

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CHAIR'S REPORT, SPRING 2015

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 Designee, with 3 (non-student) members 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 the 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.

There has been a procedural change since the Spring 2014 term. The Executive Committee no longer receives referrals/complaints for routine alcohol violations that involve no additional charges, which are now referred to the Alcohol and Other Drugs Harm Reduction Initiative, AODHRI. However, as secretary of the Executive Committee, Dean George meets weekly with AODHRI directors to discuss cases that might require referral for disposition.

In Spring 2015 there were 24 transports for intoxication compared with 25 in Spring 2014 and 43 in Fall 2014, so a notable decrease from the previous term back to the level of the year prior.

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).

In Spring 2015 there were 26 dispositions without formal hearings involving 68 students; compared with 33 in Fall 2014. Two cases involved multiple students; 27 in one instance and 13 in another.

In addition, there was 1 formal hearing and 1 penalty hearing, both involving only one student.

Penalties from dispositions and formal hearings were assigned to 69 students, up from 43 in Fall 2014, as follows:

5 suspensions, 7 probations, 39 reprimands, 1 degree withheld, and in 17 instances, charges were dismissed or withdrawn.

Penalty Hearings

In cases where 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.

There was 1 penalty hearing In Spring 2015 involving a Freshman, expelled for violating drug regulations and imperiling the integrity of the University for the purchase, use and concealment of LSD. The penalty was overturned to 4 terms of suspension and 1 term of probation.

Formal Hearings

Although most students admit the validity of the charge(s) made against them and opt for a disposition without a Formal Hearing, if the student contests 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 Spring 2015 there was 1 formal hearing involving a Freshman, charged with Defiance, Intimidation/Harassment/Coercion, and Threat of Physical Violence for threatening a residential college dean. The student was given a penalty of 1 term of suspension.

Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism

In Spring 2015, 45 students were charged with academic dishonesty, over double the number (18) charged in Fall 2014. This is due to the one case involving 27 students charged with use of a problem set answer key from a previous year. Penalties given for academic dishonesty in Spring 2015 included 1 suspension, 5 probations and 29 reprimands. Charges were withdrawn for 6 of the charged students and the degree was withheld in 1 instance. Three cases were carried over to the Fall 2015 term.

In previous reports, I have tracked the trend in charges of academic dishonesty since Spring 2012 and noted an overall decrease of ~30%. If the one case involving 27 charged students is not included, the number of academic dishonesty charges in Spring 2015 is identical to the previous term, 18, which may hint at some approach to a steady state.

Other Forms of Academic Dishonesty

Five of the 45 charges of academic dishonesty involved plagiarism. Other forms of academic dishonesty included: submitting the same paper for more than one course, unauthorized use of a calculator on an exam, submitting identical lab reports, submitting the work of another student, unauthorized collaboration on an exam and falsifying forms.

Alcohol and Illicit Drugs

As stated above, the Executive Committee no longer receives referrals/ complaints for routine alcohol violations that involve no additional charges. These cases are now referred to AODHRI as in (“Audrey.”)

As with Fall 2014 there was only 1 case involving illicit drugs in Spring 2015. One student was charged with use of marijuana. Thus, the notable decrease in drug-related charges from 33 in Spring 2014 is holding steady thus far. The single drug-related charge in Fall 2014 also involved marijuana.

Other Violations

Other cases in Spring 2015 involved charges of: defiance for not cooperating with police, falsification of documents/false I.D., acts of violence, property damage and interference with university functions.

Referred Cases:

In Spring 2015, 26 students were referred to their residential colleges and 25 of the 26 cases involved students who were intoxicated; 24 were transported to YNH or University Health Services.

Thanks

I sincerely thank all of the members of the Executive Committee for their commitment to service and very thoughtful consideration of all cases brought before the Committee. Very special thanks to the Secretary of the Committee, Dean Pamela George, the Fact-Finder of the committee, Professor Thomas Near and to the student members James Volz SY '15, Hans Kassier JE '16 and Susannah Krapf SY '17 for their excellent input and service each week as part of the Coordinating Group as well as at full hearings and penalty hearings.

I thank Lisa Miller, Lisa Pitoniak and other staff in the Yale 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. I am also 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.

Last but not least, I am deeply thankful to each of the residential college Deans, Masters and other advisors who have appeared before the Committee. The value of their most critical role in advising, preparing, counseling and supporting the students who appear before the Executive Committee is immeasurable.

Ruth Blake

Chair of the Yale College Executive Committee Fall 2013, Spring 2014, Fall 2014, Spring 2015, Fall 2015

Professor of Geology & Geophysics

Professor of Forestry & Environmental Studies

Spring 2015

Formal Hearings

1 formal hearing, involving 1 student

Penalty Hearings

1 penalty hearing involving 1 student

Dispositions without Formal Hearings

26 dispositions without formal hearings, involving 68 students

Penalties from dispositions and formal hearings

The following penalties were assigned to 69 students:

expulsions - 0

suspensions - 5

probations - 7

reprimands - 39

charge withdrawn - 17

withhold degree - 1

Academic Dishonesty Charges, including pending cases

45 students were charged with Academic Dishonesty which resulted in: