

Committee on Academic Misconduct (COAM) Annual Report

Summer Semester 2023 – Spring Semester 2024

Prepared by

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The University's *Code of Student Conduct* defines academic misconduct as "any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the university or subvert the educational process" (Faculty [Rule 3335-23-04\[A\]](#)). The Committee on Academic Misconduct (COAM) is charged with maintaining the University's academic integrity by investigating and adjudicating "all reported cases of student academic misconduct, with the exception of cases in a professional college having a published honor code." In instances where a student has violated the University's *Code of Student Conduct*, COAM decides upon "suitable disciplinary action" (University Rule [3335-5-48.7\[B\]](#)). The university revised the policies referenced in the Code of Student Conduct effective January 1, 2024. The most notable changes regarding academic misconduct involve changes to the definitions of prohibited examples of academic misconduct (Rule [3335-23-04\[A\]](#)) and quorum (Rule [3335-23-15\[E\]](#)). Data for this year's annual report consist of cases resolved from May 8, 2023 to May 5, 2024 and the report follows the templates for reporting developed by previous COAM chairs and coordinators.

COAM utilizes Zoom for panel hearings since the start of Summer 2020 term. Links to previous annual reports can be found on the Senate website http://senate.osu.edu/?page_id=183 or at <http://oaa.osu.edu/coamreports.html>. It should be noted that the 2012-13 reporting year was shorter in comparison with previous years because of calendar changes associated with OSU's conversion to semesters.

COAM is composed of thirty (30) faculty members, fifteen (15) graduate students (appointed by CGS), and fifteen (15) undergraduate students (appointed by USG). The work of COAM is facilitated by the Coordinator who (1) receives and processes allegations of academic misconduct, (2) notifies students of allegations of academic misconduct, (3) consults with students and faculty regarding allegations of academic misconduct, (4) schedules hearings to

resolve allegations of academic misconduct and (5) notifies students and faculty of the outcomes of these hearings.

Every student who is charged with academic misconduct has the right to a hearing before a hearing body of COAM. Panel hearings consist of at least four members of COAM and requires at least two faculty representatives and one student representative for cases submitted prior to spring semester 2024. Effective January 2024, quorum for panel hearings was decreased to three voting members of the committee which shall include no fewer than two faculty members and one student member. The hearing body serves as an impartial body that hears evidence and determines (1) if a student has violated the University’s *Code of Student Conduct* and (2) an appropriate sanction in cases where a student is found “in violation.” If a student takes responsibility for allegations of academic misconduct and waives their right to a hearing, they may have the allegations resolved as an administrative decision. For an administrative decision, a member of COAM serves as a hearing officer and determines appropriate sanctions.

I. SUMMARY OF CASES RESOLVED

During the 2023-2024 academic year, COAM resolved 797 cases of alleged academic misconduct. Of the cases resolved, 71.5% were resolved as administrative decisions and 28.5% were resolved as panel hearings (**Table 1**).

Table 1
Committee on Academic Misconduct
Summary of Total Cases Resolved and Method of Resolution
2023-2024 Academic Year

Method of Resolution	Number of Cases	% of Total Cases
Administrative Decisions	570	71.5%
Panel Hearings	227	28.5%
TOTALS	797	100%

Of the cases resolved by COAM this past reporting year, 709¹ (89.0%) resulted in findings of “in violation” (**Table 2**). Of the 570 cases closed by administrative decisions, 37 were invalidated for reasons including weight of evidence did not support the allegation or duplicate submissions.

¹ Total findings adjusted after appeals, as noted in Section VI of this report.

Table 2
Committee on Academic Misconduct
Distribution of Cases by Finding
2023-2024 Academic Year

	Students Found “Not In Violation”	Students Found “In Violation”	Total Cases
TOTALS	88	709	797

II. SUMMARY OF ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT CHARGES

When allegations of academic misconduct arise, a student often does not know or understand what they have allegedly done wrong. Since COAM desires that the hearing process be an educational process, the Coordinator and/or office staff meets with a student charged with violating the *Code of Student Conduct* upon request. The nature of the behavior that led to the allegations is explained. **Table 3** summarizes information on academic misconduct charges for the 2023-2024 academic year. The left column is a list of the types of charges used most commonly by COAM. The “Number of Charges” column lists the total number of charges assigned by COAM for each particular violation, and the “% of Total Charges” column lists the number of charges as a percentage of the total charges (2053). The last two columns list the number of findings of “in violation” associated with each charge and the respective percentage for each. For example, of 344 charges of plagiarism, 307 (89.2%) were found “in violation.”

Students are often charged with and found “in violation” of more than one charge. Thus, the total number of charges (2053) exceeds the total number of cases resolved by COAM (797), and the total for “Number In Violation” (1869) exceeds the actual number of *students* found “in violation” (709).

Due to changes in both the numbering and wording of the charges as defined in the prohibited examples of academic misconduct (Rule [3335-23-04\[A\]](#)) starting with spring 2024 cases, the charges shown in this report represent the new code changes. The summary merges the previous charges with the new charges based upon the description of the rule. It should be noted that copying is now included in the definition of plagiarism. An increase is shown in “compromising the academic misconduct of the university” (A) and “falsification, fabrication, or dishonesty” (A7) charges as compared to previous years and can be partially explained by generative artificial intelligence allegations.

“Violation of course rules and/or assignment guidelines” generally accompanies the other more specific charges, and so a student who is found in violation on a specific charge may also be found—by entailment—in violation of course policy. In the majority of COAM cases, charges against students stem from the failure to follow course or assignment guidelines, and this charge may be used by itself alone if the allegations stem directly from a failure to follow course guidelines.

Table 3
Committee on Academic Misconduct
Summary of Academic Misconduct Charges by Type and Finding
2023-2024 Academic Year

Charge	Number of Charges	% of Total Charges	Number "In Violation"	% "In Violation"
3335-23-04 (A) Compromise the academic integrity of the university or subvert the educational process	247	12.0%	225	91.1%
3335-23-04 (A1) Violation of course rules and/or assignment guidelines as contained in the course syllabus or other information provided to the student	749	36.5%	698	93.2%
3335-23-04 (A2) Knowingly requesting, providing, and/or receiving unauthorized information, materials, and/or assistance during academic activities	245	11.9%	205	83.7%
3335-23-04 (A3) Possession and/or use of unauthorized information, materials, and/or assistance during academic activities	210	10.2%	186	88.6%
3335-23-04 (A4) Submitting plagiarized work for an academic requirement. Plagiarism is the representation, including but not limited to copying, of another's work or ideas as one's own; it includes unacknowledged word-for-word use and/or paraphrasing	344	16.8%	307	89.2%
3335-23-04 (A5) Unauthorized use of generative artificial intelligence systems or similar technologies to complete academic activities	4	0.2%	4	100.0%
3335-23-04 (A6) Submitting substantially the same work to satisfy requirements for one course or academic requirement that has been submitted in satisfaction of requirements for another course or academic requirement, without permission	8	0.4%	7	87.5%
3335-23-04 (A7) Falsification, fabrication, or dishonesty in creating or reporting laboratory results, research results, and/or academic activities	224	10.9%	217	96.9%

Table 3 (continued) Summary of Academic Misconduct Charges by Type and Finding

3335-23-04 (A8) Serving as, or enlisting the assistance of a substitute for a student in academic activities	7	0.3%	7	100.0%
3335-23-04 (A9) Alteration of grades or marks by the student in an effort to change the earned grade or credit	2	0.1%	2	100.0%
3335-23-04 (A10) Alteration of academically-related university forms or records, or unauthorized use of those forms or records	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
3335-23-04 (A11) Engaging in activities that unfairly place other students at a disadvantage, including but not limited to taking, hiding, or altering resource material, or manipulating a grading system	2	0.1%	2	100.0%
3335-23-04 (A12) Violation of program regulations and/or policies as established by departmental committees and made available to students	4	0.2%	4	100.0%
3335-23-04 (A13) Providing falsified materials, documents, or records to a university official to meet academic qualifications, criteria, or requirements, including but not limited to submitting falsified doctor's notes and/or falsified transcripts	7	0.3%	5	71.4%
TOTALS	2053	100%	1869	--

III. SUMMARY OF CASES BASED ON STUDENT’S ENROLLMENT UNIT AND THE INITIATING UNIT

Twenty enrollment units on campus were represented in the cases resolved by COAM during the 2023-2024 reporting year, with combined cases from the College of the Arts and Sciences (UASC), College of Engineering (UENG), and the Fisher College of Business (UBUS) accounting for 67.9% of the total cases (**Table 4**). It should be noted that although the Graduate School is listed as the enrollment units for 64 cases, those students were in graduate programs offered by other academic departments and/or colleges.

The cases heard by COAM during the past year were *initiated* from or involved courses from 93 units across the University, with the combined cases from courses in Computer Science and Engineering (115 cases), Psychology (57) Mathematics (52), Electrical and Computer Engineering (46) and English (35) accounting for 38.2% of the total cases (**Table 5**). Some units of the university now offer instruction as part of certification programs that may not involve courses listed in the official course catalog maintained by the Registrar. Since the definition of a student in the *Code of Student Conduct* includes any person who entered into agreement with the university to take instruction, allegations of academic misconduct in these certification programs are reported to COAM. Those cases are included in the “Other” category at the bottom of **Tables 6 and 7**.

Table 4
Committee on Academic Misconduct
Distribution of Cases Based on Student's Enrollment Unit
2023-2024 Academic Year

Enrollment Unit	Total for Enrollment Unit	% of Total
UASC (College of the Arts and Sciences)	259	32.50%
UENG (College of Engineering)	162	20.33%
UBUS (Fisher College of Business)	120	15.06%
GRD (Graduate School)	64	8.03%
UEHE (College of Education and Human Ecology)	52	6.52%
UEXP (Exploration Program)	42	5.27%
UHRS (School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences) + UHRSP (Pre-program)	25	3.14%
UAGR (College of Food, Agriculture and Environmental Sciences)	11	1.38%
USWK (College of Social Work)	10	1.25%
UACD (Academy)	8	1.00%
UAHR (School of Architecture)	8	1.00%
UATI (Agricultural Technical Institute)	8	1.00%
UPHR (College of Pharmacy)	7	0.88%
UNUR (College of Nursing) + UNURP (Nursing Pre-program)	6	0.75%
UPBH (College of Public Health) + UPBHP (Public Health Pre-program)	4	0.50%
VSTR (Visitor)	3	0.38%
UDHY (Dental Hygiene) + UDHYP (Dental Hygiene Pre-program)	2	0.25%
UENR (School of Environment and Natural Resources)	2	0.25%
UJGS (John Glenn College of Public Affairs)	2	0.25%
UNDG (Undergraduate Non-Degree)	2	0.25%
TOTALS	797	100%

Table 5
Committee on Academic Misconduct
Distribution of Cases Based on Initiating Unit
2023-2024 Academic Year

Course Offering Unit & Description		Number of Cases	% of Total
CSE	Computer Science & Engineering	115	14.43%
PSYCH	Psychology	57	7.15%
MATH	Mathematics	52	6.52%
ECE	Electrical and Computer Eng	46	5.77%
ENGLISH	English	35	4.39%
BUSML	Business Admin: Marketing & Log	33	4.14%
COMM	Communication	30	3.76%
ENGR	Engineering	28	3.51%
CHEM	Chemistry	22	2.76%
HISTORY	History	20	2.51%
SOCWORK	Social Work	19	2.38%
SPANISH	Spanish	19	2.38%
THEATRE	Theatre	19	2.38%
POLITSC	Political Science	17	2.13%
PHILOS	Philosophy	16	2.01%
BIOLOGY	Biology	12	1.51%
ARTEDUC	Art Education	11	1.38%
BIOCHEM	Biochemistry	11	1.38%
SOCIOL	Sociology	11	1.38%
EDUTL	Education: Teaching & Learning	9	1.13%
PUBHHBP	Pub Hlth: Hlth Bhvr&Hlth Prom	9	1.13%
ANTHROP	Anthropology	8	1.00%
CBE	Chemical and Biomolecular Eng	8	1.00%
FDSCTE	Food Science & Technology	8	1.00%
FRENCH	French	8	1.00%
MICRBIO	Microbiology	8	1.00%
BUSFIN	Business Admin: Finance	7	0.88%
PUBHBIO	Pub Hlth: Biostatistics	7	0.88%
STAT	Statistics	7	0.88%
ACEL	Agricultural Comm, Ed & Ldrshp	6	0.75%
ISE	Industrial and Sys Engineering	6	0.75%

Table 5 (continued) Distribution of Cases Based on Initiating Unit

MECHENG	Mechanical Engineering	6	0.75%
PHR	Pharmacy	6	0.75%
ACCTMIS	Accounting and Management Info	5	0.63%
CIVILEN	Civil Engineering	5	0.63%
MUSIC	Music	5	0.63%
ARCH	Architecture	4	0.50%
BUSOBA	Bus Admin: Operat & Bus Analyt	4	0.50%
ECON	Economics	4	0.50%
MEDREN	Medieval & Renaissance Studies	4	0.50%
ANIMSCI	Animal Sciences	3	0.38%
ARTSSCI	Arts and Sciences	3	0.38%
EEOB	Evol, Ecology & Organismal Bio	3	0.38%
EXP	Exploration	3	0.38%
HDFS	Human Dev and Family Science	3	0.38%
HUMNNTR	Human Nutrition	3	0.38%
KNHES	Kinesiology: Health & Exercs Sci	3	0.38%
MOLGEN	Molecular Genetics	3	0.38%
NRSADV	Nursing Advancement	3	0.38%
PUBAFRS	Public Affairs, John Glenn Col	3	0.38%
ANATOMY	Anatomy	2	0.25%
ANMLTEC	Animal Sciences Technology	2	0.25%
ATHTRNG	Athletic Training	2	0.25%
BIOMEDE	Biomedical Engineering	2	0.25%
COMPSTD	Comparative Studies	2	0.25%
DESIGN	Design	2	0.25%
ENR	Environment & Natural Resource	2	0.25%
ESEPSY	Educ Sts: Education Psychology	2	0.25%
GENSTDS	General Studies	2	0.25%
JEWSHST	Jewish Studies	2	0.25%
LING	Linguistics	2	0.25%
MBA	Master of Business Admin	2	0.25%
MEDLBS	Medical Laboratory Science	2	0.25%
NURSING	Nursing	2	0.25%
SPHHRNG	Speech and Hearing Science	2	0.25%
AEDECON	Agricul Envrmntl & Devlop Econ	1	0.13%

Table 5 (continued) Distribution of Cases Based on Initiating Unit

AFAMAST	African American & African Std	1	0.13%
AIRSCI	Air Force Aerospace Studies	1	0.13%
ART	Art	1	0.13%
ASTRON	Astronomy	1	0.13%
AVIATN	Aviation	1	0.13%
BIOETHC	Bioethics	1	0.13%
BUSADM	Business Administration	1	0.13%
BUSMHR	Business Admin: Mgmt & HR	1	0.13%
CHINESE	Chinese	1	0.13%
COMLDR	Community Leadership	1	0.13%
CRPLAN	City and Regional Planning	1	0.13%
EALL	East Asian Languages and Lit	1	0.13%
GENMATH	General Studies: Mathematics	1	0.13%
GEOG	Geography	1	0.13%
GERMAN	German	1	0.13%
HISTART	History of Art	1	0.13%
HTHRHSC	Health and Rehabilitation Sci	1	0.13%
KNSISM	Kinesiology: Spt Indsty Spt Mgt	1	0.13%
LARCH	Landscape Architecture	1	0.13%
LAW	Law	1	0.13%
NEUROSC	Neuroscience Department	1	0.13%
PHYSICS	Physics	1	0.13%
PLNTPTH	Plant Pathology	1	0.13%
PUBHEPI	Pub Hlth: Epidemiology	1	0.13%
WELDENG	Welding Engineering	1	0.13%
WGSST	Women's, Gender & Sexuality Sts	1	0.13%
Other	Other	3	0.38%
TOTALS		797	100%

IV. SUMMARY OF CASES BASED ON STUDENT’S RANK AND COURSE LEVEL

Approximately 63% of the cases resolved by COAM during the 2023-2024 reporting year were the result of misconduct allegations in 1000- and 2000-level courses (**Table 6**). Fewer cases resulted from allegations in progressively higher-level courses. Some cases of academic misconduct occur outside of a formal class taken for academic credit. Those cases are included in the category “Other”.

Table 6
Committee on Academic Misconduct
Distribution of Cases Based on Course Level (Number)
2023-2024 Academic Year

Course Level (Semesters)	Number of Cases	% of Cases
1000	254	31.9%
2000	247	31.0%
3000	154	19.3%
4000	50	6.3%
5000	37	4.6%
6000	22	2.8%
7000	16	2.0%
8000	14	1.8%
Other	3	0.4%
TOTALS	797	100%

Table 7 summarizes the number of cases resolved at each level by student class rank. The distribution of cases for undergraduates is fairly evenly distributed across all ranks but does increase with increasing undergraduate rank. The greatest number of cases and the highest percentage of cases within a single rank was for rank 4 students. Undergraduates are entering the university with more credit hours, which means that some rank 2 students are in their first year at the university. The largest number of cases involved ranks 3 and 4 students. When cases by rank are expressed as a percentage of total students within each rank based on fifteenth-day student enrollment for Autumn 2023, the distribution of cases was as follows: rank 1 = 1.41% (10,122 students); rank 2 = 1.55% (10,719 students), rank 3 = 1.68% (11,384 students), rank 4 = 1.23% (18,701 students), and graduate students (excluding graduate professional students) = 0.58% (11,102 students). Note: a rank of “Other” may represent visitor or other individuals who took courses as non-degree students and/or were enrolled in a certification program.

Table 7
Committee on Academic Misconduct
Distribution of Cases Based on Student Rank and Course Level
2023-2024 Academic Year

Course Level	Rank						TOTALS	% by Course Level
	1	2	3	4	GRD	Other		
1000	102	74	49	27	0	2	254	31.9%
2000	32	61	84	70	0	0	247	31.0%
3000	7	26	43	78	0	0	154	19.3%
4000	0	4	12	33	0	1	50	6.3%
5000	0	1	3	22	11	0	37	4.6%
6000	0	0	0	0	22	0	22	2.8%
7000	0	0	0	0	16	0	16	2.0%
8000	0	0	0	0	14	0	14	1.8%
Other	2	0	0	0	1	0	3	0.4%
TOTALS	143	166	191	230	64	3	797	100%
% by Rank	17.9%	20.8%	24.0%	28.9%	8.0%	0.4%	100%	

V. SUMMARY OF DISCIPLINARY AND GRADE SANCTIONS

When COAM finds that a student has violated the University’s *Code of Student Conduct*, COAM imposes sanctions. A sanction typically includes a disciplinary component and a grade-related component. Educational sanctions are used in cases of plagiarism.

The disciplinary sanctions imposed by COAM and the number of cases involved are summarized in **Table 8**. Of the 797 cases resolved during the 2023-2024 Academic Year, 709 resulted in a finding of “in violation” and these were accompanied by a disciplinary sanction. As these data demonstrate, most students found “in violation” of the *Code of Student Conduct* received a sanction of “disciplinary probation.”

Table 8
Committee on Academic Misconduct
Summary of Disciplinary Sanctions
2023-2024 Academic Year

Disciplinary Sanction	Number of Cases “In Violation”	% of Cases
Formal reprimand	22	3.1%
Disciplinary probation (range = 1 term to “until graduation”)	668	94.2%
Suspension (range = 1 to 2 terms)	18	2.5%
Dismissal	1	0.1%
Other	0	0.0%
TOTALS	709	100%

The grade sanctions imposed by COAM and the numbers of cases involved are summarized in **Table 9**.

Of the 709 cases in which a student was found “in violation” in 2023-2024, no grade sanction was authorized in eight of the cases. As these data demonstrate, the modal grade sanction for students found “in violation” of the University’s *Code of Student Conduct* is an authorization for a “0” on all or part of the assignment and a further reduction of the student’s final grade. In most instances, COAM authorizes the instructor to award a grade sanction. In some instances, COAM imposes the sanction of a failing grade directly via the Registrar: “re-enroll with a failing grade” and “E” by action of University Committee. These failing grades may not be removed from the advising report or transcript by petition, substitution, or retroactive withdrawal from the course but are eligible for grade forgiveness. The hearing body have the option to create grade sanctions appropriate to individual cases of academic misconduct and are included in the category “Other”.

Table 9
Committee on Academic Misconduct
Summary of Grade Sanctions
2023-2024 Academic Year

Grade Sanction	Number of Cases	% of Cases
None	8	1.1%
Authorization for a "0" on all or part of the assignment	137	19.3%
Authorization for a reduction in the student's final course grade	49	6.9%
Authorization for “0” on all or part of the assignment and a further reduction of the final letter grade in the course	443	62.5%
Authorization for a final grade of "E" or “U” in the course	24	3.4%
Final Grade of E/U/NP by “action of University Committee”	31	4.4%
Re-enroll with a final failing grade for the course	8	1.1%
Other	9	1.3%
TOTALS	709	100%

A summary of the disciplinary sanctions received by graduate students who were found in violation of the *Code of Student Conduct* is given in **Table 10**.

Table 10
Committee on Academic Misconduct
Summary of Disciplinary Sanctions for Graduate Students
2023-2024 Academic Year

Disciplinary Sanction	Number of Cases “In Violation”	% of Cases
Formal reprimand	0	0.0%
Disciplinary probation (range = 1 term to “until graduation”)	47	92.2%
Suspension (range = 1 to 4 terms)	4	7.8%
Dismissal	0	0.0%
TOTALS	51	100%

A summary of the grade sanctions received by graduate students during the 2023-2024 academic year is provided in **Table 11**.

Table 11
Committee on Academic Misconduct
Summary of Grade Sanctions for Graduate Students
2023-2024 Academic Year

Grade Sanction	Number of Cases	% of Cases
None	1	2.0%
Authorization for a "0" on all or part of the assignment	14	27.5%
Authorization for a reduction in the student's final course grade	7	13.7%
Authorization for "0" on all or part of the assignment and a further reduction of the final letter grade in the course	21	41.2%
Authorization for a final grade of "E" or "U" in the course	2	3.9%
Final Grade of E/U/NP by "action of University Committee"	3	5.9%
Re-enroll with a final failing grade for the course	0	0.0%
Other	3	5.9%
TOTALS	51	100%

VI. APPEALS

A student who has been found in violation of the *Code of Student Conduct* has the right to appeal the original decision of the hearing body. The appeal is not intended to rehear or reargue the same case and is limited to specific grounds as outlined in the *Code of Student Conduct*. Appeals of decisions of the Committee on Academic Misconduct are submitted for decision to the Executive Vice President and Provost or designee. Of the 709 cases in which the student was found to be "in violation" by COAM in 2023-2024, 41 cases were appealed. In 27 instances, the decision of the Committee was upheld. Fourteen of the appeals were granted. In eight of those cases the grade sanction was changed and in nine of those cases the disciplinary sanction was changed. In one instance the student was found not in violation and in one instance the student was granted a new hearing.