



Student Conduct and Community Standards Annual Report 2020-2021

The department of Student Conduct and Community Standards (SCCS) is a component of the Health, Wellness and Safety portfolio of the Division of Student Affairs. The department promotes responsible decision-making that fosters student-centered learning and accountability in alignment with community values and expectations. The staff assist students in upholding community standards as the office addresses allegations involving students who may have violated the Student and/or Student Organization Conduct Codes. The staff have provided advising for students who are alleged to have violated the Academic Honor Policy, however that responsibility will shift for the 2021-22 academic year.

Mission and Vision

Mission Statement

The Department of Student Conduct and Community Standards promotes responsible decision-making that fosters student-centered learning and accountability in alignment with community values and expectations.

Vision Statement

We believe Florida State students' recognition of the impact of their decisions empowers them to develop positive character for future endeavors.

Core Functions

Community Wellbeing: Empowering students to value and contribute to an environment which fosters a sense of wellness and belonging.

Student Learning: Developing students' ability to critically evaluate choices and personal values; and apply their reflections to future decision-making.

Accountability: Encouraging students to own their behaviors and recognize when they do not align with their values or with university expectations.

Staffing

In the 2020-21 year, SCCS employed three full-time professional staff through December 2020 and two full-time staff from January 2021 to June 2021, one administrative professional and two part-time graduate staff.

Response to COVID-19

The University instructed employees able to complete their work remotely to begin doing so on March 23, 2020. Prior to that date, SCCS did an assessment of its operations and core functions and determined all normal business operations could continue uninterrupted as all staff worked remotely. SCCS supported the University community and student development as described below:

Facilitating Virtual Meetings

It was vital to ensure that our staff could remain connected and collaborate effectively while operating virtually. Utilizing *Microsoft Teams* was a comprehensive way to upload documents, share projects, and easily communicate via chat or video call. Through the first few weeks of the

transition, it was important to make visual contact everyday through a daily check-in meeting via a separate teleconferencing platform. Maintaining human connectivity while transitioning to an all-virtual office setting allowed us to see colleagues and continue to have the social connection that enriches our productivity and work environment.

Once the department ensured we could maintain effectiveness, we identified in-person processes that needed to be continued so we could identify how to make them virtual. SCCS had to determine how to adjudicate hearings virtually. For all informal single student cases, this was achieved by having each individual hearing officer use the Zoom video conferencing platform to continue hosting those meetings. We updated all letter templates to automatically insert our unique user Zoom personal meeting links and refer students to the institution's website for information on how to use the platform. For formal cases, Zoom allowed for the creation of breakout rooms, which, in turn, could be used for witness rooms, as well as virtual spaces for students and advisors to confer. For cases in which we did not want students to interact directly with each other, such as cases where there was a reporting individual and responding student, we had the individuals call in to the virtual Zoom meeting rather than participating by video for most of the meeting. We had students switch to video when giving their statement. This allowed for equitable participation while maintaining an effective visual separation of parties.

We also modified slightly how we interacted with students during our virtual meetings. We asked more intentional questions about how students have handled the transition to online learning spaces, how they were maintaining their personal well-being, what their plans were or how their plans changed. We shared our humanity with students because we recognized the value of human connection was being emphasized in a way that was not as profound before the pandemic.

Being able to adjudicate any resolution process and heighten our human connection to students proved there were no processes our office could not effectively facilitate virtually. To get to that place of confidence, we made a plan to ensure we were sensitive to students' needs and feelings. We relied on each other to conceptualize, craft, and test these processes and used each other as test subjects to simulate our virtual processes to see if they would work. Creating these virtual processes allowed our staff to partner closer together and become more seamless as a unit.

Electronic File Review System

SCCS needed to identify how to share relevant conduct information with others. This challenge arose because our in-person practice afforded others, including students, advisors, and outside hearing officers, the ability to schedule times to view this information. This has been ideal for our office, as we could ensure individuals accessed information without being provided copies. We wanted to meet our commitment to accessing information without compromising the integrity of the process. To address this challenge, our staff worked with Information Technology Services and the Office of the General Counsel to create the electronic file review system.

Examples of when this process may be used includes instances where the record is a prohibitively large file or document that would take significant time for the involved party to review, or when the party's physical location prohibits an in-person file review. As a note, video and audio files are not available for electronic file review and must be conducted in a live file review. SCCS successfully utilized this process throughout its time working remotely due to the

COVID-19 pandemic, allowing the office to provide uninterrupted service to invested stakeholders.

A highlight for the SCCS team during COVID-19 remote work, included ‘gathering’ for a Virtual Student Conduct Board Celebration. SCCS honored the contributions and accomplishments of the Student Conduct Board (SCB) during a virtual end-of-year celebration on April 22, 2020. This ceremony was an opportunity for SCCS to thank SCB for all their hard work during the academic year and show gratitude for their service to SCCS and the FSU community. During the ceremony, the three SCB chairs were recognized by the graduate advisors, as were all graduating SCB members.

Significant Stories

Title IX New Regulations- Code Revision

In May 2020, the U.S. Department of Education released final regulations governing campus sexual assault under Title IX. Following the release of these regulations the Office of Civil Rights posted multiple clarifying posts on how the final rule regulations were meant to be interpreted. The Department of Student Conduct and Community Standards has worked very closely with the Office of Vice President of Student Affairs, the Office of General Counsel, and the Office of Title IX to remain agile in preparing our processes to comply with new regulations. This included a review and revision of the Student and Student Organization Conduct Codes as well as all departmental documents and letter templates for this purpose. Our office also took this opportunity to rebuild how cases are transferred from the Office of Title IX in order to make more effective use of our Maxient software at capturing and reporting the outcomes of the Title IX process at Florida State University going forward. To date SCCS has not had a case referred that falls under the new Regs

Revision of the curriculum of Ethics Workshops- Accommodating a hybrid offering

During the 2020- 2021 academic year, the Ethics Workshop outcome provided by Student Conduct and Community Standards was rebuilt into a hybrid outcome consisting of a synchronous and asynchronous portion. Both portions of Ethics Workshop were intentionally built to cultivate student reflection and development as they participate in one on one, individual and group activities. In receiving feedback from students throughout the year, we learned that students have enjoyed the new hybrid format as it allows them the time to process and reflect with peers, while the asynchronous portion allows them to do so individually. The new hybrid version of Ethics Workshop has also opened the ability for the facilitator to be able to create a curriculum set for the year and in facilitating it, eases the administrative load. Allowing time for students to work individually, provides them the space to do this when they are able and allows the facilitator to check in as needed.

Conduct Code Revision and Passage

In September 2020, SCCS, introduced a new *Student Conduct Code* and *Student Organization Conduct Code* after receiving full Board of Trustees approval. The rationale for updating and revising the Codes included: to make the Codes clearer and more concise; revise existing and introduce new resolution options for individuals, organizations, and Title IX cases; to clarify several definitions, including student, advisor, reporting/affected individual, and responding student; and update several of the violations, particularly in the *Student Organization Conduct Code*.

As a result of the Florida Legislature adopting House Bill 233 in May 2021, Student Conduct and Community Standards has been working with university colleagues to revise the *Student Conduct Code* and *Student Organization Conduct Code* to be in compliance with the Bill. Additionally, the updated work of FSU's Policy 2-2 regarding Anti- Sexual Misconduct will also be incorporated into the new Codes. As the Code revision follows the review process through the FSU Board of Trustees (BOT), SCCS staff will incorporate appropriate updates, including templates inside the Maxient database; office forms; the SCCS website; and holding a follow up meeting with University Housing to discuss the implementation of the new Codes procedures.

Recruitment, Training and Professional Development for University Colleagues

Recruited and conducted training for all advisors and hearing officers for students and student organization conduct matters, student conduct hearing officers, Title IX hearing officers and advisors. FSU Hosted Professor Peter Lake, Stetson University College of Law, with additional University colleagues who conducted TIX Supplemental Training for Advisors and Hearing Officers to include an overview of the new regulations, deeper content on the questions of relevancy and cross examination. The newly recruited pool of advisors and hearing officers were utilized to effectively serve students in efficient and supportive ways for timely resolution of their cases.

Response to reports of Discrimination- 219 Reports Received

As the primary recipient of Discrimination Reports, once review for potential violations of the Code occurred, SCCS responded to all submitters to acknowledge the report, shares resources and offer the opportunity to meet with a staff member. If appropriate, conducted Educational Conversations regarding Freedom of Expression with the student alleged to have expressed bias or discrimination toward another student. SCCS also recruited a group of colleagues throughout the Division of Student Affairs to facilitate the educational conversations.

Additional Items for Inclusion:

- Strengthened the collaboration with Faculty Development and Advancement in serving students through the Academic Honor Policy process. Enhancements included having the FDA staff load cases into Maxient that will allow our staff and newly recruited and trained advisors to be familiar with the case in advance of meeting with the student. This allowed for greater effectiveness and efficiency in supporting students.
- Strengthened the Alternate Resolution (AR) role and option with education and overall offerings to the University community. Utilized AR with COVID cases, minor alcohol and other drug violations and with appropriate conduct cases for student organizations.
- Enhanced the working relationship with University Housing with respect to adjudication of cases and coordination of outcomes for COVID case resolutions as well as suspension level behaviors of concern.
- Facilitated leadership development experiences and curriculum with the Student Conduct Board members to support student learning and development as they served the University community.

Trends

Beginning in Summer 2020 following the death of George Floyd, the Black Lives Matter movement ignited and gained significant national media attention. As Florida State students experienced a rise in social media interactions of which they believe they experienced discrimination or bias, SCCS received 219 reports of discrimination. All reporting parties received an acknowledgement and response with resources available to them.

Alternative Resolution Process

Across the industry of higher education many institutions have begun to research and implement forms of alternative resolution as a means to address conduct that allows respondents to accept responsibility for behavior that impacts the community, prevent the recurrence of the behavior, and to meet the needs of the community. It is anticipated that that with the implementation of the Title IX final rule regulations as of August 2020 that the number of complainants and respondents seeking alternative resolutions will continue to increase. Institutionally it was determined to utilize alternative resolution as a means to address student behavior that violated safety measures put into place in the Return to Student Life Guide response to the COVID-19 outbreak. This allowed students to accept responsibility and take steps to learn from the incident and safely re-enter the community without impacting their disciplinary record.

During the 2020-21 academic year SCCS facilitated a total of 50 alternative resolutions: 2 Organization Cases, 4 Title IX cases, and 44 individual student cases.

Academic Honor Policy (AHP) Advising Pool

With the rise of digital proctoring necessitated by the distance format in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, institutions of higher education across the country experienced a significant increase in the number of allegations of academic dishonesty. Not unlike national trends, FSU's number of allegations also increased as Honorlock was implemented across multiple academic departments. The Department of Student Conduct and Community Standards which provides advisors to FSU students navigating the academic honor process recognized that with the number of Academic Honor Policy allegations increasing we needed to recruit and train a larger pool of volunteers to assist with the demand. To meet the demand, SCCS offered two training sessions where we trained ten volunteers from across the Student and Academic affairs divisions. Additionally, the department sought additional funds to extend the hours of one of our graduate assistants by 10 hours per week to assist in conducting AHP advising. During the 2020-2021 academic year SCCS received 135 requests for academic advisors through the Maxient system, in addition to many requests for academic advising that came in via phone calls to the department that would not be captured in this figure.

Student Learning

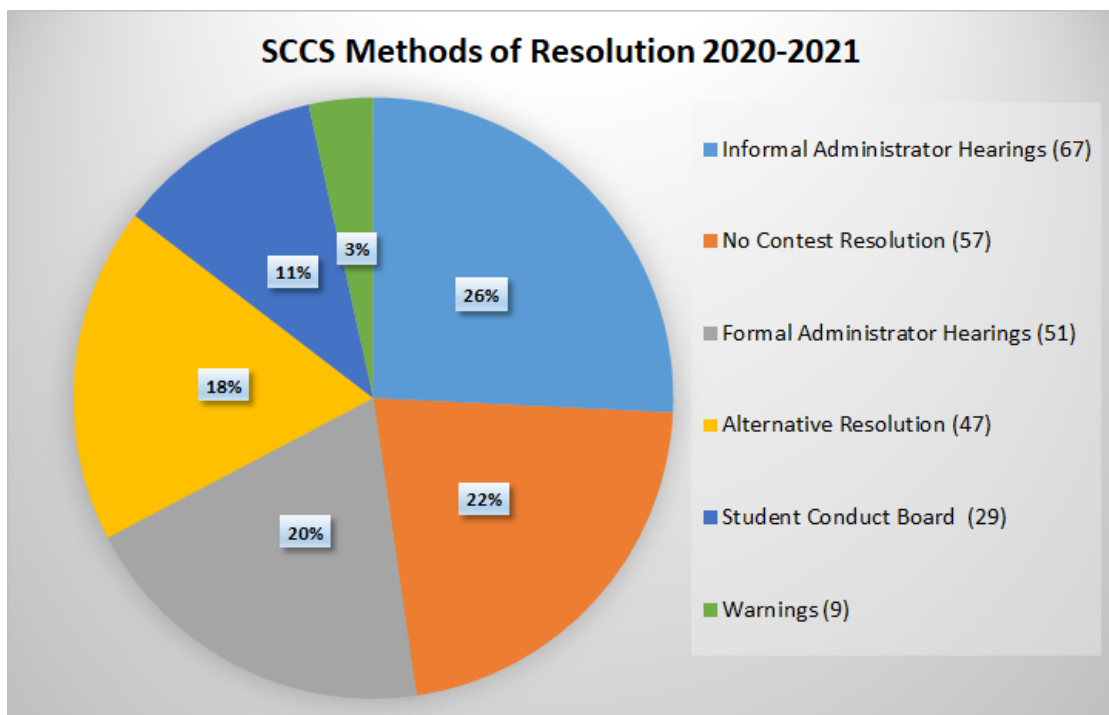
At the conclusion of each Ethics Workshop that SCCS facilitates, students are emailed an assessment via Qualtrics to get an understanding of their perspectives on the workshop, as well as get a sense of what they believe they learned as a result of participating in the workshop. As part of the SCCS Ethics Workshop assessment, students were asked what they learned about ethics and values and what they learned about themselves as part of their reflection on the exercises they completed through the workshop. With regards to ethics and values, most students said they learned that they needed to think about, establish, and live their values in a more

thoughtful way. Some also recognized they have good values and need to be true to them. When responding about what they learned about themselves, students said that they felt they were good people who made mistakes but that they were growing and evolving as people, and they should not be too hard on themselves.

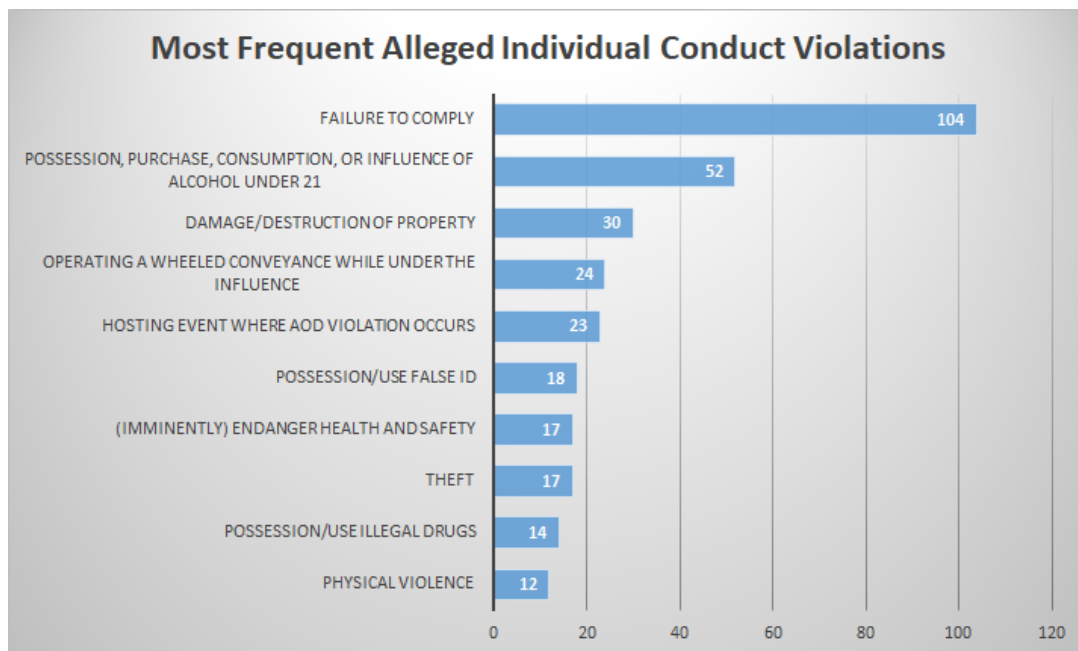
Informally, Student Conduct Board (SCB) members shared with SCCS staff during the virtual SCB end-of-year celebration what they learned through that experience. Numerous SCB members discussed how they had learned a lot about themselves as leaders, how to collaborate with others, and how to work on a team. A few mentioned that they would use what they learned by being involved in SCB in future careers upon graduation.

Signature Data Points

Methods of Resolution	2019-2020	2020-2021
Hearings	280	147
Formal Administrator	110	51
Informal Administrator	149	67
Student Conduct Board	21	29
Informal Resolutions	72	113
Alternative Resolutions	4	47
Informal Resolution (Renamed)/No Contest Resolutions	67	57
Warning	1	9
Total Cases Resolved	352	260



Individual Charges	Number of Cases- 2019-20	2020-21
Inappropriate Use of Another's Identification	10	Included in Other Charges
Damage/Destruction of Property	13	30
Intoxicated Behavior	16	N/A
Possession/Use Illegal Drugs	16	14
Theft	17	17
Physical Violence	28	12
Operating a Wheeled Conveyance While Under the Influence	30	24
Failure to Comply	33	104
(Imminently) Endanger Health and Safety	34	17
Possession/Use False ID	36	18
Possession, Purchase, Consumption, or Influence of Alcohol Under 21	124	52
Hosting Event where AOD Violation Occurs	Included in Other Charges	23
Other Charges	194	132



**Number of Unique Student Organization Cases- 19 total
Charges listed below**

<u>Student Organization Allegations</u>	Number of Alleged Violations	
<u>Violation Type</u>	2019-2020	2020-2021
Failure to Comply	1	11
Possession/Consumption of Alcohol Under 21	1	6
Rapid Alcohol Consumption	4	5
Hazing	6	2
(Imminently) Endangering Health, Safety, Well-Being of Others	1	1
Providing False Information During Investigation/Hearing Process	1	1
Unreasonable Disruption of Others	1	1
Illegal Drugs	0	1
Physical Violence	2	0
Hosting Event with Alcohol	2	0
Obstructing Orderly Conduct of the University/Community	2	0
Violation of Other Regulation/Policy	2	0
Possession/Use False Identification	2	0
Sexual Harassment	1	0
Open Party-no reasonable steps to ensure legal compliance	1	0
Failure to Reduce Risk of Underage Alcohol Consumption	1	0
Non-Sexual Harassment or Bullying	1	0
Unauthorized Intrusion of Property or Communications	1	0
Violation of Federal/State Law or Ordinance	1	0
Sex Discrimination and Sexual Misconduct	0	0
Non-Sexual Retaliation	0	0

- 87 Ethics Workshops Completed, with 81 assigned by SCCS and 6 assigned by University Housing. Sessions were offered in sessions were offered in a synchronous and asynchronous fashion due to COVID. This demonstrates opportunities for positive instances of student learning. This was an increase from 67 in 2019-2020 to 87 in 2020-2021 for students successfully completed hybrid Ethics Workshop.
- Issued Interim Health and Safety Actions to 7 individuals and 2 organizations.
- 135 requests for advisors for Academic Honor Policy cases received by SCCS.
- 219 reports of discrimination. All reporting parties received acknowledgement and resources. 109 Educational Conversations scheduled with identifiable FSU students.
- 877 Dean's Certifications Completed
- 17 Petitions for Clearance of Disciplinary Record

Staff Development

Allen Clay, Jr.- Graduate Assistant

- NASPA Pre-Conference: Selected as Small Group Facilitator
- Selected NASPA Pre-Conference Presentation: Culturally Relevant Leadership Learning Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) Human Subjects Research (HSR) Certification
- Received Master of Education degree- Higher Education, May 2021

Jordan Stone

- NASPA Title IX Informal Resolution Certification
- Completed SUNY Student Conduct Institute Basic Compliance Training

KC White, Associate Dean of Students and Director

- NASPA Senior Fellow- Developed and managed national Fraternity and Sorority Life (FSL) Foundations of Excellence project with NASPA colleagues and over 100 volunteers
- Completed SUNY Student Conduct Institute Basic Compliance Training

Quotes

The quotes below are from students who completed the SCCS Ethics Workshop assessment survey. These quotes demonstrate the success and strength of the adjusted hybrid Ethics Workshop program and SCCS as whole.

“I have learned more about my leadership skills, my need to speak up and use my voice, and the ways in which I should spread ethical and moral values.”

“I think this workshop was really good for me and helped with me self-reflection. It reminded me that I do have great values and I want to follow them.”

“I have learned more about my leadership skills, my need to speak up and use my voice, and the ways in which I should spread ethical and moral values.”

The following quotes are from students who served as Student Conduct Board members. These quotes reflect the intentionality taken by the graduate staff and SCCS to provide a holistic experience for SCB members.

“SCB not only has given me the opportunity to be a servant leader, but it has strengthened my leadership skills. Coming into SCB, I knew that there was an academic level to it, however, I did not realize how much I would grow as a student like the students that come to our hearings. It also added a new level of perspective for me when listening to other students and their cases.”

“This experience as before has been exceptional I've been able to grow in leadership, teamwork, and problem-solving skills. While all meeting amazing peers that want to give back and serve the FSU conduct board.”