Yale undergraduates are called before the Executive Committee of Yale College when they are charged with possible violations of the Undergraduate Regulations.

The Executive Committee is composed of 3 tenured faculty, 3 junior faculty, 3 undergraduates and the Dean of Yale College or Dean’s representative, with 3 members (non-student) serving as officers of the Committee: the chair, the Fact-Finder and the secretary.

In the majority of cases, students admit the validity of the charge(s) made against them and choose a disposition without a formal hearing before the full Executive Committee. Disposition hearings, held weekly, make up the bulk of Committee work and are conducted by the Coordinating Group which is composed of the 3 officers of Executive Committee (the chair, fact-finder, and secretary) and 1 of the 3 student members, who rotate in this capacity throughout the term. If the student contests the charge(s), then the case is considered further for a formal hearing before the full Executive Committee.

In Fall 2013 there were 46 dispositions without formal hearings involving 70 students, 2 Full Hearings involving 2 students, and 1 penalty hearing involving 1 student.

**Dispositions without a formal hearing:**

In the case of disposition without a formal hearing, the charged student appears before the Coordinating Group of the Executive Committee along with his/her advisor (typically the Dean or Master of his/her residential college). The student is read guidelines for the proceedings and may present an opening oral statement followed by a question/answer period based on this statement and on the student’s previously submitted written statement and other documentation such as police reports, e-mail correspondence, papers/exams and other records pertinent to the case. The student’s advisor is invited to make a statement on the student’s behalf followed by closing remarks by the student after which the Coordinating group deliberates to reach a decision on the penalty. A full dismissal of charges is rare, and standard penalties include: reprimand, probation, suspension and expulsion. Students may also be required to meet additional conditions such as paying for damages to property, restricting use of specific buildings or entryways on campus, seeking counseling for substance abuse or mental health, submitting written reflections or formal written guidelines, (for example, a risk-management plan for groups and organizations hosting parties and other social events.)

**Penalty Hearings:**

In cases were students wish to dispute the penalty resulting from a disposition without a formal hearing, they may petition for a Penalty Hearing which is brought before the full Executive Committee. In Fall 2013 there was 1 penalty hearing involving 1 student charged with academic dishonesty. The penalty of 2 terms of suspension was upheld.
Full Hearings:

Although most students admit the validity of the charge(s) made against them and opt for a disposition without a formal hearing, if students contest the charge(s) they will have their case heard by the full Executive Committee in a formal hearing. The full committee is composed of three tenured and three untenured faculty members, three undergraduates and the Dean’s designate. The secretary of the committee also attends full hearings, but is not a voting member. In the Fall of 2013 there were 2 formal hearings involving 2 students, with both involving the charge of academic dishonesty.

Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism

In Fall 2013, 21 students were charged with Academic Dishonesty and 9 of these charges involved plagiarism. In several previous Chair’s reports such as the 2009-10 report, considerable attention was given to academic dishonesty and plagiarism, both to defining the various forms of academic dishonesty and to recommendations and guidelines for its prevention going forward. Although academic dishonesty remains a common violation of the undergraduate regulations, an apparent decrease in overall academic dishonesty charges from 2012 to 2013 is very promising and likely points to the success of the highly visible and concerted efforts under the leadership of Dean Mary Miller, to clearly define and publicize (e.g., website, regular e-mail reminders throughout the academic year) various forms of academic dishonesty as well as guidelines to faculty for stating policies on plagiarism and cheating and their obligation to report violations of these policies to the Executive Committee.

Other forms of academic dishonesty:

The 12 cases of academic dishonesty that did not involve plagiarism involved variable charges including submission of work from previous courses, false claims of instructor/advisor permission, false claims of submission of an exam, false claim of mis-grading, bringing notes to an exam, submission of identical work by multiple students and solicitation of problem set solutions from online sources and copying of problem set solutions posted online.

Alcohol and illicit drugs:

There were 34 students charged with violations involving alcohol, the majority of which involved under-aged drinking or distributing alcohol to under-aged individuals at social functions, and several involved using false identification to purchase alcohol. Much attention has been devoted to addressing the on-going problems involving alcohol use and abuse on campus, for example the recent “Think About It” video module for entering Freshman.

On-campus alcohol consumption and the so-called “drinking culture” at Yale is the subject of several targeted efforts and designated Yale committees that are actively engaged in further addressing this important issue.
There were 8 cases involving marijuana use, 1 case involving unauthorized use of prescription pills and 1 case involving LSD with at least 4 additional cases involving LSD to be heard in the Spring 2014.

Notably, the recent cases involving LSD are the first at Yale since ~ the 1970-80’s, The 1 case from Fall 2013 was carried over to the Spring Term and will therefore be presented in the Spring 2014 report along with at least 3 additional cases and 1 pending case involving 5 students and involving the use of LSD. The Committee feels that this rather sudden spike in violations of the undergraduate regulations involving LSD warrants special attention sooner rather than later to prevent further escalation of this apparent trend.

**Referred Cases:**

32 cases involving 35 students were referred to the respective residential college dean. 29 of the 32 cases involved 31 students who were intoxicated; 31 were transported to YNHH or University Health Services.

**Concluding thoughts:**

I have served as a member of the Executive Committee on 2 separate occasions and as Chair since Fall 2013.

Service on the Executive Committee provides the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the perspectives and experiences of Yale undergraduates and of the various challenges they face. It also provides an opportunity to contribute positively to the Yale community and to enhance the academic experience of students that come before the committee, which has proven to be an invaluable asset to my own teaching, advising and mentoring of Yale undergraduates. Students coming before the committee typically undergo deep introspection and reflect very sincerely on their experiences and the consequences of their actions outside of themselves. They also gain valuable insights into their relationships to fellow students, roommates and residents of their colleges, and for many, it is an opportunity to recalibrate their mindset and reset their course onto a successful path.

As with past Chairs, I view the Committee’s role more as one of ‘intervention, correction and redirection” than one of “penalty and punishment,” and it has been my experience that committee members approach each case with sincerity and deep concern for the well-being of students and with an earnest desire that the student take full advantage of the “teachable moment” and become stronger, more focused and in many cases more empowered and better able to benefit from and fully engage in the plethora of extraordinary opportunities available to Yale undergraduates.

As noted by previous Chairs Jacobs, Clark, Bloom, and others, “the great majority of cases that come before the committee are not due to willful or malicious intent and often are the result of poor decision making—usually under great stress, inattention to guidelines/instructions,
inebriation, and honest mistakes.” This remains largely true, with “honest mistakes” typically due to students just not knowing or paying close enough attention to rules and course/assignment guidelines. Great pressure to achieve “perfection” (rather than excellence) either self-imposed by the student or ascribed to outside, usually family/parental, expectations, has been put forth as a reason for committing academic dishonesty on several occasions, which points to a need to consider ways to address this issue during student orientation or other occasions throughout the academic year. While there are some rare cases possibly involving issues of deeper concern, the vast majority of cases that come before the committee involve students who are highly sincere, and deeply remorseful, but have simply made a very poor choice due to a singular and momentary lapse in judgment. The experience of coming before the Executive Committee has a very profound impact on most students with the intended outcome of setting them back onto a path of academic and personal success.

Thanks

I am deeply thankful to all members of the 2013-2014 Executive Committee for their excellent committed and compassionate service during a fairly active term. Each member brought invaluable expertise and perspective to bear in their most thoughtful and careful consideration of all cases brought before the full Committee. I would like to extend special thanks to the 3 undergraduate student members of the Committee, Austin Jaspers, JE ’15, Nicole Shibley, TC ’14 and James Volz, SY ’15, especially for their committed weekly service to the Coordinating Group. These students provided invaluable insights on undergraduate life, academic and course-related issues and the challenges faced by Yale students. I am thankful to Susan Sawyer in the General Counsel’s office and Dr. Lorraine Siggins for their critical input and expertise as consultants to the Committee and to Dean Mary Miller for her leadership and tireless commitment to excellence. I would also like to thank Lisa Miller, Lisa Pitoniak and other staff in the Yale College Dean’s office for their assistance with organizing cases, communications, distributing documentation, and with the day-to-day logistics that allow the committee to function smoothly. It was a great pleasure to work in the Coordinating Group each week with Professor Alan Mikhail, our fact-finder, and Dean Pamela George, the secretary of the Committee. Both brought not only their unique and valuable perspectives on cases, but also the highest level of concern, fairness, compassion, and respect for each student who came before us. Finally, I cannot begin to thank Pamela George, enough for her deep and sincere commitment to the Executive Committee and to the overall well-being and success of Yale students, as well as her wonderful support of the incoming Chair.

Ruth Blake
Chair of the Yale College Executive Committee Fall 2013
Professor of Geology & Geophysics
Professor of Forestry & Environmental Studies
**Fall 2013**

**Dispositions without Formal Hearings**
46 dispositions without formal hearings, involving 70 students

**Formal Hearings**
2 formal hearings, involving 2 students

**Penalty Hearings**
1 penalty hearing involving 1 student

**Penalties from dispositions and formal hearings**
The following penalties were assigned to 72 students:
- expulsions – 1
- suspensions - 8
- probations - 10
- reprimands – 53
- not guilty – 0
- withhold degree - 0

**Academic Dishonesty Charges, including pending cases**
21 students were charged with Academic Dishonesty which resulted in:
- suspensions - 8
- probations - 6
- reprimands – 3
- charge withdrawn – 2
- withhold degree - 0
- carried over to spring term – 2

**Plagiarism**
9 of the 21 cheating cases were plagiarism which resulted in:
- suspensions - 3
- probations - 4
- reprimands – 2
- charges withdrawn – 0
- withhold degree - 0
- carried over to the spring term – 0

**Other forms of Academic Dishonesty**
12 of the remaining cheating cases were other forms of cheating:

1 Falsely claimed permission from residential college dean to take a make-up exam after the deadline
1 Falsely claimed an exam was misgraded and changed answers on exam to be reviewed for a better grade
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Copied answers from a TA online posting of problem sets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Provided solution sets from a previous course to 2 students taking the course this term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Submitted solution sets from a previous course as own work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Submitted identically incorrect solutions to a quiz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Posted problem sets on the internet asking for answers and posted the take-home mid-term exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Falsely claimed he turned in a midterm exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Fabricated quotations from sources for a paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Falsely claimed permission from residential college master and dean to ask instructors for class assignment extensions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Brought notes to an exam</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Referred Cases**

32 cases involving 35 students were referred to the residential college. 29 of the 32 cases involved 31 students who were intoxicated; 31 were transported to YNHH or University Health Services.