

MEMORANDUM

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Office of the Provost

July 25, 1978

To: George T. Matthews, Vice Provost and Chairperson
Senate Steering Committee

From: Peter J. Bertocci, Chairperson
Committee on Academic Conduct

Subject: Annual Report of the Committee
on Academic Conduct - 1977-78

Please forgive the tardiness of this report. As I indicated informally to you, I chose to delay submission of the report until the Committee had heard all of its pending cases through Spring Semester, 1978, and could include these in its statistics.

I. Committee Memberships

A. Faculty Members

Peter J. Bertocci, Sociology/Anthropology, Chairperson (1 year)
William D. Hamlin, Education, Alternate (1 year)
Egbert W. Henry, Biological Sciences (2 years)
L. M. Lewis, Jr., Learning Skills (2 years)
Billy Joe Minor, Education (2 years)
Diane E. Norman, Education (1 year)
David M. Stonner, Psychology (1 year)

B. Administration Members

Manuel E. Pierson, Dean for Student Services, permanent member,
ex officio

C. Student Members

Gary A. Foster
Elie Chidiac
Jori Moore (alternate)

II. Summary of Cases Coming Before the Committee, May, 1977 - July, 1978*

During the period covered by this report, the Committee acted upon a total of 27 cases, involving 43 students. Statistics on these cases

and students are taken from the records of the Office of the Dean for Student Services and reported below.

A. Disposition of cases and penalties imposed in each individual student case.

1. Not guilty	15
2. Guilty, by penalty imposed	
(a) Academic disciplinary reprimand	4
(b) Academic disciplinary reprimand cum probation	2
(c) Probation only	1
(d) Academic disciplinary suspension cum immediate readmission and probation until graduation	10
(e) Academic disciplinary suspension	4
(f) Dismissal	2
(g) Other additional penalties	**
3. Cases dismissed for insufficient evidence	5
Totals	43

In addition, the Committee was asked to render an opinion in a case coming to light, but never brought formally before it with an actual misconduct charge, in which it was found that a student's father had actually submitted the student's exams and required work in several courses. The Committee ruled advisarily that the student should receive an "N" in all the relevant courses; no charge was brought because the student had been hospitalized throughout the entire semester in question and could not be held responsible for the actions of his father. As the latter was not officially enrolled, no charge could be brought against him.

B. Preliminary data on students brought before the Committee by sex, racial/national origin and class standing.***

1. Sex (N=43)	
Male:	22
Female:	21
2. Racial/national origin (N=43)	
U.S. White:	29
U.S. Black:	10
Foreigh:	4

3. Class Standing (N=43)

Senior:	3
Junior:	5
Sophomore:	18
Freshman:	15
No data:	2

C. Preliminary data on cases brought by academic unit or course rubric

Mathematics/Statistics	7
Computer Science (Engin.)	6
Physics	3
History	2
Political Science	2
Music	2
Management	2
Philosophy	1
Biology	1
Chemistry	1
 Total	 27 cases (N.B. not individual students)

D. Discussion

The number of individual student cases heard this past year has more than doubled over the average of the past five years.**** Why this should be so is an unanswerable question at this point. The increase may be due to a greater willingness of faculty, at least in certain departments, to report perceived violations to the Committee, although we have no way of knowing whether or not a reluctance to do so has been present among faculty members over the previous five years. We note that the majority of cases have come from courses involving use or teaching of mathematics, wherein such misconduct as copying during examinations appear to be more readily detectable. Cases in which a verdict of guilty was declared constitute roughly 50 percent of all those brought before the Committee, and this is consistent with the data from last year. (Cases dismissed or those in which a verdict of not guilty was reached usually involve lack of sufficient evidence to convince the Committee that the alleged misconduct indeed occurred; in some instances, faculty members bringing the charge initially later dropped them for lack of evidence.)

The Committee has tended to impose most often the penalty of Academic Disciplinary Suspension cum Immediate Readmission, coupled with Probation until graduation. This is because many of the cases it has heard involved unpremeditated in-class ("panicked") cheating by first-time offender Freshman or Sophomore students, and we have attempted to establish something of a penalty precedent for these types of cases.

Where cheating has been deliberately premeditated, harsher penalties have been imposed, and the Committee has meted out its most severe penalties in those cases where the deliberate, premeditated cheating have involved and jeopardized innocent other students. These actions, too, have been reasonably consistent with a view to informal precedent setting. In some cases of plagiarism, the Committee has additionally required the student to produce a new research paper demonstrating an ability to utilize proper source citation procedures, thereby hoping to introduce a pedagogical element in its penalties.

The majority of guilty offenders have been Freshmen and Sophomores, expectably enough, and consisted of persons who were not altogether familiar with the procedures and pressures of the classroom.

*This time period is selected to cover Fall, Winter and Spring Semesters during which the Committee hears cases. These data may be subject to further revision.

**Reflects instances in which the Committee required the student to produce a research paper. See discussion in (D) of text.

***As required by the Senate.

****See Report on Committee Activities for 1976-77 for comparative data.

III. Policy Matters

The Committee had no occasion to seek Senate approval of proposed changes in present academic policy. And this past year saw no internal procedural policy changes which merit report here.

PJB:ew

cc: P. Evarts, Chairperson Designate, CAC
M. Pierson, Dean for Student Services