



# Student Conduct Process Learning Outcomes

## Assessment



Public

**Name of Assessment** Student Conduct Process Learning Outcomes Assessment

**Project:**

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

**Role**

Director (Ben White)

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**Providing** Student Conduct

**Department:**

**Other** 6th College, Marshall College, Muir College, Revelle College, Roosevelt  
**Units/Departments** College, Warren College

**Involved in**

**Assessment Project:**

### Program, Service, or Event Related to Assessment Project

This assessment project is linked to the UC San Diego campus-wide student conduct process, which is centrally coordinated by the Office of Student Conduct.

### Assessment Project Description

The purpose of this assessment project is to assess student learning through the student conduct process. The assessment will be included in the resolution letters for all students participating in Administrative Resolution meetings. It is 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 allows us 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 polices.
- 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).

**Relationship to** Think Critically and Solve Problems, Advance a Plan for Personal,

**Student Affairs** Academic, and Professional Success, Engage in a Healthy Lifestyle,  
**Learning Outcomes:** Promote Social Justice and Community Responsibility

**Assessment Project** 9/15/2012  
**Start:**

**Assessment Project** 9/14/2013  
**End:**

### 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 2012-13 academic year, 922 students responded to the assessment, which represents about 34% of all students (2640) 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

Campus Labs will be used to distribute the assessment via student conduct resolution letters.

### Data Analysis Methods

Data will be analyzed using Campus Labs.

### Presentation of Findings

Electronic copies of the intermediate and final results of the assessment 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 also post the final results of the assessment on the Office of Student Conduct website.

**Progress:**  100%

### Link Assessment Project in Campus Labs Baseline

Source Name	Project Name
All project data	UCSD Student Conduct Exit Survey

## Summary of Findings

We discovered from the assessment that about three fifths 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. What this data shows is that a majority of respondents know 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 44 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 30 percent of respondents said they “neither agreed nor disagreed” with the statement. These results run counter to widely-held assumptions that if students knew more about the relevant policies, they would have acted differently. Furthermore, 20 percent of the respondents to this question submitted comments about why they “disagreed” with this statement, including students who said:

- “Alcohol is ubiquitous and unavoidable. In order for a minor to avoid a situation in which he is surrounded by alcohol he must necessarily alienate himself from his peers.”
- “I knew the ramifications that my actions would instill upon me, but I mistimed and misjudged my actions. It was entirely my fault, as I was completely aware of the consequences.”
- “I was aware that my activities did violate the code, but I did not properly evaluate the risks of violating them.”
- “Most students are aware of the Student Conduct Code, but they decide to drink anyways if it is a safe atmosphere and they are sure they won’t get caught.”
- “The Student Conduct Code isn’t exactly on my mind every time I make a decision. In my opinion, it actually doesn’t have anything to do with any decision that a student makes, unless it’s about cheating.”

As stated above, these statements do not support the theory that students are not aware of the Student Conduct Code and basic consequences when they are involved in an incident. Additionally, the statements and data show that, even if they knew about the Code, such knowledge would not have changed their behavioral choices.

One area that we see potential for significant improvement is the timeliness of the process. Only 72 percent of respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they were notified of their potential violations soon after the incident. Similarly, about 75 percent of respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that once they were notified of the alleged violations, their resolution meeting took place within 10 academic days. 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. We hope to alleviate this issue during the upcoming year by providing more administrative assistance support to the college and residential life offices.

We used to receive frequent anecdotal information from students and other members of the campus community that the student conduct process was unfair and Student Conduct Officers were “out to get” them. Happily, the data in this assessment showed that, for the vast majority of situations, this is no longer true. The data includes:

- Nearly 90 percent of respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they were able to explain their side of the issue during the resolution meeting.
- Eighty-seven percent of respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” they were treated with respect by the Student Conduct Officer throughout the process.
- Eighty-six percent of respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they were provided a clear and understandable explanation of the alleged violations during their resolution meeting.
- Eighty-three percent of respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that the Student Conduct Officer demonstrated fairness in making the decision in the case.

However, we were concerned with a lower rate of agreement for whether students were informed of their appeal rights during the resolution meeting. Seventy-nine percent of respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” they were informed of their appeal rights. Interestingly, this number increased by four percent after we reminded Student Conduct Officers in January to inform students about their appeal rights. 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 key goals is for students to learn more about the importance of community standards. Nearly 85

percent of respondents 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that the student conduct process helped them learn about the importance of community standards. Additionally, 75 percent of respondents stated that as a result of participating in the process, they changed their behavior positively. While this number is lower than the community standards answer, it is important to note that only two percent of respondents 'strongly disagreed' or 'disagreed' with this answer (Note that nearly 20 percent answered either 'neither agree' nor 'disagree' or 'not applicable').

Finally, we asked respondents "Specifically, what have you learned while going through the process". Nearly 700 respondents (75.9%) 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:

- "Be careful with your actions. Other people can interpret your actions in unpredictable ways."
- "Honestly, I can't say much has changed before and after the process. I consider myself a good person. I just did something I knew wasn't allowed and got in trouble. I took the risk, but seeing as there was no malice in any of our actions, I don't think this is a life-changing experience."
- "I learned that the rules are established for a purpose in mind. They are not intended to hamper my well-being but rather, promote it."
- "One night of bad decisions can lead to a greater amount of stress, worry, and consequences."
- "While bitter for having been mischaracterized by the RSO, I actually did gain a greater appreciation for the effects alcohol consumption can have on the body, the consequences of being caught with alcohol when under 21, and the benevolence the university displays by allowing for students to go through this process."

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 findings have already been used in our planning process for the upcoming academic year. We plan to 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.

We also learned that the wording of the questions is extremely important. For example, one question asked: "As a result of completing the assigned sanction(s), I gained a greater understanding of the consequences of my behavior." While this is an important question to ask, the reality is that most respondents take the survey immediately after receiving the resolution letter and prior to completing all sanctions. Nearly 15 percent of respondents answered not applicable while another 15 percent answered that they 'neither agreed' nor 'disagreed'. Because this question did not capture the desired answer (e.g. whether completing the sanctions gave respondents a greater understanding of the consequences of their behavior), we are amending the question for next year's survey to ask whether participating in the student conduct process helped students gain a greater understanding of the consequences of their behavior.

Additionally, we have revised the entire survey to better assess specific questions, including questions of areas we want to know more about and deleting questions that are irrelevant or repetitious. We felt that a total of 45 questions (including the "why did you disagree?" questions) were too much and we plan to focus on more specific questions about the process and what students have learned by participating in the process.

On a positive note, we were pleased with the high percentage of positive responses for questions relating to the administration of the process. We have heard significant anecdotal data stating that there was not adequate information available about the student conduct process and that Student Conduct Officers were unfair, uninterested in hearing the student's perspective about the incident, and unable to provide basic information about the incident. However, the survey results validate the greater emphasis on training and change of overall philosophy we have undertaken over the past three years.

## Lessons Learned

The most positive aspect of this assessment was getting a rich set of data about the student conduct process. The “story” of the student conduct process has not been told well over the years, particularly with staff relying on anecdotes rather than hard statistical data combined with anecdotal information. We now have three years of student conduct statistical data in addition to the results from this assessment. We definitively know the number of cases, types of sanctions, and demographic data along with a stronger sense of what the students gain from the process and how it affects them in their experience as a student. This data will allow us to identify trends, erase myths, and more effectively plan for the academic year. For us, this assessment has been a revelation!

An issue which prevented us from getting better data was having both ‘neither agree nor disagree’ and ‘not applicable’ as potential answers for many of the questions. We felt that having both responses prevented us from receiving responses which actually answered the question. For next year’s assessment, we are eliminating the “not applicable” option.

Another issue we had was that we did not inform students about the survey during resolution meetings. With this being the first year of the assessment, our focus was to get it operational. For the upcoming academic year, we will have Student Conduct Officers inform students about the survey at the end of the resolution meeting. This will allow our results to have a greater reach and provide us with a greater sample size.

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.

### **Supplemental Information**

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