



**DIVISION OF  
STUDENT AFFAIRS**  
**OFFICE OF STUDENT CONDUCT**

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To: University of Maryland Faculty and Staff  
From: James Bond, Assistant Director for Academic Integrity, Office of Student Conduct  
Kelly Schrader, Coordinator for Academic Integrity, Office of Student Conduct  
Rachel Yu, Chair of the University Student Judiciary Executive Committee  
Date: August 4, 2020  
Re: 2019-2020 Report on Academic Integrity

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Annually, the Office of Student Conduct (OSC) gathers and shares information with relevant stakeholders regarding the state of academic integrity on campus. This document serves to provide academic departments and other campus entities with statistics, trend data, and proposed solutions which further involve the University community in the implementation of successful academic dishonesty prevention efforts. This report reflects behavior that has occurred over the last year (June 1, 2019-May 31, 2020). It also offers recommendations to instructors on ways to mitigate misconduct and promote academic integrity on all assignments and exams.

### **Impact of COVID-19**

The past several months has been unlike any other faced by our campus, and the OSC shared in that experience. Our meetings with students transitioned relatively seamlessly to a teleconference style. This includes adjudication meetings such as Disciplinary Conferences and Honor Reviews (hearings). There was a slight increase in referrals compared to the same time period in 2019. Specifically, 53 additional cases were reported during April-June, 2020. Most of these cases involved students using assistance websites such as Chegg.com (for many STEM courses) or Stackoverflow.com (for courses involving computer coding) to solicit answers to coursework. Also prevalent was the tendency for students to work together on many assignments expected to be done independently.

The types of behavior reported require significant discussion; more than this report can cover. Research shows that the temptation to commit acts of academic dishonesty increases when students:

- feel disengaged from the learning
- experience a great deal of stress and anxiety for the work
- are distracted by environmental stimuli
- have easy access to unauthorized assistance

These sentiments were echoed in many of our conversations with students. Despite significant efforts taken by University administration, faculty, and staff, students still felt confused with the delivery of information, at times isolated from instructors and support staff without guidance on how to approach the work, and overburdened with having to meet course expectations while managing personal strife related to the pandemic and societal unrest. As these frustrations were also shared by faculty and staff, it allows an opportunity to hone the approach we take with students as we continue into the fall semester.

It is encouraging that instructors have adapted their courses to account for the change in our learning environment. It continues to be imperative that instructors make it clear to students that the priority is not in the grade earned, but in the mastery of the material being studied. Giving explicit expectations on what should and should not be

used is also important, and adapting assignments to account for students’ proclivity to use online resources may help students feel successful in the work they produce. This matter will continue to be discussed in collaboration with the [Academic Integrity Liaisons](#), the [Teaching and Learning Transformation Center](#), and similar units as we function in a primarily online environment.

**University Student Judiciary and the Student Honor Council**

The University Student Judiciary (USJ), the group of student volunteers who adjudicate alleged campus violations, had a particularly productive year. In addition to working toward improving their training efforts, they also made great strides in their outreach on campus to promote the values of integrity and character. Their most notable accomplishment was the series of events throughout Integrity Week, held in early March. These efforts will continue in a live and virtual space in the coming year. They will also recruit culturally and intellectually diverse students to enhance their membership. Please take the time to nominate students you feel would benefit from participating in the USJ by sharing their name with our office. Please also encourage your students to follow OSC and USJ on social media (account information is below). We invite you to do the same.

The Student Honor Council resolved a large number of cases (60 Honor Reviews of 73 students) in the past year, and they will continue throughout the summer. This could not happen without the faculty and staff volunteers, as the Code of Academic Integrity mandates their participation in all Honor Reviews. A list of volunteers is seen in the appendix of this report, and we express our immense gratitude for the hours they spend in support of ensuring a fair review of allegations for our students.

**Statistics on Academic Misconduct**

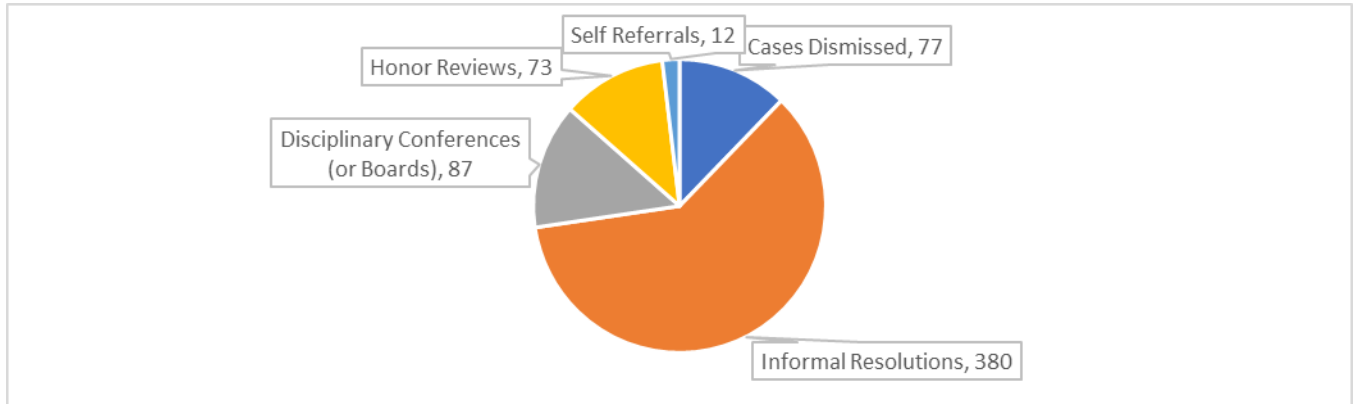
This year, OSC saw a 10% decrease in referrals compared to the 2018-2019 academic year. With 634 new referrals in the reporting period, this remained a very busy year, but was statistically the lowest referral number in three years. While that is encouraging, we recognize that instructors do not always report suspicious behavior to OSC. We cannot stress enough the importance of doing so in a timely manner to ensure due process for all involved.

The charts below show (A) the types of violations that students were charged with based on the referrals, and (B) the resolution methods used in the past year.

A. Frequency of Charges for Students

Charge	No. of Times Charged
1(a) Cheating	475
1(b) Fabrication	27
1 (c) Facilitating Academic Dishonesty	177
1(d) Plagiarism	173
1(e) Self-Plagiarism	20

(B) Resolution Methods Used By Students to Resolve Cases



Informal Resolutions (where students accept responsibility and agree to a determined sanction) while the number of cases dismissed and the number of Honor Reviews are proportionally the same as the last reporting period. Recently there has been an increase in the use of the Disciplinary Conferences and DC Boards (where cases are resolved with staff involvement). Information for specific colleges, departments, or courses are available upon request.

**Conclusion**

The Office of Student Conduct continues to be a resource for faculty, staff, and students as we work to prevent, investigate, and adjudicate matters of alleged student misconduct. This requires a shared commitment of integrity throughout the campus. There are several resources as faculty develop courses for the coming year that can be found in the appendix of this report.

There is no panacea for academic dishonesty. There is only a commitment to creating an environment where academic integrity is highly valued, and where infractions are reported and addressed in a timely, fair, and consistent way. You are invited to share your concerns, insights, and questions about this report with the OSC. Good luck in the weeks ahead and know that we look forward to our continued collaboration.

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## APPENDIX

### I. 2019-2020 Faculty and Staff Volunteers for the Student Honor Council

These volunteers served on 60 Honor Reviews this past school year.

Name, Dept. or College	Name, Dept. or College
Dr. Peggy Antonisse, ARHU	Dr. Zeinab Karake, BUSN
Suzanne Ashour-Bailey, ENGR	Dr. Sabrina Kramer, HONR
Dr. John Bono, BUSN	Alyssa Neuner, CMSC
Dr. Stephen Brown, BUSN	Dr. Tammatha O'Brien, AGNR
Dr. John Buchner, CMNS	Dr. Jade Olson, ARHU
Tracey Centorbi, BSOS	Pam Orel, ARHU
Carol Cron, BUSN	Maddie Reich, Dept. of Resident Life
Dr. Lee Friedman, CMNS	Dr. Scott Roberts, Graduate School
Jennifer Gershberg, J.D., BUSN	Jim Schwartz, Dept. of Residential Facilities
Tiffany Harris, Dept. of Resident Life	Dr. David Wilt, UMD Libraries
Laura Hood, Stamp Student Union	Dr. Jianhua Zhu (winner of Fac/Staff Award), AGNR

### II. Articles and Resources for Enhancing Academic Integrity in Your Courses

1. [Academic Integrity Checklist for Instructors](#)
2. [Inside Higher Education article on preventing academic dishonesty online](#)
3. [Use instances of cheating online as a teachable moment](#)
4. [Ways to reduce instances of cheating during remote instruction](#)
5. [Faculty Readiness Rubric for Academic Integrity](#)
6. [OSC Instructor Guide for Academic and Nonacademic Conduct](#)
7. [Campus Assessment Work Group snapshot on Academic Integrity](#)
8. [The Academic Integrity Liaison Program](#)
9. [The International Center for Academic Integrity](#) (University of Maryland is a Member)
10. [University System of Maryland William E. Kirwan Center for Academic Innovation](#)
11. [List of scholarly articles discussing academic integrity in the college setting](#)