint two representatives to serve as “advocates” for every case
 - Both advocates conduct a thorough investigation ahead of a full hearing
 - One advocate advises the defendant
 - The other files a formal accusation
 - The full Board convenes to hear the case and decide on this accusation

Improving Outreach

Presented by Alex Hudson

Better Outreach

- Goals:
 - Bring greater transparency to the process
 - Include the community in discussions about the Honor Code
 - Educate the faculty about the process

Better Outreach

- Proposed ideas:
 - Publish case summaries for the community
 - Interface regularly with faculty through option representatives
 - Make previous decisions available to the Board during cases

Committee Members

- Alexander Hudson*
- Lucas Hartsough
- Sierra Petersen
- Christopher Watson
- Jared Leadbetter*
- Christopher Brennen
- J. Morgan Kousser
- Nai-Chang Yeh

*co-chairs

Questions and Discussion

- Ideas summary:
 - Membership changes
 - Training for representatives
 - New positions and roles
 - Better outreach to community
- Contact info
 - ahudson@caltech.edu
 - jleadbetter@caltech.edu