

## Student Conduct Learning Outcomes Assessment (2013-14)



**Name of Assessment Project:** Student Conduct Learning Outcomes Assessment (2013-14)

**Name(s) of Person(s) Responsible for Assessment Project:** Director (Ben White)

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**Providing Department:** Student Conduct

**Other Units/Departments Involved in Assessment Project:**

**Program, Service, or Event Related to Assessment Project:** This assessment project is linked to the UC San Diego campus-wide non-academic student conduct process, which is centrally coordinated by the Office of Student Conduct.

**Assessment Project Description:** The purpose of this assessment project was to assess student learning through the student conduct process. The assessment was included in the resolution letters for all students participating in Administrative Resolution meetings. It was designed to measure the impact of their experience being documented for violating the *Student Conduct Code* and what they learned by going through the process. This assessment also was designed to analyze the effectiveness of our Student Conduct Officers and whether students feel they were treated fairly during their student conduct experience.

**Unit/Program Specific Goals and Learning Outcomes:** As a result of their involvement in the student conduct process:

- Students will gain a greater understanding and awareness about the impact of their behavior on themselves and other members of the UC San Diego community.
- Students will gain a greater understanding and awareness of the *Student Conduct Code*, the *Principles of Community*, and other relevant policies.
- Students will learn practical tools for being a positive member of the UCSD community.
- Students will participate in educational programs and sanctions appropriate to their violation(s).

These learning outcomes were addressed by specific questions in the assessment.

**Relationship to Student Affairs Learning Outcomes:** Think Critically and Solve Problems, Promote Social Justice and Community Responsibility

**Assessment Project Start:** 7/1/2013

**Assessment Project End:** 6/30/2014

**Population/Sample:** The assessment was included in the resolution letters for all students participating in Administrative Resolution meetings through the UC San Diego Non-Academic Student Conduct Process. During the 2013-14 academic year, 982 students responded to the assessment, which represents 36.2% of all students (2712) who received resolution letters.

**Type of Assessment:** Student learning outcomes and/or behavioral outcomes, Satisfaction study

**Other Assessment Type(s):**

**Assessment Methods:** Surveys

**Other Assessment Method(s):**

**Data Collection Tools:** The assessment was distributed to students via student conduct resolution letters emailed to them after their meeting with a Student Conduct Officer.

**Data Analysis Methods:** We compiled the survey results from Student Voice and reviewed the statistics from each question to determine any significant trends.

**Presentation of Findings:** Electronic copies of the findings will be shared with key constituencies, including the Vice Chancellor - Student Affairs, the Council of Deans of Student Affairs, Council of Resident Deans, Council of Assistant Resident Deans, the Council of Provosts, Council of Assistant Deans of Student Affairs, Associated Students Office of Student Advocacy, and the Assessment Coalition. Additionally, we will discuss the findings with selected groups. We will post the final results of the assessment via our annual report on the Office of Student Conduct website.

**Progress:** 100%

**Link Assessment Project in Campus Labs Baseline :**

**Name**

**Source**

[Student Conduct Process Survey](#)

Baseline (All project data)

**Summary of Findings:** This is the second year we have conducted this assessment and we saw an interesting, yet positive difference in this year's results. There was a significant increase in responses indicating that respondents 'strongly agreed' with the statements they were asked to answer. This type of increase was seen for most every question asking for the respondent's level of agreement with statements.

For example, we saw a 15.2 percentage point increase of responses indicating 'strongly agree' for the statement, "I was provided a clear and understandable explanation of the alleged violation(s) during my Administrative Resolution meeting." Similarly, we saw a 13.5 percentage point increase of 'strongly agree' responses for the statement, "As a result of meeting with the Student Conduct Officer, I gained a greater understanding of the consequence of my behavior." We believe these results show that students are feeling more confident that they are being

treated fairly in our process, which seems to be creating more satisfaction with their overall experience.

About 48 percent of the students responding to the survey identified themselves as first year students, similar to 2012-13. About a quarter of the respondents identified themselves as second year students, about 15 percent identified as third year students, and close to 10 percent identified as fourth year students. These numbers are all similar to what we received in 2012-13. Additionally, 85 percent of respondents reported that they live on campus, up five percentage points from 2012-13. The results also showed that 85 percent of all respondents are from the state of California, including nearly 53 percent from Southern California.

We know from the assessment that about half of the respondents said they learned about the Student Conduct Code prior to starting classes at UC San Diego, either through materials in their admissions packet or a new student orientation/transfer program. Interestingly, we saw an eight percentage point increase of students who said they received this information from meeting with a Student Conduct Officer about the alleged violations. Even with this increase, the data still shows that a majority of respondents knew about the Code prior to arriving on campus and before the incident occurred.

Even with a majority of the respondents stating they knew about the Code prior to arriving on campus, only 37 percent of the respondents "strongly agreed" or "agreed" that if they were more aware of the Student Conduct Code, the incident would not have occurred. An additional 38 percent of respondents said they "neither agreed nor disagreed" with the statement. These results continue to run counter to widely-held assumptions that if students knew more about the relevant policies, they would have acted differently. While preventative education is always an important part of our process, this assessment continues to show that actually being documented and going through the student conduct process makes the most impact on student decision making and behavior.

An area that we see potential for continued improvement is the timeliness of the process. About 79 percent of respondents "strongly agreed" or "agreed" that their incident was resolved within a reasonable amount of time, a seven percentage point improvement from 2012-13. There are many variables with administering the student conduct process, especially with the submission of reports. Sometimes, it takes a week or two after an incident to get a meeting letter out to a student because the accompanying police report has yet to arrive. Other times, the delay is due to issues with administrative backlog. Some comments we received from students about this included:

- "I feel the meeting would have been a bit more productive if the event in question was fresher in my memory."
- "The sanctions for my case and many others took longer than the specified time; this was a source of anxiety, especially during Finals Week."
- "I wasn't sent the email regarding appointments until over a month after, which in my opinion is far too long."

We hope the timeliness of the process will continue to improve during the upcoming academic year as we will provide more extensive assistance, training, and support to the college and residential life offices. We also will have a staff member in our office regularly follow-up on outstanding cases, which should help to prevent cases from remaining open for long periods of time.

Our office places a high priority on students being treated fairly in the student conduct process. The data in this assessment showed that, as was the case in 2012-13, this is true for the vast majority of students. The data includes:

- About 90 percent of respondents "strongly agreed" or "agreed" that they were able to explain their side of the issue during the resolution meeting.
- Ninety percent of respondents "strongly agreed" or "agreed" that they were provided a clear and understandable explanation of the alleged violations during their resolution meeting.

Similar to 2012-13, 83 percent of respondents "strongly agreed" or "agreed" that the Student Conduct Officer demonstrated fairness in making the decision in the case.

However, we are still concerned with a lower rate of agreement for whether students were informed of their rights to a sanction reduction request during the resolution meeting. Seventy-five percent of respondents "strongly agreed" or "agreed" they were informed of their right to request a reduction in sanctions. Given the importance for students to know their rights, especially for requesting a reduction in sanctions, we will continue to emphasize this for the upcoming academic year.

One of our main goals is for students to learn more about the importance of community standards. Nearly 75 percent of respondents "strongly agreed" or "agreed" that the student conduct process helped them learn about the importance of community standards. This number was 10 percentage points lower than in 2012-13 but 15 percent of respondents answered "neither agree nor disagree", an answer not included in the previous version of the assessment. Similar to 2012-13, 75 percent of respondents stated that as a result of participating in the process, they changed their behavior positively. Both of these answers show that the vast majority of students who go through the student conduct process are learning about campus standard and by virtue of participating in our process, changing their behavior in a positive way.

Finally, we asked respondents "Specifically, what have you learned while going through the process". Nearly 800 respondents (81%) responded to this question, which provided us with additional data, albeit anecdotal to describe what students learned from the process. Responses of what students learned included:

- "Every decision I make has an impact on myself as well as the people around me. I need to be more aware of what I am getting into, and realize the consequences of a negative decision before making that choice."
- "I have a greater appreciation for those around me that may not consent to the behavior I have previously demonstrated. I have a greater appreciation for my living space and the implications my behavior has on it."
- "I learned that even though I was not doing anything wrong, my actions and the actions of my peers can be interpreted as something the

RSOs need to investigate and I should be more aware of that.”

- “There is a wide support system at UCSD that I had little knowledge of before this process. However, after speaking with my Dean of Student Affairs, I have gained more confidence that I am not alone in my struggles as a student at this institution.”
- “To drink safer. It is unrealistic to assume that 19-20 year olds in college won’t drink alcohol, so you have to educate them about what can happen (DUIs, poisoning) from not partying safely.

The majority of comments exhibited a positive response in what was learned from the process. There were comments criticizing the timeliness of the process, the way in which staff or RAs handled certain parts of the process, and the process itself. These comments are a good reminder that the student conduct process is predicated on fairness and the nature of interactions students have with staff or RAs during the process impacts the student’s perception of the process.

**Impact of Assessment:** The most positive aspect of this assessment is getting another robust set of data about the student conduct process. We now have four years of student conduct statistical data in addition to two years of results from this assessment. We definitively know the number of cases, types of sanctions, and demographic data along with a strong sense of what the students gain from the process and how it affects them in their experience as a student. This data allows us to identify trends, erase myths, and more effectively plan for each academic year. For us, this assessment continues to be a revelation!

The findings are used in our planning process for the upcoming academic year. We will emphasize timeliness in submitting and processing reports, sending meeting letters to students, and resolving cases. The questions addressing these issues showed that the process is not as timely as it should be which is frustrating for most students as they want to resolve the issue and get it off their minds. Along the same lines, we will re-emphasize the importance of informing students about their right to request a reduction in sanctions or appeal the decision if they go to a review.

Additionally, we are continuing to review and revise the survey to better assess specific questions, including questions of areas we want to know more about and deleting questions that are irrelevant or repetitious. Last year, we felt that a total of 45 questions (including the “why did you disagree?” questions) was too much so we reduced the total number of questions to 24. As we continue to evaluate this year’s results, we will focus on adding more specific questions about the process and what students have learned by participating in the process.

**Lessons Learned:** We will make a couple of small tweaks that should give us more accurate information in the future. For the question asking about where the respondent is from, we did not include Central California, which is a separate part of the state and not included with Northern or Southern California. We also did not include the designation of “fifth year” in the question we ask about students’ academic classification. These additions for next year’s survey will provide more accurate demographic data about the students completing the survey.

We also included the assessment in letters that went to students who “failed to appear” for their meeting. In these situations, the student was sent up to two letters requesting a meeting and after failing to respond, the Student Conduct Officer made a decision in the case without the student’s involvement. Some students who did not meet with a Student Conduct Officer filled out the survey but because they did not fully experience the process, were limited in their answers, hence the “not applicable” answers and comments we received in parts of the survey. We were going to fix this last year but it appears to have fallen through the cracks. We will make sure it is addressed in the 2014-15 version of the survey.

**Supplemental Information:**

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