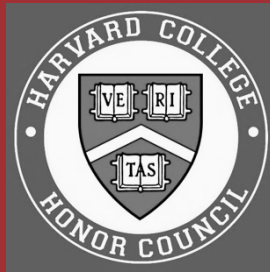


Office of Academic Integrity and Student Conduct

Harvard College Honor Council Annual Report 2024-25



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The Harvard College Honor Code

Harvard College is an academic and residential community devoted to learning and the creation of knowledge. We – the academic community of Harvard College, including the faculty and students – view integrity as the basis for intellectual discovery, artistic creation, independent scholarship, and meaningful collaboration. We thus hold honesty – in the representation of our work and in our interactions with teachers, advisers, peers, and students – as the foundation of our community.

Members of the Harvard College community commit themselves to producing academic work of integrity – that is, work that adheres to the scholarly and intellectual standards of accurate attribution of sources, appropriate collection and use of data, and transparent acknowledgement of the contribution of others to their ideas, discoveries, interpretations, and conclusions. Cheating on exams or problem sets, plagiarizing, or misrepresenting the ideas or language of someone else as one’s own, falsifying data, or any other instance of academic dishonesty violates the standards of our community, as well as the standards of the wider world of learning and affairs.

Contents

- 1 Introduction 2
- 2 Overview 3
 - 2.1 Case Outcomes and Responses 2024-2025 3
 - 2.2 Explanation of Responses 3
 - 2.3 Case Outcomes Resulting in a Change of Status 2024-2025 5
 - 2.4 Types of Concerns 2024-2025 5
 - 2.5 Reports by Class Year 2024-2025 6
 - 2.6 Reports by Division 2024-2025 7
- 3. Aggregate Data 2021-2025 8
 - 3.1 Case Outcomes and Responses 2021-2025 8
 - 3.2 Case Outcomes Resulting in a Change of Status 2021-2025 9
 - 3.3 Types of Concerns 2021-2025 10
 - 3.4 Reports by Class Year 2021-2025 11
- 4. Conclusion 12

1 Introduction

The Honor Code is an integral part of the academic experience at Harvard College and emphasizes a centuries-old commitment to truth and the belief that we “hold honesty – in the representation of our work and in our interactions with teachers, advisers, peers, and students – as the foundation of our community.”

The Harvard College Honor Council, where students, faculty, and staff share equal responsibility for upholding the Honor Code, both reflects and works to strengthen our collective commitment to academic integrity.

The Honor Council also responds to potential violations of the Honor Code, and in responding it emphasizes educational development and a pedagogical response to student action. Our mission is to help students understand the rules and consequences of their actions so that they can learn greater responsibility both within Harvard College and beyond its gates.

Open communication with the entire community is central to creating and maintaining the shared commitment to academic integrity inherent in the Honor Code. While the Honor Council is charged with informing the community about its decisions, we also work to maintain strict confidentiality regarding individual students. The statistics presented here are reported in aggregate to maintain the privacy of the individual students concerned.

2 Overview

During the 2024–25 academic year, the Honor Council reviewed a total of 138 cases. Of these, 100 (72.5%) were cases in which the student was found responsible for violations of the Honor Code, while 38 (27.5%) were cases in which the student was found not responsible.

The numbers listed below represent the number of disciplinary charges and responses. They do not necessarily represent the number of students, since a student could be charged with multiple violations and responses.

2.1 Case Outcomes and Responses 2024-2025

<u>Response</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Scratch	14	9%
Take No Action	24	15.5%
Require to Complete an Educational Program	17	11%
Referral for a Local Sanction	0	0%
Exclusion from a Course	0	0%
Admonish	24	15.5%
Probation	73	47.1%
Require to Withdraw	3	1.9%
Total	155	100%

Note: An individual case can result in more than one outcome. For example, a student might be placed on probation and be required to complete an educational program.

2.2 Explanation of Responses

The basic range of responses is as follows, in order of increasing severity. The first two indicate that the Honor Council did not find a violation.

Scratch - A finding that nothing wrong occurred, or that there are no grounds for action. A decision of scratch is recorded in the student's file to signal that the Council found no fault.

Take No Action - This response indicates that a serious accusation was made but was not or could not be substantiated.

The following responses indicate that the Honor Council found that a violation did occur but do not involve a change of status. They signal different levels of responsibility and seriousness.

Requirement to Complete an Educational Program - A requirement to successfully complete an educational program. This requirement may also be appended to any of the other actions listed below.

Referral for a Local Sanction - A referral to the faculty member teaching the course in which the finding of academic dishonesty was made with a recommendation that “Local Sanctions” (for example, mandatory tutoring, a course warning, an ungraded rework of the assignment in question, a grade penalty, or a failure for the assignment) are appropriate. Such sanctions are imposed at the discretion of the faculty member, in consultation with the Secretary.

Exclusion from a Course - Exclusion is an indication that the student was not permitted to continue in the course and received no credit. It is equivalent to a failing grade in the course. Exclusion is ordinarily an action taken in conjunction with another outcome, such as Admonish, Probation, or Requirement to Withdraw.

Admonish - Admonition is a warning that a student has violated rules or standards of conduct, and it begins a state of jeopardy (i.e., it signals to the student that the Council may respond to future misconduct with formal disciplinary action).

The following responses cause a change of a student’s status (see Section 2.3 for further details).

Probation - Disciplinary probation puts a student on notice that their conduct gives considerable cause for concern. The Council will likely respond more seriously (e.g., Requirement to Withdraw) to further violations. The length of disciplinary probation can vary.

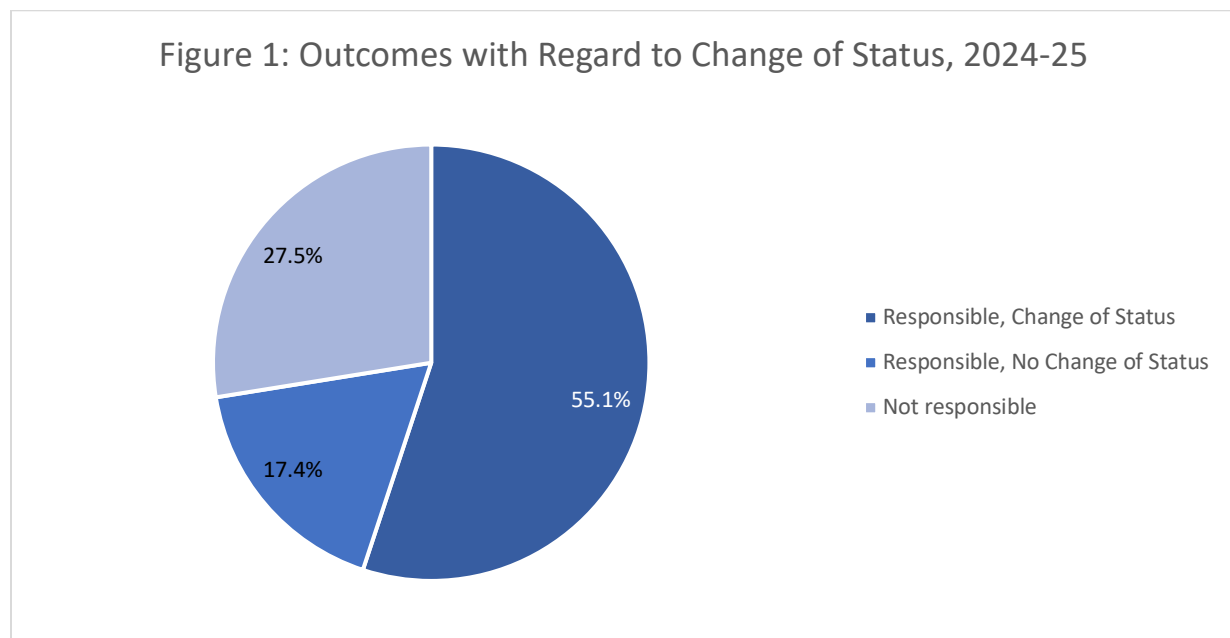
Requirement to Withdraw - This action is taken when a student’s conduct is unacceptable and the Council has determined that the student needs to be separated from the College in order to gain perspective on their actions, or to address and resolve any difficulties. In these cases, the Council ordinarily requires the student to leave the Harvard community completely and to hold a full-time, paid, non-academic job in a non-family situation for at least six consecutive months before petitioning for readmission to the College. The length of withdrawal normally ranges from two to four terms.

Recommendation for Dismissal or Expulsion - In the most serious cases of misconduct, the Honor Council may require a student to withdraw and make a recommendation to the Faculty Council that the student be dismissed or expelled from the College. Dismissal severs a student’s connection with the University, and they can be readmitted only in the rare instance of another vote by the Faculty Council; expulsion severs the student’s connection with the University permanently.

2.3 Case Outcomes Resulting in a Change of Status 2024-2025

Of the 138 cases reviewed by the Honor Council, 100 cases resulted in a finding of responsibility. Out of those responsible findings, 76 (55.1%) resulted in outcomes that changed a student’s status, and 24 (17.4%) resulted in decisions that did not change a student’s status (see Figure 1).

Normally, students at the College are considered to be “in good standing.” Some responses by the Honor Council change a student’s status from “in good standing” to “on probation” or “required to withdraw.” As described above in Section 2.2, students “on probation” or “required to withdraw” may not be eligible for certain opportunities or programs at the College, such as independent study, cross-registration, and study abroad, until their status is restored to “in good standing.” The Council’s decision to respond with an outcome that affects a student’s status reflects its understanding of the gravity of the violation and the extent of a student’s responsibility for it.



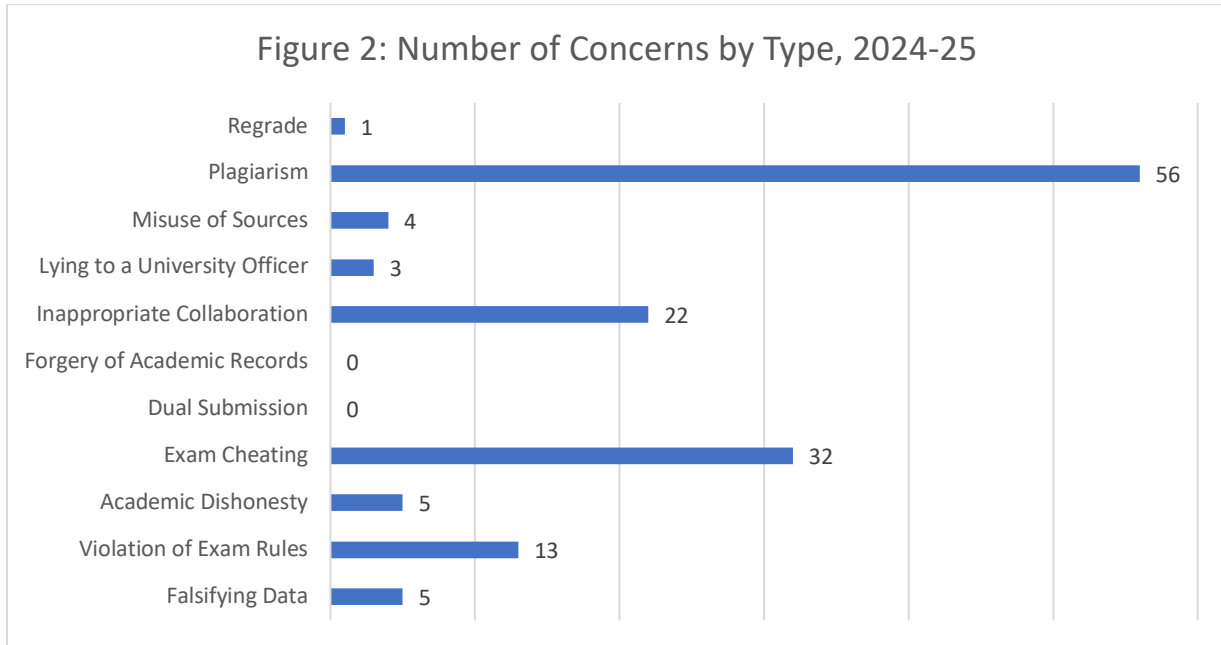
In Figure 1, the categories are defined as follows:

- *Responsible, Change of Status*: Probation or Requirement to Withdraw
- *Responsible, No Change of Status*: Requirement to Complete an Educational Program, Referral for a Local Sanction, Exclusion from a Course, or Admonish
- *Not Responsible*: Scratch or Take No Action

2.4 Types of Concerns 2024-2025

A total of 141 concerns were reported. The most common concerns reported to the Honor Council in 2024-2025 were plagiarism and exam cheating (see Figure 2).

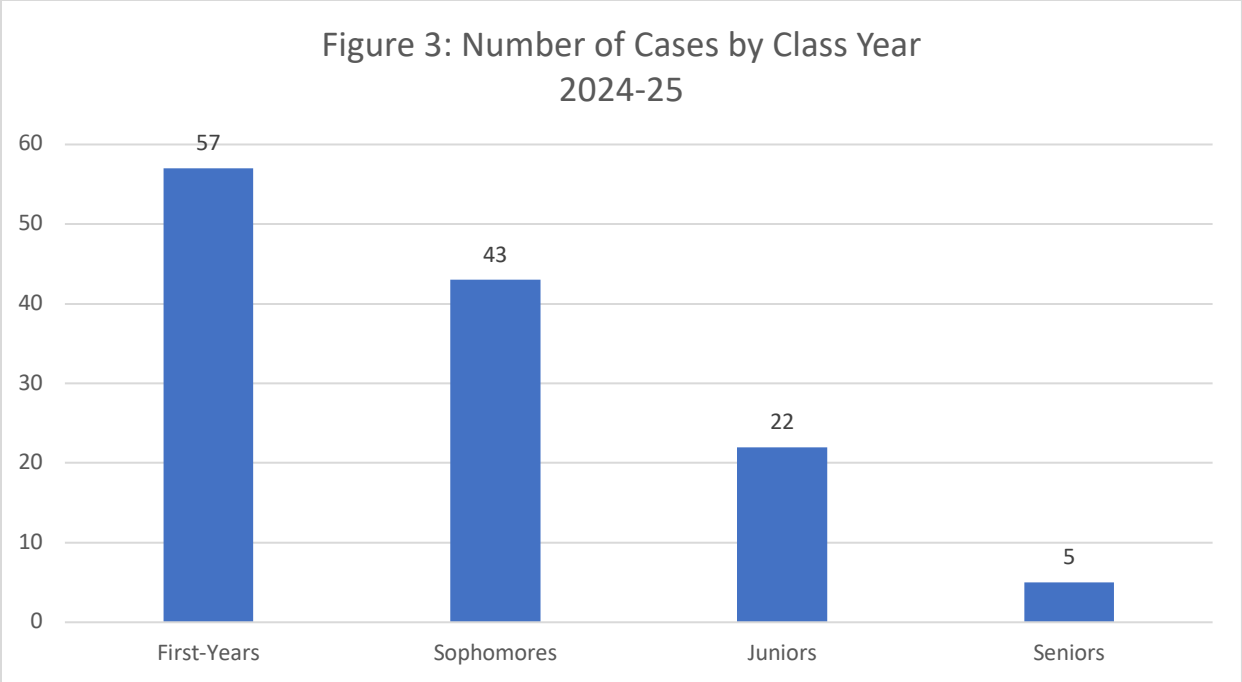
Please note that the definition of plagiarism is broad and can include copying another student’s problem set as well as the traditional “cut and paste” plagiarism without attribution that is the more familiar definition.



Note: An individual case can have more than one concern. For example, a case might involve both plagiarism and inappropriate collaboration.

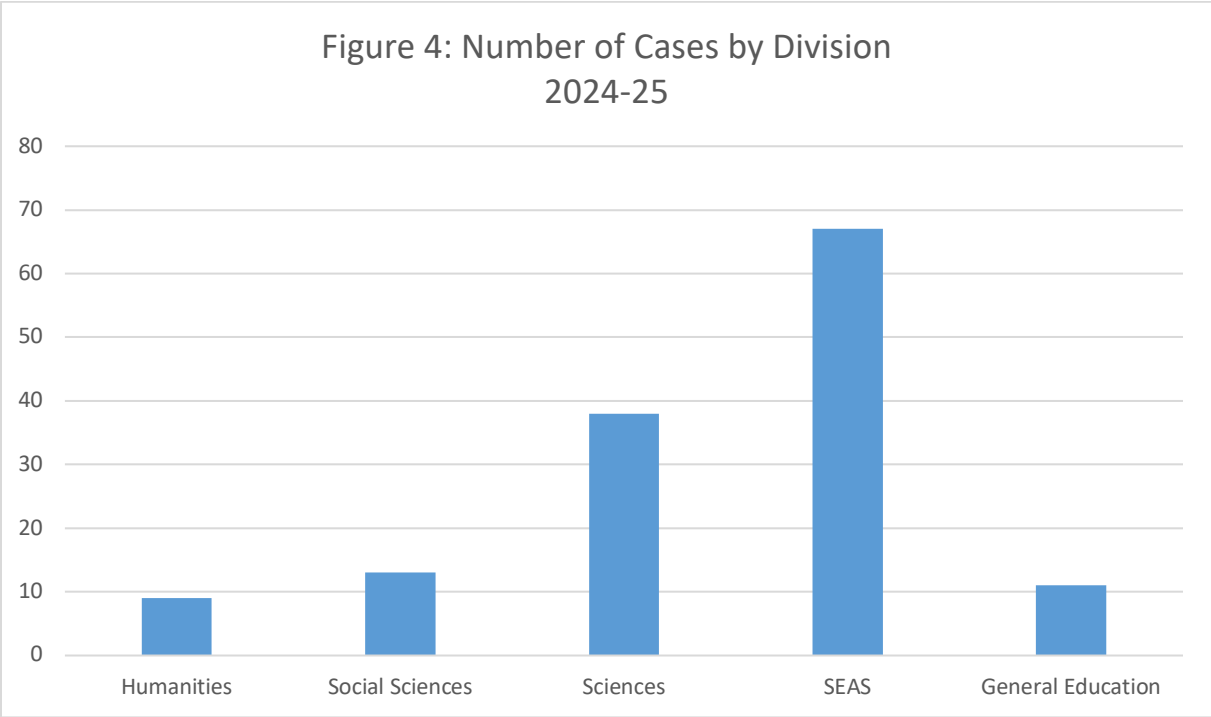
2.5 Reports by Class Year 2024-2025

First-year students are disproportionately represented in academic misconduct cases compared to students in other class years and suggests a need for stronger academic integrity education during students’ early years (see Figure 3).



2.6 Reports by Division 2024-2025

The majority of cases reviewed by the Honor Council were referred to by courses in the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences (SEAS) (see Figure 4).



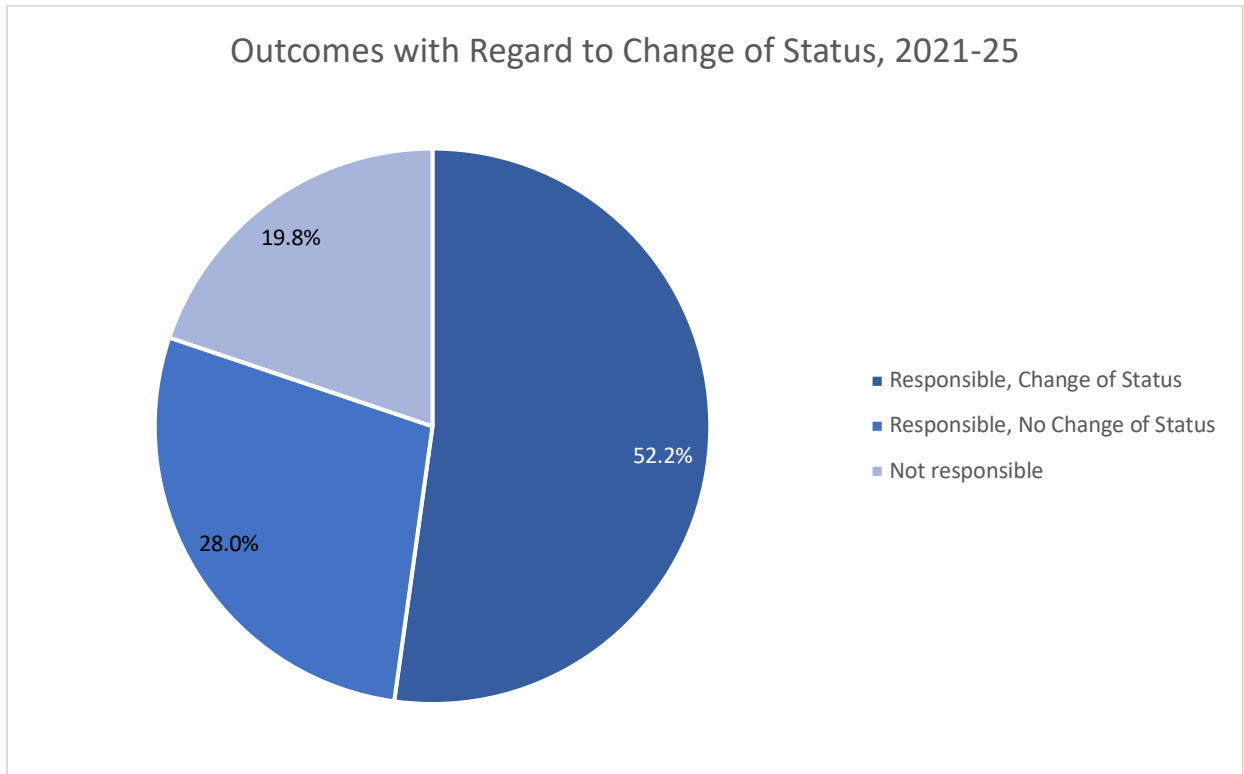
3. Aggregate Data 2021-2025

The Honor Council commits to providing the Harvard College community with four years of aggregate data with which to assess the state of our academic community.

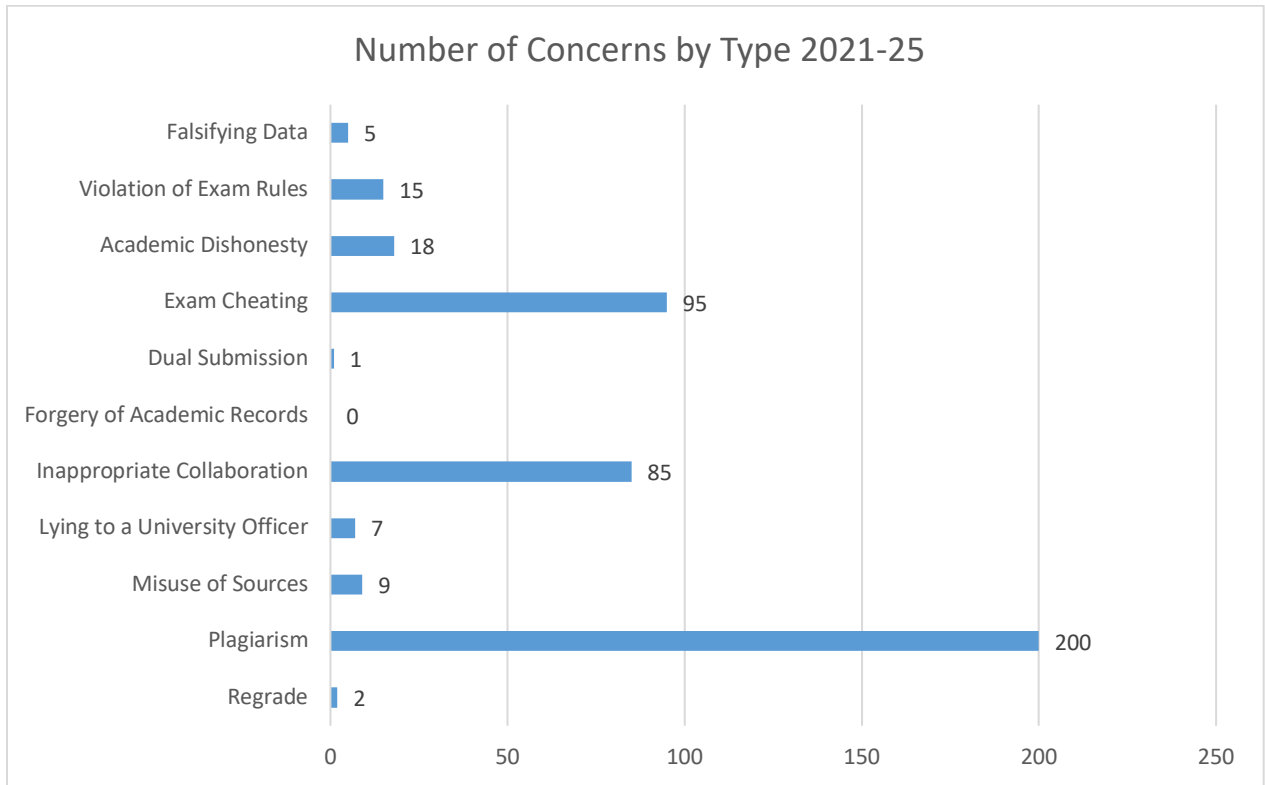
3.1 Case Outcomes and Responses 2021-2025

<u>Response</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Scratch	35	7.4%
Take No Action	55	11.6%
Require to Complete an Educational Program	17	3.6%
Referral for a Local Sanction	44	9.3%
Exclusion from a Course	2	0.4%
Admonish	85	17.9%
Probation	213	44.8%
Require to Withdraw	24	5.1%
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Total	475	100%

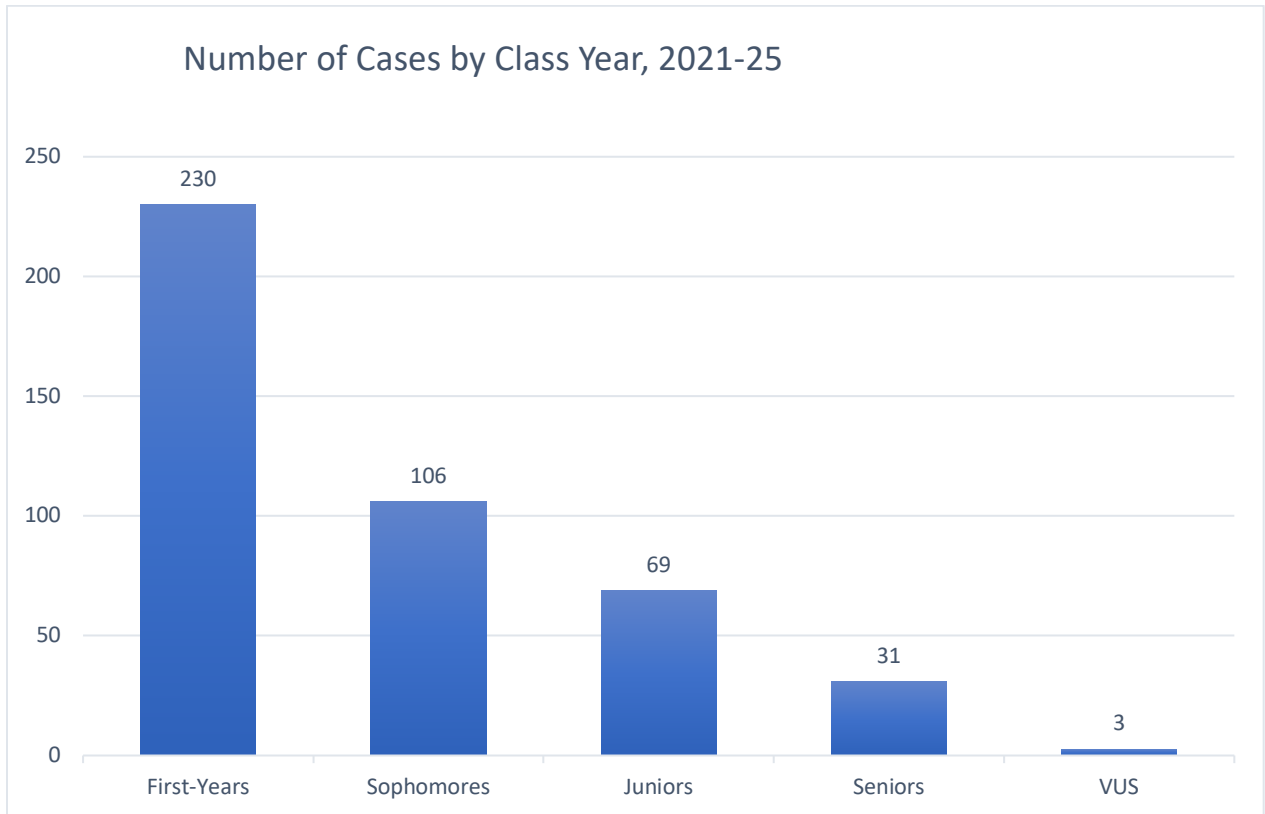
3.2 Case Outcomes Resulting in a Change of Status 2021-2025



3.3 Types of Concerns 2021-2025



3.4 Reports by Class Year 2021-2025



4. Conclusion

The Honor Council remains committed to upholding the values of honesty, trust, and fairness within the academic community and will use these findings to inform ongoing outreach and reform initiatives.

For the most up-to-date information on the Standards of Conduct in the Harvard Community, including a current list of prohibited conduct and current procedures, please consult the following websites:

<https://oaisc.fas.harvard.edu/>

<https://handbook.college.harvard.edu/>