

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CHAIR'S REPORT, FALL 2011

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

Dispositions without a formal hearing:

If they are willing to admit the validity of the charge, they may petition to have a disposition without a formal hearing and come before the Coordinating Group. The Coordinating Group is composed of the Committee's three officers, (the chair, a fact-finder and the secretary of the committee), along with a Yale undergraduate. In a question and answer dialogue with the student, followed by a comment from the student's adviser (usually his or her residential college dean), the Coordinating Group does its best to grasp the detailed circumstances of the violation as well as the current state of mind of the student with respect to the past event, which might in turn be an indicator of future behavior. The penalty, however, is based solely on the violation. We may dismiss the charges, but more often we hand down a penalty: reprimand, probation, suspension, or expulsion. The penalty may also include a fine, if warranted, and is often accompanied by an additional task, which we assign in order to complete the act of making amends or to make certain that the students understand not just that they have received a penalty, but also why.

We had 52 dispositions without formal hearings in the Fall, involving 59 students. Five students were suspended, 4 received probation, 48 received reprimands and charges against two of them were dismissed.

Plagiarism: There were seven cases that involved plagiarism and the penalties ranged from reprimand (1), to probation (1), to suspension (4). Another student was reprimanded for seeming to seek help from a tutor on a take-home examination.

Hazing: We had several cases of hazing by groups.

We saw the full range of acts of poor judgment, very often without malicious intent but occasionally with either a will to destructive behavior or blindness as to its implications: trespassing, property damage, misuse of e-mail (including falsification of the sender's name), illegal computer downloading, interpersonal harassment and aggression, both verbal and physical.

Many of the charges involved violations of alcohol regulations: buying or consuming alcohol while still a minor, falsification of ID to do so, serving alcohol to people under twenty-one. The saddest cases, of course, involved alcohol consumption to the point of serious self-endangerment.

Referred Cases:

There were also cases involving 56 students whom we did not see but were referred directly to the residential college. Most of these students were intoxicated, and most were transported to YNHH or University Health Services.

Full Hearings:

Although the vast majority of students choose the disposition, a student who wishes to contest the charge may also wish to come instead before the entire committee. 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. We had no such hearings in Fall of 2011.

Penalty Hearings:

Students may also choose to come before the full committee if, after having had a disposition without a formal hearing, they wish to dispute the penalty. In the single penalty hearing of last semester, the two term suspension was overturned and the student was subsequently suspended for a single term.

Conclusion:

In his 2006-2007 report, Paul Bloom wrote that "most cases that the committee sees are caused by foolishness, inattention, inebriation, or honest mistakes." I affirm that opinion. Most of the students we see are individuals of high integrity atoning for a poor choice. It is our hope that the students who come before us leave the room with the sense that their penalty is just and that they have learned more about themselves from the experience.

A few brief suggestions for action on our part that might decrease the instances of certain types of cases would be:

-More intensive and detailed reminders about the misuse of alcohol and its procurement would be of great service to Yale.

-Dean Miller has rightfully recognized the seriousness of hazing. Even more education about hazing and specifically why it is reprehensible might be helpful.

With respect to plagiarism as well, repeated emphasis on its precise definition and how to avoid it (perhaps through e-mails sent out every semester) might, I think, spare a few well-intentioned but poorly informed students from appearing before our committee.

Thanks:

My thanks go to Margaret Clark. Having served several years on the committee before being appointed as chair, I benefited from observing the kindness, calm, respect and evenhandedness with which she officiated. (For an exquisitely detailed description of the committee's function, see her report from 2010-2011).

My special thanks to the hardworking members of the entire committee. The full hearings are long and difficult, I know.

I have the honor to work side-by-side in the Coordinating Group with Professor Eric Sargis, our fact-finder, and Pamela George, the Secretary of the Committee. Eric Sargis's energy, precision, sense of fairness, intelligence, and time-demanding dedication to the job are endless. There are no sufficient words to praise Pamela George's equal devotion to the integrity of Yale University and the well-being of its students. I am thoroughly in her debt for her painstaking attention to detail, her clarity, her great wisdom, and her untiring insistence on justice—her insistence that we get it just right. It is the wonderful insights and the specialized knowledge and understanding of the undergraduates serving alongside us, that so critically helps us to do so. Profound thanks as well to those working behind the scenes: to Lisa Miller whose meticulous work keeps the complex paperwork (and us) organized; to Susan Sawyer in the General Counsel's office, and to Dr. Lorraine Siggins and others we consult with regard to the mental health issues that face us. Each student brings an adviser along, usually the dean of his or her college. The Executive Committee lives with the problems of individual students once a week. The deans are there for them 24/7 with compassion, patience and wisdom that truly contribute to Yale's greatness. You all have my heartfelt thanks and admiration.

Carol F. Jacobs
Chair of the Yale College Executive Committee 2011-2012
Professor German Language and Literature
Birgit Baldwin Professor of Comparative Literature

Fall 2011 Penalty Hearing and Dispositions without a Formal Hearing

PH

In a penalty hearing, Senior, charged with Harassment, Drugs, Misconduct During a Formal Hearing or Disposition, Defiance of Authority & Imperiling the integrity of the university, had earlier decision of 2 terms suspension overturned and was suspended for 1 term.

DWFH

Two students charged with Defiance for arguing with a residential college dean and refusing to identify themselves to 2 residential college deans on Cross Campus had charges withdrawn.

Sophomore, charged with violating alcohol regulations for multiple transports to YNHH for alcohol intoxication, was reprimanded.

Sophomore, charged with Defiance and violations of alcohol regulations for jumping the barricades multiple times at Spring Fling on Old Campus, was reprimanded.

Freshman, charged with cheating for asking a residential college tutor to help her complete answers to an exam, was reprimanded.

Junior and Sophomore, charged with Trespassing & Hazing for activities in the pulpit of the Divinity School chapel, were reprimanded and required to submit a plan that will comply with the Undergraduate Regulations. The plan was shared with all members of their society.

Junior, charged with cheating for plagiarizing a final paper, was suspended for 1 term.

Sophomore, charged with academic dishonesty for plagiarizing a final paper, was put on probation for 2 terms.

Junior, charged with Trespassing in the rear of the Yale University Art Gallery, was given probation for the remainder of her time at Yale.

Freshman, charged with Falsification of Documents and Unauthorized Use of Services for sending a fake email from Chief Ronnell Higgins sent to all Yale students, was put on probation for 2 terms and required to apologize to Chief Higgins.

Sophomore, charged with Defiance for rudeness to a dining hall worker and refusing to meet with his residential college dean or master, was put on probation for 2 terms and required to send a letter of apology to dining hall worker and dining hall manager.

Senior, charged with imperiling the integrity of the university for sending an improper email to Pierson students, was reprimanded.

Junior, charged with Defiance and violating Fire Safety regulations for disorderly conduct when asked to move from the area of Toad's Place on York Street during a fire alarm, was reprimanded.

Freshman charged with Acts of Violence, Drugs, Alcohol and Defiance of Authority for smoking marijuana in his room, threatening his roommate while drunk and disregarding authority, was suspended for 2 terms. Student must apply for readmission.

Senior, charged with violating Use of Computer Services for illegally downloading and sharing music, was reprimanded.

Junior, charged with violating alcohol regulations for alcohol intoxication at 261 Park Street, was reprimanded.

Senior, charged with Harassment, Drugs, Misconduct During a Formal Hearing or Disposition, Defiance of Authority & Imperiling the integrity of the university, was suspended for 2 terms