

MIT Committee on Discipline

*Annual Report to Chair of the Faculty and President of the Institute
Reporting Period: July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016*

Reported Cases

Acting in accordance with its purpose of adjudicating cases of alleged student misconduct and student organization misconduct, the Committee on Discipline (COD), chaired by Prof. Suzanne Flynn, had 317 cases brought to its attention in academic year 2015-16. 255 of those cases (80%) were complaints alleging misconduct by individual students and 62 of those cases (20%) were complaints alleging misconduct by student organizations. These cases were resolved in a variety of ways. The following is a summary of types of violations for 2015-16, compared to the previous year's totals.

Table 1: Complaints of Individual Student Misconduct

Academic Year Total - Incident Type	2014-2015	2015-2016
Academic Misconduct	33	52
Cheating	15	15
Plagiarism	6	8
Unauthorized collaboration	10	22
Other academic misconduct	2	7
Personal Misconduct Total	193	192
Alcohol	86	100
Other drugs	11	12
Assault	1	2
Harassment (other than sexual) and stalking	9	10
Property damage	1	2
Disorderly conduct	6	8
Theft	6	9
Unauthorized access, improper use of MIT property	25	25
Fire Safety, Arson	13	4
Weapons, Dangerous Objects	1	2
Residence Hall Security or Guest Violations	9	4
Hazing	9	0
Institute Expectations of Student Behavior/Integrity	*	6
Other	13	8
Sexual Misconduct	9	11
Sexual harassment	0	3
Stalking (including nonsexual stalking)	*	2
Nonconsensual sexual touching or penetration	*	6
TOTAL	235	255

Note: Each case is counted one time, even when more than one allegation exists in a case.

*Category not calculated in prior year. Institute expectation of student behavior complaints would previously have been listed in "other" and complaints under sexual misconduct would previously have been counted in the general total for sexual misconduct.

Table 2: Complaints of Student Organization Misconduct

Academic Year Total - Incident Type	2014-2015	2015-2016
Alcohol	13	31
Other Drugs	1	1
Exceeding Occupancy	2	0
Fire Safety	2	0
Hazing	6	5
Harassment (other than sexual)	3	0
Open Air Spaces Policy/Unauthorized Roof Access	3	3
Disorderly Conduct (other than noise complaints)	1	3
Noise Complaints	*	13
Recruitment violations	*	4
Other	2	2
Total	33	62

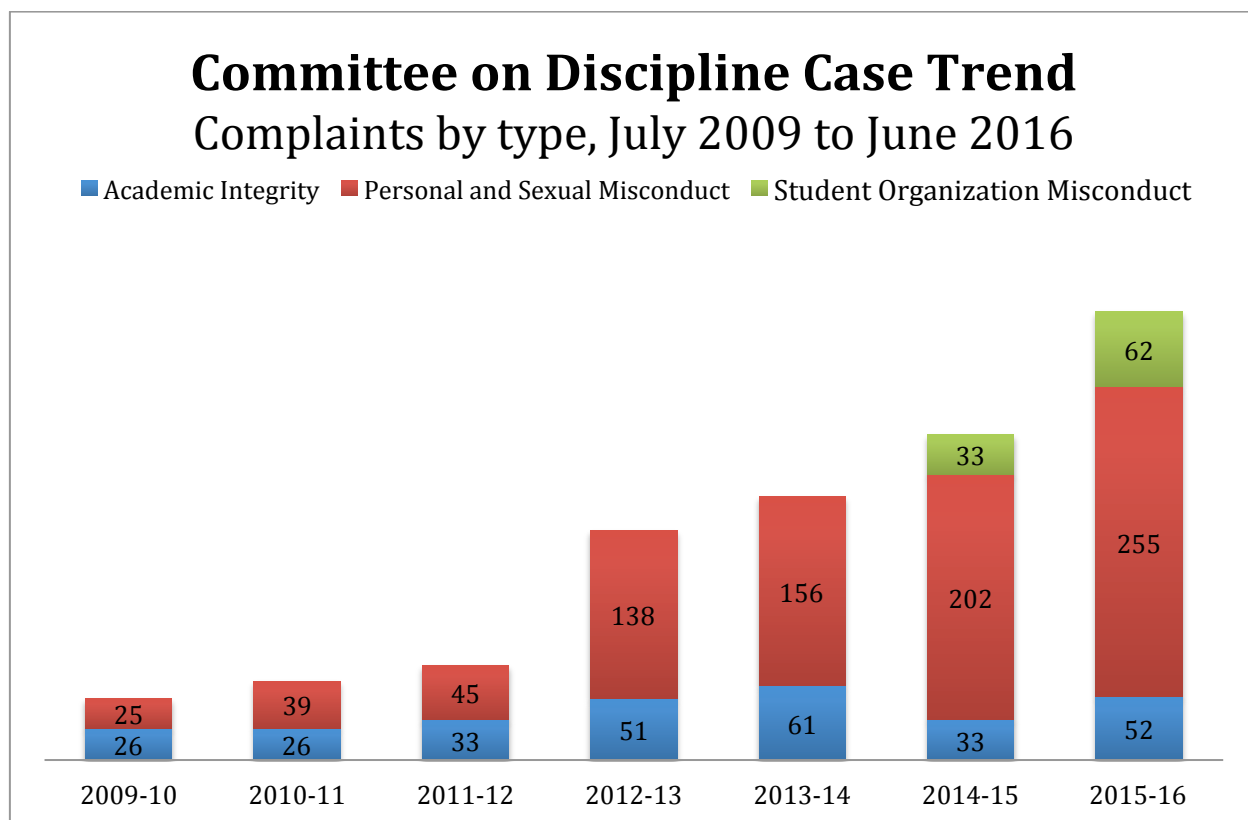
Note: Each case is counted one time, even when more than one allegation exists in a case.

*Category not calculated in prior year. Noise complaints were recorded as disorderly conduct last year. Recruitment violations would have been counted in "other."

Case Trend

The total number of reported cases was 18% higher in 2015-16 than it was in 2014-15. Complaints against individual students increased 8.5% whereas complaints against student organizations increased by 88%.

The number of cases presented to COD has risen 521% over the last seven years.



Case Resolutions

The COD uses a variety of methods, formal and informal, to resolve cases presented to it. These resolution methods are described in the Rules and Regulations of the Committee on Discipline. The resolution methods used by the COD in 2015-16 are presented below and compared to the previous academic year.

2015-16 was the third year that the COD had the sanctioning panel resolution method available. This method continues to be regarded as successful and is chosen by the strong majority of students who have the choice of going to a sanctioning panel or a hearing. Three of the four COD Hearings students opted for this year were in sexual misconduct cases that were presented before the revised COD procedure for handling sexual misconduct cases was in effect.

2015-16 was the second year that COD was responsible for student organization misconduct. COD continued its strong partnership with student organization coordinating groups (e.g., Interfraternity Council, Panhellenic Council, Association of Student Activities, etc.) to resolve most cases of alleged student organization misconduct by assigning them to student-run judicial boards.

2015-16 was the first year that the COD implemented its new procedure for handling sexual misconduct cases. Three cases were presented after the new rules were implemented. All three of those cases were handled by the new sexual misconduct hearing method.

Table 3: Case Resolution Methods Used by the Committee on Discipline

Academic Year Total – Resolution Type	2014-2015	2015-2016
COD Administrative Resolution	149	131
COD Hearing	1	4
COD Sanctioning Panel	7	6
COD Sexual Misconduct Hearing	*	3
COD Sexual Misconduct Sanctioning Panel	*	0
Faculty Letters to File	18	35
Withdrawal of Case/Dismissal	4	20
Restorative Justice/Alternative Dispute Resolution	1	0
Case closed due to Help Seeking Protocol	27	62
Non-adjudicative resolution	38	15
Delegated to student-run judicial mechanism	13	35
Cases pending (as of 6/30)	10	6
TOTAL	268	317

*This was a new option in 2015-16, so no cases were handled with this method in prior years.

Case Outcomes

The philosophy of the COD is that student discipline is one expression of the comprehensive education that a student receives when attending MIT and that by participating in structured educational sanctions (e.g., substance abuse education, mentoring programs, essays that demand critical thinking and personal reflection, etc.), the student learns to correct his or her mistakes and develops into a more mature person. A very small number of cases (1.9% in 2015-16) require a student to be separated from the Institute, either temporarily or permanently, due to the Institute's need to ensure a safe environment. 98% of cases are resolved without suspension or expulsion. This table presents the outcomes assigned by COD in the 2015-16 academic year, compared with the 2014-15 year.

Table 4: COD Sanctions by Academic Year

Academic Year Total – Sanction Type	2014-2015	2015-2016
Expulsion	0	3
Suspension or Degree Deferral	5	3
Removal from Institute Housing (House or FSILG)	1	2
Probation	38	35
COD letter to file	75	73
Substance Abuse Education or Treatment	74	109
Restitution	6	3
Other Educational Sanctions or Referrals	142	153
No Contact Order, Directive to stay away from certain buildings	2	10
Faculty letter to file	18	35
Academic Integrity Seminar	15	15
Targeted Community Service Project	10	2
Required abstinence from alcohol and drugs	6	6

Note: It is common for the COD to assign more than one sanction in a case, so there are more sanctions than cases. Sanctions exclude all cases in which the respondent was found not responsible, the case was dismissed, the case was delegated to a student-run panel for action, or the case is still pending.

Additional Activity

In addition to responding to complaints of misconduct, the COD pursued a number of activities this year.

COD Sexual Misconduct Task Force. The work of the Task Force on Institute Handling of Sexual Misconduct Complaints, Chaired by Prof. Munther Dahleh at the request of Chancellor Barnhart, was completed during the 2014-15 year. Their recommendations are online at <http://cod.mit.edu/taskforce>. During 2015-16, the COD implemented those recommendations by creating a subcommittee responsible for handling all sexual misconduct cases and extensively updating the COD Rules and Regulations to create a new procedure for resolving complaints of sexual harassment, intimate partner violence, stalking, and sexual misconduct. After consultation with the Faculty Policy Committee, the revised COD Rules and Regulations were implemented in November 2015.

Academic Integrity. During the 2015-16 academic year, the COD formed a subcommittee, chaired by Prof. Martha Gray, to examine current trends, preventative activities, and other issues related to academic integrity. Several areas for further study and administrative action were identified. The work of this subcommittee will continue in the coming year and is may result in recommendations to the faculty.

Additional Updates to the COD Rules and Regulations. During the 2015-16 academic year, the COD updated its Rules and Regulations one time, in November 2015. Most of the changes were designed to implement the sexual misconduct task force recommendations, as noted previously. Additional revisions included providing more guidance on the circumstances under which COD will consider complaints alleging misconduct by former students and former student organizations, updating the procedure for taking interim action when doing so is necessary, and clarifying the options for students responding to faculty letters to file. Prior to making these changes, the COD consulted with faculty members who have experience on COD, faculty members serving in senior leadership positions, and the Faculty Policy Committee.

Increased COD Training. The Office of Student Citizenship continued to provide briefings, trainings, and ongoing development activities to the members of the COD. Over 20 hours of such activity was provided to all members of the COD. Advanced topics included unconscious bias in decision making. In addition to standard training provided to all COD members, the members of the sexual misconduct subcommittee received an additional 18 hours of specialized training in issues related to sexual misconduct, more than the COD has ever received before. The enhanced training included LGBT issues related to the COD's work, questioning techniques, and the neurobiology of alcohol-induced blackouts and the practical implications of this research for the COD. This increased training was well received by members of the COD.

Respectfully submitted,

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