

Student
Conduct and
Judicial Affairs

2017

Annual Report

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Introduction

It has been another busy year for the Office of Student Conduct and Judicial Affairs (SCJA). The office continues to hold students accountable for their behaviour, address violations of the Student Code of Conduct, intervene and manage situations involving complex student behaviour, and provide day-to-day support and guidance to faculty and staff on both academic and non-academic misconduct. This year, the Office has also had the good fortune of hiring Jennifer Cheddie, Student Conduct Officer to assist with demands.

Policy Development

Guidelines for the Accommodation of Religious and Spiritual Practice

Due to some challenges with complex student requests for religious/spiritual accommodation a working group of various College personnel developed guidelines to provide clarity to both students and others around the process for requesting religious/spiritual accommodation.

Academic Misconduct Policy and Concerns about Instruction Policy

Contributing to the institutional re-refresh of several policies, SCJA has been working with representative working groups to modernize two important college policies.

Student Code of Conduct updates

In preparation for the 2018 legalization of marijuana and in preparation for the introduction of a Smoke Free Campus policy, section 3.4 of the Student Code of Conduct was amended to provide clarity on use of tobacco, marijuana and alcohol on campus. The policy was also amended to enhance the prohibition on fraud and misrepresentation to improve response and investigation into these sometimes complex issues. This change will also improve alignment with anticipated revisions to the Academic Conduct policy. The Appeal Procedures were updated to conform to Board of Governors bylaws regarding student appeals of suspension.

System Improvements

Symplicity Advocate Case Management System

The Symplicity Case Management system was implemented for the SCJA office in June 2017, with one academic department selected for user testing in October 2017. All Divisions Chairs and Program Managers received training on the system during the fall 2017. Feedback from the test group was that the new process for responding to and reporting academic misconduct incidents, was a vast improvement over the previous process. The system was made available for college-wide use in January 2018 with associated training as needed.

Education, Training and Awareness Initiatives

Sexual Violence and Misconduct

With the adoption of Langara's policy B3009 Sexual Violence and Misconduct in January 2017, the SVM Education and Awareness working group put its efforts to enhancing understanding of sexual violence and misconduct issues that could effect members of the campus community.

Awareness and promotion – with the assistance of C&M a three-phase annual communication strategy has been developed. The themes for each phase are as follows: general awareness, consent

education, and bystander intervention, which will be repeated annually. The strategy includes print, a dedicated Sexual Violence Support web site, social media exposure and digital signage.

As part of the initial policy roll out, employees in student facing support roles were provided with training on the policy, the meaning of sexual violence and misconduct in a college context, and specific training on responding to disclosures under the College's procedures.

Sexual Respect Ambassador Program – In August 2017, the Sexual Respect Ambassador program was initiated, attracting over 36 employee volunteers willing to act as departmental advisors on matters falling under the Sexual Violence and Misconduct Policy. To prepare them for their role, the ambassadors received formal training on the following: Orientation to College SVM policy and procedures, Responding to Sexual Violence Disclosures, Sexual Harassment from a Human Rights Code Perspective and Effective Compassionate Communication skills.

Department presentations – Between mid-fall and the end of 2017, the Sexual Respect Ambassadors completed approximately 18 presentations to various college departments on the College's Sexual Violence and Misconduct policy and response procedures, reaching an audience over 300 employees.

Student projects – In the spring of 2017, students in Design Formation worked on a social marketing project to increase awareness of sexual harassment. The students were kind enough to permit the use of these posters as part of the awareness campaign. In the fall of 2018, Marketing Management students developed social marketing campaigns on topics including defining the issue, consent awareness, bystander intervention, and support services on and off campus. The student work was showcased in February 2018 as part of the Pink Shirt event.

Student Sexual Respect Ambassadors – With the success of the Sexual Respect Ambassador program, students were recruited in November 2017 to become Student Sexual Respect Ambassadors. Nine students participated in specialized training on the College's SVM Policy, on campus resources and how to respond to disclosures. A total of 8 training and coaching sessions were offered to the student ambassadors last fall.

Other

SCJA has continued to provide information to new students and parents on student rights and responsibilities, and offered workshops to students on Academic Integrity, Conflict Resolution and Bystander Intervention. In addition to providing on-to-one coaching to faculty and staff on intervention and case management strategies, SCJA has made regular presentations to departments on student behaviour management, current College policies, and similar topics.

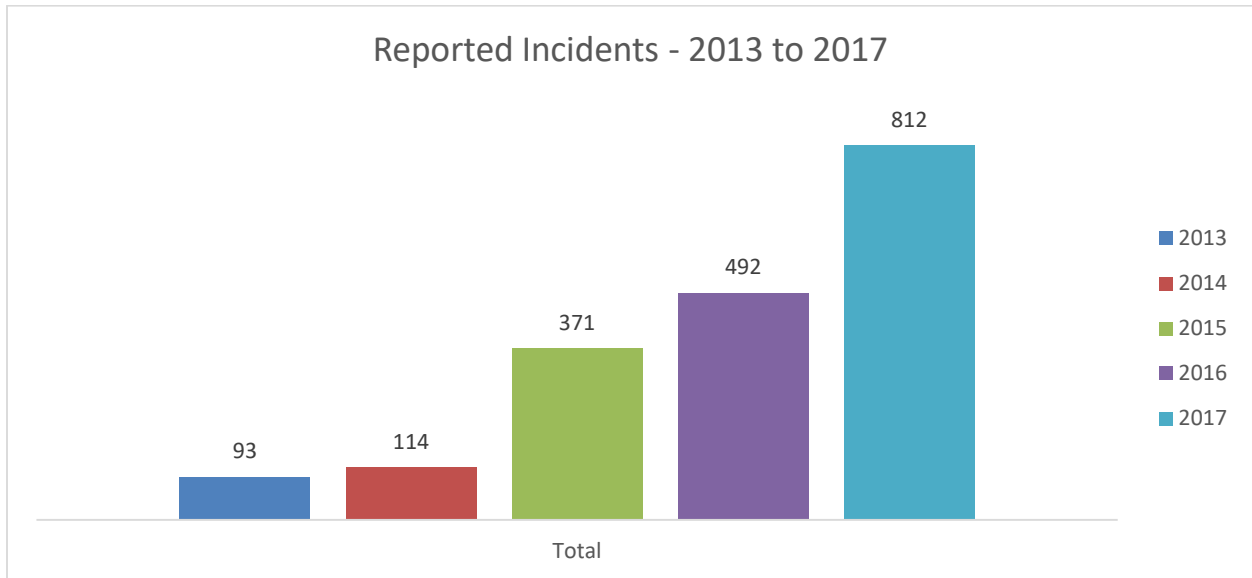
Academic Misconduct Incidents

Academic misconduct can take many forms. Like last year, common examples of plagiarism during 2017 were large-scale cutting and pasting from other sources, copying from another student's work or allowing another student to copy from their work, failing to cite correctly on a paper, and handing in someone else's work as their own. Incidents of cheating have increased this year with more students using unauthorized aides or technologies during exams, talking or otherwise sharing information during exams, and engaging in unauthorized collaboration on assignments.

Note: The incident numbers mentioned below should not be interpreted as reflecting all academic misconduct occurring on campus. Not all faculty members report incidents of academic misconduct, and some departments have devised procedures for addressing incidents within the department.

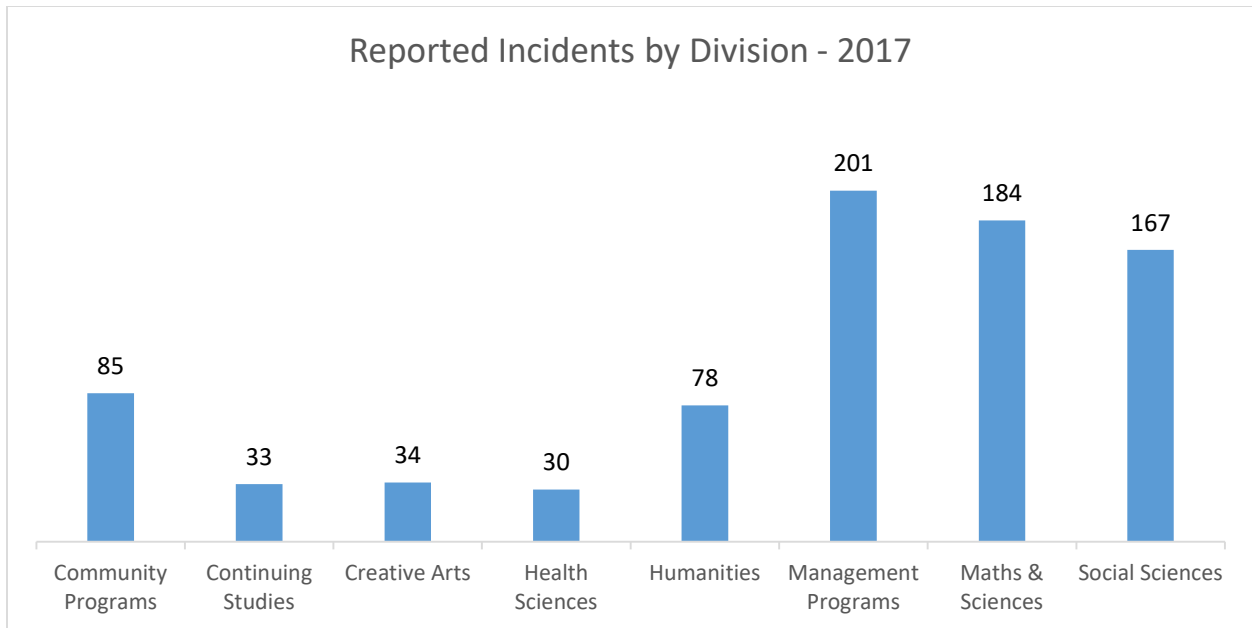
Incident Numbers

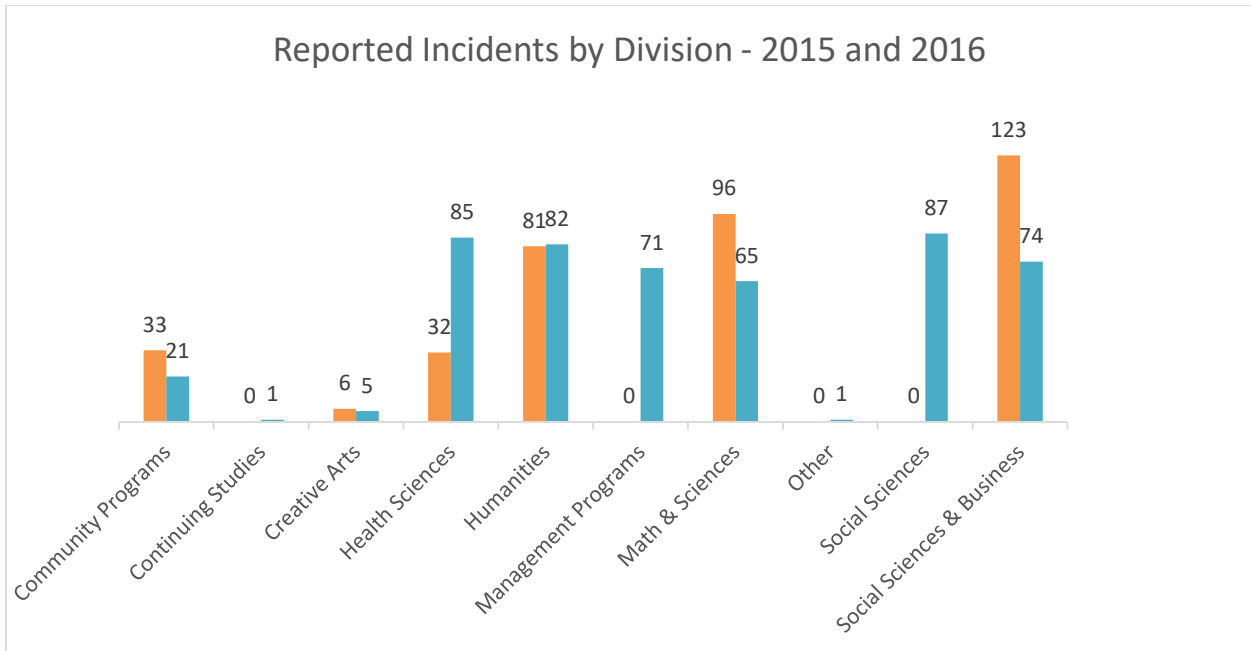
The trend in increased reported incidents of academic misconduct continues, with an overall increase to 812 reported incidents from last year’s 492.



Incidents by Division

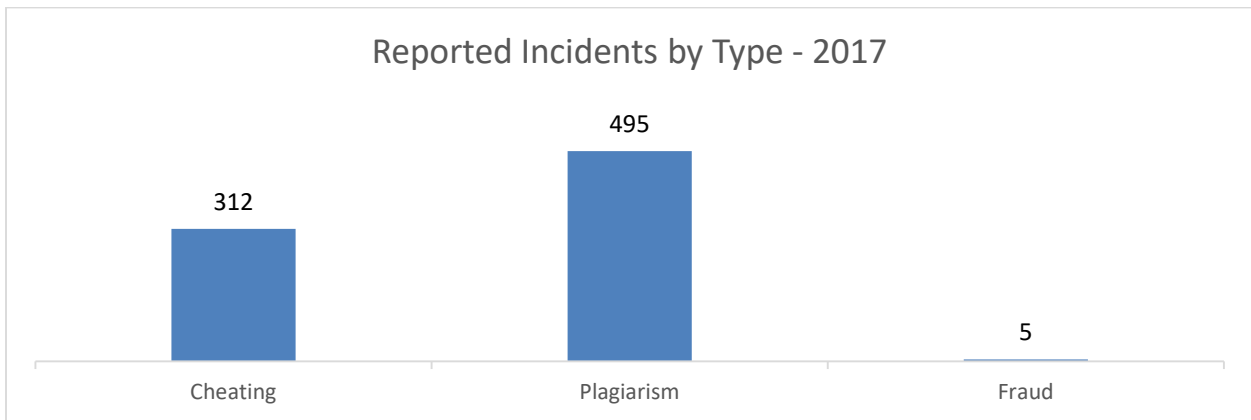
In 2017 most Divisions experienced an increase in reported incidents of academic misconduct with the exception of Health Sciences and Humanities. The charts below compare incident numbers for 2017 with those of the previous two years.



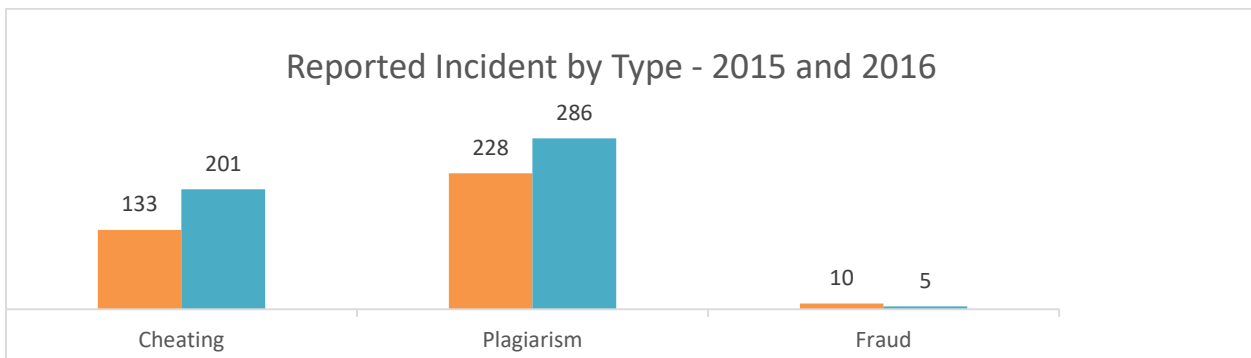


Incident Types

In 2017 the reported incidents of plagiarism (495) and cheating (312) appeared roughly proportional to previous years although the overall numbers have increased.

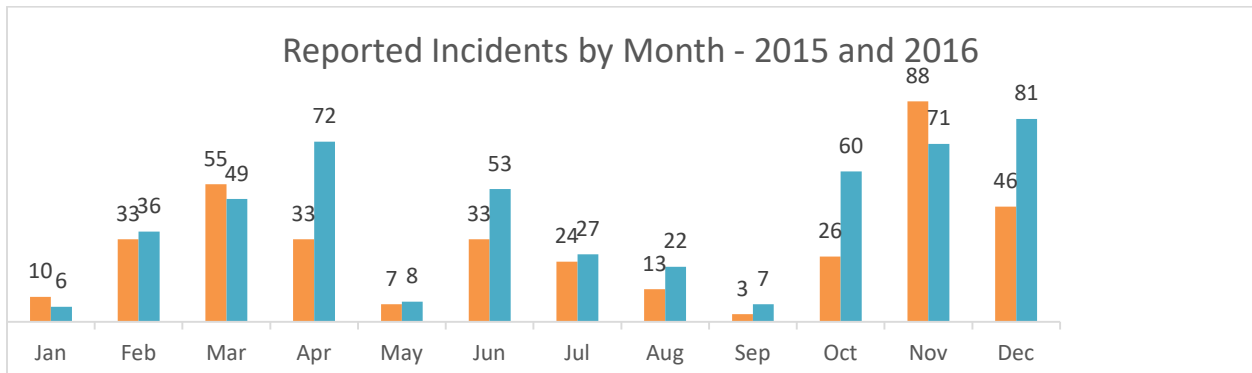
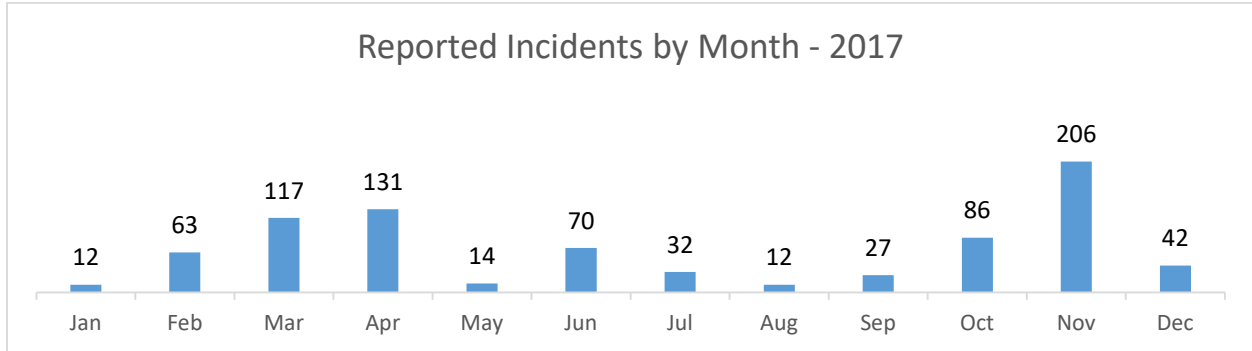


Compare with 2015 and 2016.



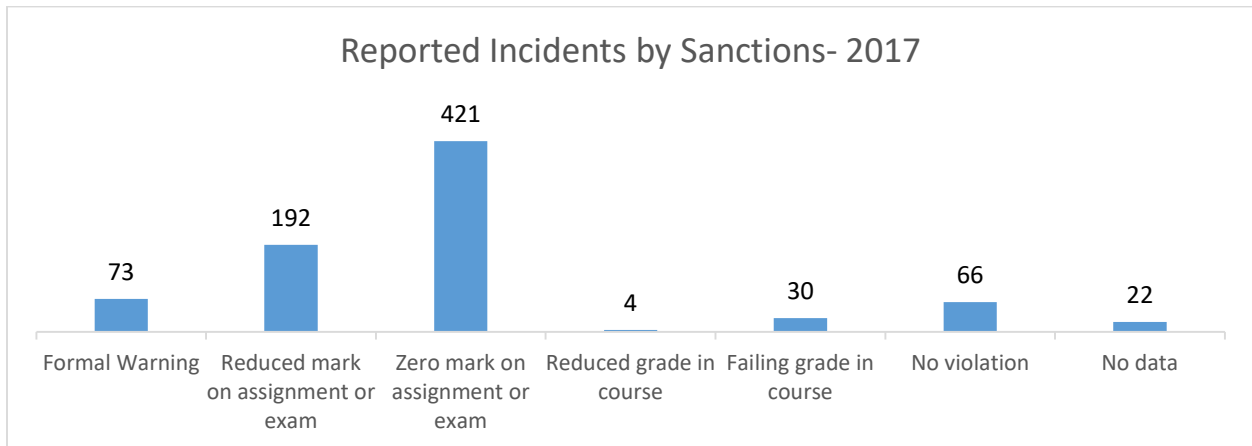
Monthly Distribution

Unsurprisingly, incidents occurred most frequently mid to late semester, with November recording 206 incidents and March and April showing 117 and 131 respectively. This distribution is similar to what has been observed in previous years.



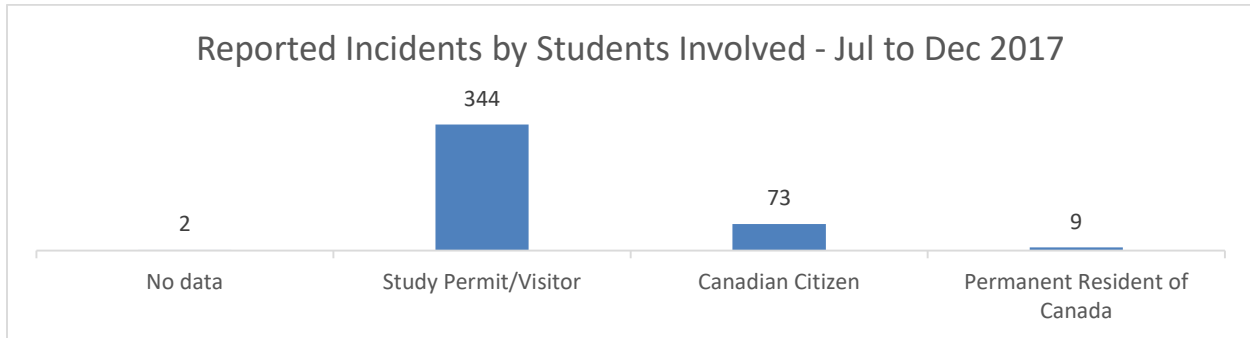
Penalties

Following the investigation, faculty determined that misconduct occurred in 724 of the 812 reported incidents in 2017 (no data was available for 22 cases at the time of this writing). Like last year, the most common penalties for academic misconduct were a failed or reduced grade on the assignment or exam (401 and 192 respectively), and course failure was applied in 30 cases. The College suspended one student in 2017 for violations of the Academic Conduct policy.



Students Involved

Since the adoption of the Advocate system in July 2017, it has been possible to assess incident information according to reported student residence status. Since July 2017 there have been 428 reported incidents.



Recidivism

The majority of the 812 reported incidents were first infractions (712). One-hundred of the reported incidents were repeated infractions.

Appeals

Of those instances where students were found to have engaged in academic misconduct, twenty-six (22 in 2016) students requested an appeal. In twenty-five cases the original decision was maintained and in one, a lesser penalty was implemented.

Sexual Violence and Misconduct Incidents

With the introduction of the Sexual Violence and Misconduct Policy, tracking of incidents falling under this policy has become important.

In 2017, there were 16 incidents of sexual violence or misconduct reported to the college. Of the 16 incidents, 15 arose from students. The majority of the concerns pertained to sexual harassment and the majority were put forward by students. 15 complainants were female and one was male. 14 respondents were male and two were unknown. Seven incidents occurred on campus, eight occurred off campus and one occurred both on and off campus. The majority of the concerns were disclosures or informational reports not requiring formal investigation. Three requests for investigation were made.

Disclosures are defined as acts of informally telling someone from the College about an experience of sexual violence or misconduct, usually to receive emotional support and/or referrals. No other action is requested. An Informational Report is a process of notifying the College of an incident without requesting an investigation, but may include a request for accommodation. Investigations are formal processes in which findings are made and there is a potential for a disciplinary outcome.

Complainant status by type of report	
Employee	1
Sexual harassment	1
Investigation request	1

Student	15
Cyber harassment or stalking	1
Informational report	1
Sexual assault	2
Disclosure	1
Informational report	1
Sexual exploitation	1
Disclosure	1
Sexual harassment	10
Disclosure	3
Informational report	4
Investigation request	2
Police report	1
Voyeurism	1
Informational report	1
Grand Total	16

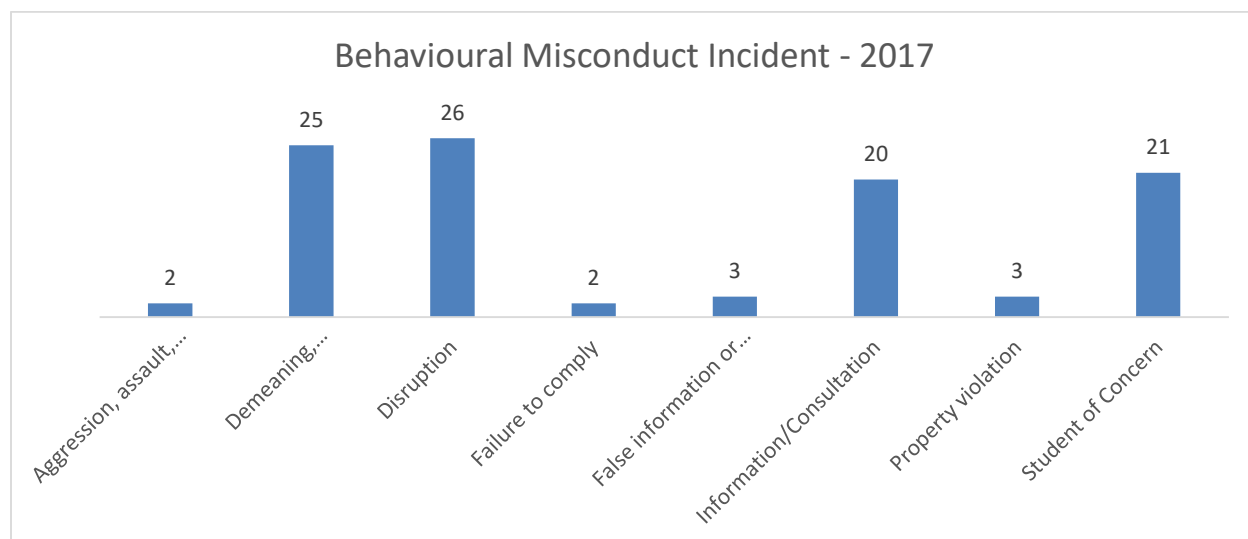
Behavioural Misconduct Incidents

Incident Numbers

During 2017, SCJA addressed 102 incidents. Sexual violence incidents are reported separately and not included in these figures

Incident Types

Where conduct violations were addressed by SCJA, the most frequent incidents included disruptive behaviour (26), incivility, aggression, and harassing-type behaviour (27), and other concerning behaviour (21). In 4 of cases, no violation was established following investigation.

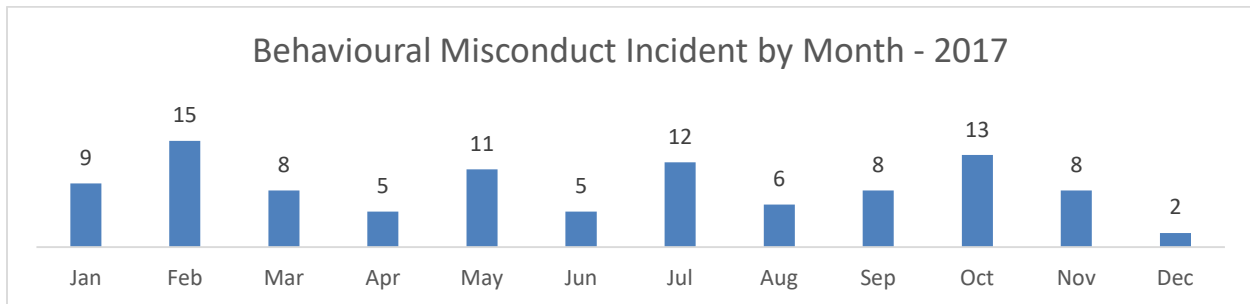


Students of Concern Incidents

A “student of concern” is a student who exhibits behaviour that poses a threat or risk of harm to the student or others; poses significant threat or risk to property; causes significant disruption to or interference with the educational process; interferes with the lawful and proper activities or functions of the College, or suggests that the student is unable to engage in the basic activities necessary to obtain an education. Due to the nature and complexity of the displayed behaviour, interventions often require a variety of methods, including liaison with health professionals, social service agencies and families, collaboration with Langara faculty and staff, on-going monitoring, coaching, community involvement and related referrals.

Monthly Distribution

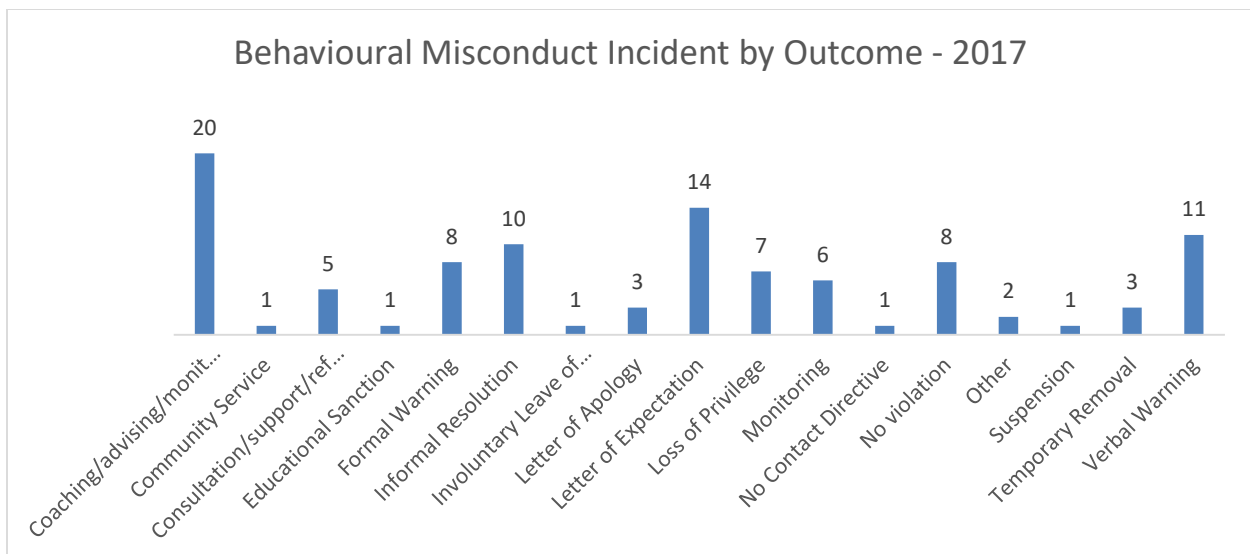
The highest number of conduct incidents arose in February (15), October (13), and May (11).



Sanctions

During 2017, sanctions have been relatively modest, with the aim of enabling behavioral change, rather than punishment. Verbal and written warnings being most common (33). Other incidents were resolved through conversation, mediation or negotiation between the parties (20). In 20 incidents, coaching or advice was provided to departments to resolve the behavioral concern without direct referral to SCJA.

One student was suspended for violations of the Student Code of Conduct, one was placed on an Involuntary Leave of Absence, and 3 were removed temporarily pending the outcome of an investigation or resolution of the matter.



Appeals

During 2016, two students submitted appeals of sanctions imposed under the Student Code of Conduct. In both instances, the original sanctions were upheld.

Behavioural Misconduct Examples

Student conduct management is a complex endeavor that requires a careful balance of various interests. While statistics provide some information about the activities of SCJA, the following pages offer examples of the various concerns addressed by the Office of Student Conduct & Judicial Affairs. *Note: student names are fabricated and no identifiers are included.*

Rafiki

Faculty brought forward concerns that Rafiki had been engaging in the following behaviour: Inappropriate and demanding interactions with faculty; excessive and frequently tangential email often critical in tone and objectionable in content, references to faculty as “cute”, “girl”, “bitchy”; touching and requesting hugs from faculty, and making repeated, unsupported allegations of racism, white privilege, islamophobia and political correctness against faculty. Rafiki was reminded of the College’s expectation regarding student behaviour and he agreed to modify the behaviour. Only a few weeks after making this commitment, Rafiki, was reported to have made disparaging comments about a classmate’s gender identity. Rafiki was temporarily removed from the class pending a resolution to the matter, required to refrain from all contact with the other student and required to write a reflection paper in which he examined his actions. Rather than comply with the sanction, Rafiki blocked SCJA email, refused to write the paper and attempted to attend class. Rafiki was required to withdraw from the course and further restrictions were imposed.

Namid

Periodic behavioural concerns had arisen with Namid since 2014. The concerns pertained to demeaning and hostile attitudes toward women, disruptive behaviour in the classroom, aggressive and offensive interactions with College employees. Namid was provided with support and coaching to assist him to modify his behaviour. In 2017 three new issues arose involving hostile behaviour toward female employees. Given the pattern of behaviour over time, and Namid’s inability to modify the behaviour to meet the College’s expectations, Namid was denied the opportunity to register for future courses until such time as he had taken steps addressed the behavioural concerns.

Student Group

Four students were assigned to work on a school project and conflict between the students arose quite early. When the course instructor was not able to resolve the matter, it was referred to SCJA. One student in the group complained that the other three were disrespectful, failed to fulfill their obligations as group members by being late for meetings, copied his work without permission, discriminated against him by speaking their native language and plotted to exclude him and/or have him do all the work. Two of the group members complained that this student made demeaning comments about them not being Canadian, made threats he would get them kicked out of school, made threats of legal or physical harm, made demeaning gender-based comments and let them copy his work. After a thorough investigation, it was found that all three students had engaged in questionable behaviour. The students were permitted to remain at the College on the condition that they refrain from objectionable behaviour and comply with all College rules and expectations.

Ramsay

SCJA was notified that Ramsay had developed a concerning preoccupation with a College employee and the fact that the employee's children were in the daycare. Around the same time, the student had applied to enter one of College's education programs. The behaviour that was reported consisted of the following: Stalking and surveillance type behaviour; disregard for or challenging of personal/professional boundaries; sending inappropriate emails to instructors; behaving in a way that suggest poor impulse control and lack of insight; making statements that caused concern for the safety of the campus community including harm to children; making statements that that he has a "sick mind," is a pedophile and a psychopathic murderer. Ramsay was immediately removed from campus. Attempts to engage the student's mental health worker to intervene were not fully successful. The student was restricted from returning to campus without a full psychiatric assessment.

Basima

A faculty member notified SCJA that Basima attended her instructor's office and became aggressive toward him, repeatedly demanded more marks on her exam, and persisted in this behaviour despite being asked to leave the office. Basima was required to offer a formal apology to her instructor and refrain from any similar behaviour in the future.

Helen

A faculty member notified security that she had misplaced her office keys. When the instructor noticed Helen using an unauthorized aid during an exam, she confiscated the unauthorized notes. On review of the notes, the instructor realized they were taken directly from the exam of which the student should have had no prior knowledge. The matter was referred to SCJA. Helen admitted that she stole her instructor's office keys and entered the office a few weeks later to review a midterm exam and take notes to bring with her when she wrote the exam. She then disposed of the keys. Although Helen expressed regret for her actions, the seriousness of the infraction and the fact that Helen had ample time to reconsider before she took these steps, mitigated against leniency. Helen was suspended from the College for theft, break and enter, disposal of College property and cheating.

Naomi

SCJA was notified that Naomi was having significant difficulties fulfilling the academic requirements for her course. Specifically, Naomi presented with significant difficulties in processing basic instructions, engaging in the kind of analytic thinking and writing required in an academic course, participating effectively in group activities with fellow students, and contributing to class discussion in a manner consistent with course content and academic expectations. The matter was referred to an Involuntary Leave of Absence Committee for review. The Committee determined that Naomi would be permitted to attend one course in the upcoming semester on a trail basis. The Committee was reconvened when the trial proved unsuccessful and Naomi was placed on an Involuntary Leave of Absence pending a change in her circumstances.

Whitney

A faculty member reported that Whitney was behaving aggressively in the classroom by yelling and throwing furniture if someone sat too close to her. Because Whitney was a student with a disability that effected her awareness of social norms and interactions, a negotiated outcome was deemed best suited to the circumstances. Whitney agreed to modify her behaviour and did so for a while. Unfortunately, a second incident involving social nearness and furniture and Whitney was placed on a progressive disciplinary path.

Sarah

Sarah submitted a quiz online on D2L. Sarah's answers were identical to those of the instructors answer key. Given the nature of the course, an answer identical to the key is highly unlikely. In fact, the instructor reported that no one has ever submitted an answer that matched the answer key. It turned out that that Sarah had a family member who had taken the course before. Sarah's cousin completed the questions and Sarah entered the answers online. Sarah admitted to cheating, she received zero on the exam.

Amanda

Students were instructed no to communicate with one another during a midterm examination. The instructor noticed two students talking and warned them to refrain from speaking. The students that received the warning were subsequently moved away from one another. Amanda witnessed the change in seating arrangement and despite warnings, decided to speak to another student during the exam. Amanda received zero on the exam.

Linda

Linda submitted an assignment that was identical to another student's submission. Grammatical and spelling errors, including omissions were identical. Linda stated that both she and her friend put equal effort into the assignment and found it difficult to complete. Although apologetic, Linda received zero on the assignment.

Michael

The instructor gave everyone in the classroom a partner to complete an assignment. All students were reminded that they were to collaborate with no one other than their partner. The solution to the assignment was posted on the internet site called "Slack". Michael was one of the students that posted the solution. Michael submitted the assignment with the solution he posted; other teams also submitted the assignment which contained the same solution. Michael admitted that he and another student posted the solution online and understood that this was a mistake. Michael received zero on the assignment.

Mia

In November 2015, Mia engaged in plagiarism by submitting a paper where she used sources without identifying or citing them. She received a mark of zero for the assignment. In February 2016, Mia again engaged in academic misconduct by submitting a mid-term exam paper composed entirely of multiple choice and paragraph answers that were identical to those of another student, including formatting. For this misconduct. Mia received a mark of zero on the exam, and a failing grade for the course. In February 2017, Mia submitted a paper that was substantially identical to that of another student. She received a mark of zero for the paper, and a failing grade for the course. Then in April 2017, Mia submitted a paper where 90% had been copied from outside sources without valid citation. Mia was suspended from the College for a period of one semester for violations of the Academic Conduct Policy (F1004).