

Memorandum

September 8, 1997

TO: Dagmar Cronn, Vice-President for
Academic Affairs
Oakland University

FROM: ^{mc} N. Cole, ^{Blw} R. Khattree, Co-Chairs
Academic Conduct Committee

SUBJECT: Annual Report, 1996-1997

The Senate's charge to the Academic Conduct Committee is "to review, propose, promulgate and implement policies concerning academic dishonesty and to judge cases of academic misconduct." The committee hears reported cases of possible academic misconduct and in cases of "guilty" verdicts, deliberates on the sanctions to be imposed. During the period from Summer 1996 through Summer 1997, there were a total of 10 reported cases involving 15 students. In one of these cases, two of the three students failed to attend the hearing and consequently a permanent hold was put on their future registrations. One case was dismissed by the committee for the reason that "it is not in the best interest of the university to process cases which are weak." The relatively small number of cases and students in 1996-1997 continues a trend since 1992-1993 of a declining number of cases being brought before the committee.

| <u>Year</u> | <u>Cases</u> | <u>Students</u> |
|-------------|--------------|-----------------|
| 1996-97 | 10 | 15 |
| 1995-96 | 16 | 25 |
| 1994-95 | 11 | 22 |
| 1993-94 | 18 | 34 |
| 1992-93 | 26 | 42 |
| 1991-92 | 20 | 40 |

Committee Caseload: The distributions of the number of cases and students brought to the ACC by academic unit and term are as follows:

| <u>Academic Unit</u> | <u>Students</u> | <u>Cases</u> |
|----------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Dean of Students | 1 | 1 |
| Engineering | 2 | 2 |
| Accounting | 2 | 1 |
| MTD | 3 | 1 |
| English | 1 | 1 |
| Art & Art History | 2 | 1 |
| Nursing | 2 | 1 |
| Rhetoric | 1 | 1 |
| Mathe. Sci. | 1 | 1 |

| <u>Term</u> | <u>Cases</u> |
|-------------|--------------|
| Fall 1996 | 7 |
| Winter 1997 | 2 |
| Spring 1997 | 1 |

Of the 10 cases considered last year (including the one for which only one of the three accused appeared for the hearing), 8 or 80% resulted in a guilty verdict. Of the 15 students charged, 12 appeared at hearings and 11 of these or 92% were found guilty. Two of these 11 students appealed to the Senate Hearing Committee, and the decision of the ACC was upheld in both cases.

Sanctions: The ACC has a range of sanctions it may impose on guilty parties. The sanctions include, in order of severity: academic reprimand, probation, suspension, and expulsion. Of the 11 students found guilty, the following penalties were assigned:

| | |
|------------|---|
| Reprimand | 2 |
| Probation | 1 |
| Suspension | 8 |
| Expulsion | 0 |

Periods of suspension ranged from 1 to 4 terms. Persons suspended are also placed on probation for the remainder of their Oakland academic career.

Other ACC Business: In a discussion among ACC committee members this year, it was noted that the time spent on defining and providing sample cases of academic misconduct in Oakland's orientation process has been virtually eliminated, due to time constraints of the orientation process. This is of concern to the faculty who have served on the committee, since student education about academic conduct is an important responsibility of the university. Although pages 48-50 in the current catalogue provide information, it is uncertain that many students ever read their catalogue copy, and it is felt that illustrating the academic conduct policies for students by describing specific circumstances of plagiarism or cheating on exams and the consequences for students found guilty has a much stronger impact on students than simply referring them to pages in the catalogue. We would urge, therefore, that time be designated during orientation for coverage of this issue.

One of us felt that the current structure and working of the Academic Conduct Committee may use some improvements. These will be discussed in a separate individual memo.

Acknowledgements: Nancy Schmitz continues to be an important resource for faculty bringing cases, students involved in cases, and committee members. David Herman continues to fight the battle of non-functioning tape-recorders and to act, in the previous chair's words, as "the institutional memory of the ACC." The ACC appreciates their hard work and that of their support staff.

The hearings of the ACC are conducted with a strong sense of seriousness and awareness that the outcome can affect the rest of a student's academic career. Committee members bear in mind the university's commitment to intellectual truth, and do all they can to hear all sides of a case and to give students and faculty every opportunity to state their case and ask questions. The members of the ACC during the 1996-97 year, all of whom carried out their duties with dedication and interest, were Matt Cilibraise (student), David Herman, Jon Froemke, Matt Karrantja (student), Bill Keane, Michael Latcha, Ted Landau, Kim LeRoy (student), Billy Jo Minor, Heather Nicholson (student), Mohinder Parkash, Daniel Ring, Gopalan Srinivason, Tung Weng, and Mary Lou Wesley. The co-chairs express our appreciation to all for their hard work, patience, and fair-mindedness.

cc: Mary Beth Snyder, Vice-President for Student Affairs
David Herman, Assistant Vice President/Dean of Students