

Academic Integrity Annual Report  
Academic Year 2021 (July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021)  
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Metropolitan State University

The [Student Guide to Academic Integrity](#) at Metropolitan State University states: "The integrity of the learning process is important in an educational context. Students must present their own original work to their teacher in order to demonstrate and improve their mastery of concepts and skills. Academic dishonesty undermines this relationship between learner and teacher that forms the foundation of higher learning" (p. 3).

The violations Metropolitan State University has identified include: Academic fraud, academic misconduct, cheating, collusion, double submission, fabrication, falsification, forgery, and plagiarism. Definitions of each of the violations can be found in the [Student Guide to Academic Integrity](#) (pages 9-11). Additionally, [University Policy #2190](#) and [University Procedure #219](#) provide specific information.

## New This Year

In response to the "Future Considerations" from the [2019-2020 Annual Academic Integrity Report](#), the following things have been added to this report:

- College or School (down to individual subject area)
- Success rates of the academic integrity workshops (attached as appendix)

## Violations

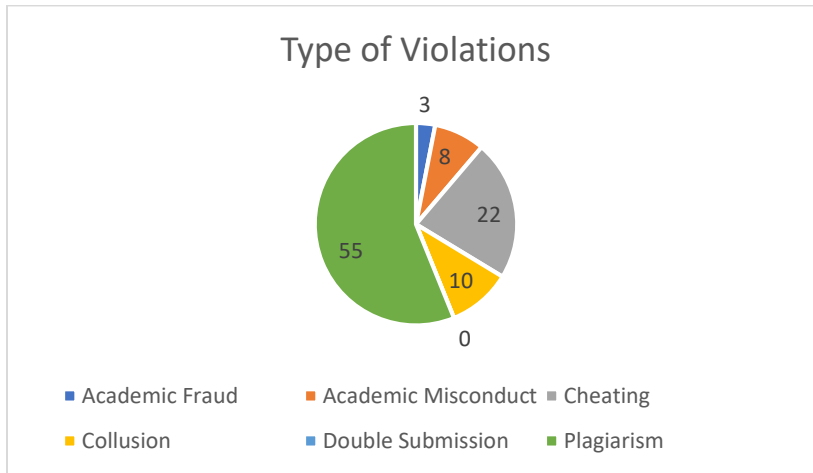
During the 2021 Academic Year, there were 73 total cases reported through the office of the Provost. It took an average of 5.52 calendar days to respond and issue violation letters and applicable sanctions. This response could have been decreased with some help by faculty:

- Submitting all documents in PDF formats
- Submitting the syllabus each time
- Submitting the supporting documentation to show the violation (ie: TurnItIn document, references to plagiarized materials, copies of exams, copies of student email exchanges, etc.)

Students can be submitted for one or more violations in the categories of academic fraud, academic misconduct, cheating, collusion, double submission, and plagiarism. The majority of cases (55 violations, 75.3%) were related to plagiarism. Of the 73 total cases (see Figure 1), 17 involved cases that had one or more violation categories at submission. The violations with two or more categories included a majority of cheating and collusion violations (6 violations, 35.3%).

Other violations with two or more categories included: academic fraud and academic misconduct; academic fraud, academic misconduct, cheating, and collusion; academic misconduct and cheating; academic misconduct, cheating, and collusion; academic misconduct, cheating, and plagiarism; and, cheating, collusion, and plagiarism.

Figure 1. Type of Academic Integrity Violation



Additionally, this year the Associate Provost tracked the department (see Figure 2) and college (see Figure 3) from each violation was filed. ICS had the most reported violations in this academic year, while education, management, and others followed. Twenty-nine (29) total departments across 6 colleges reported violations. You will see some information about “Additional Challenges to Academic Integrity” in the section below, including things like the level to which violations are reported differing by support area and college.

Figure 2. Violation by Support Area

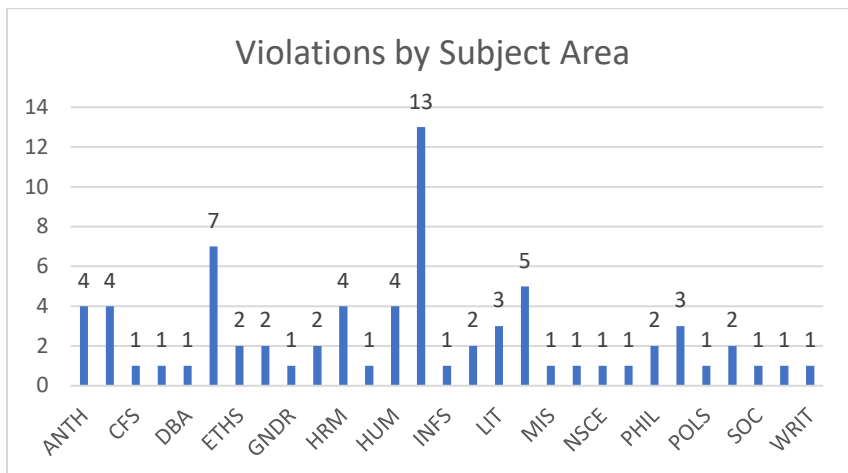
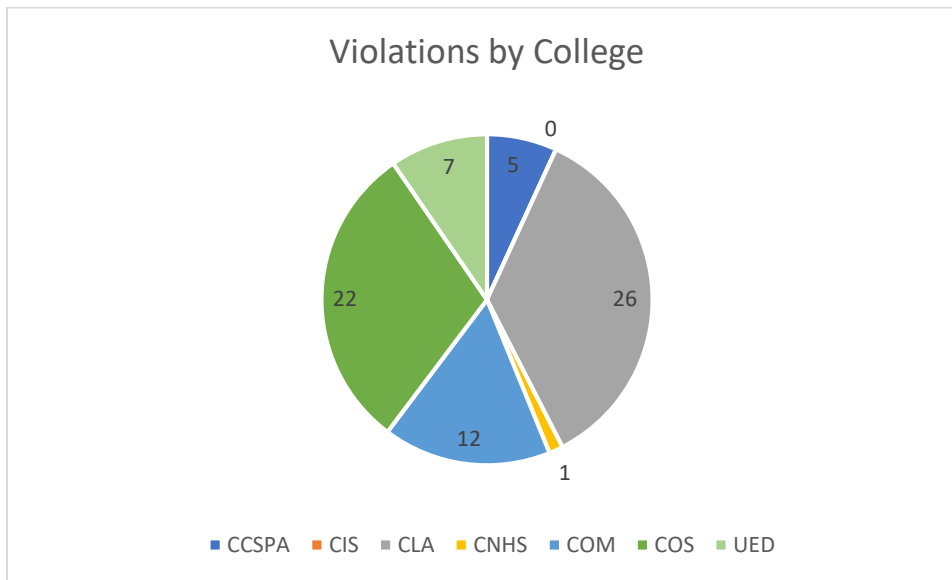


Figure 3. Violation by College



### Reasons for Differences in Violation Reporting to Sanction

Additionally, it is important to note that sometimes cases came in that were adjusted for the level of violation. In total, there were 65 requests at the first, 7 requests at the second, and 1 request at the third. Outcomes of the sanctions were 65 first level, 3 second level, 0 third level and 5 without sanction (see Figure 4). The most common reason a violation would be processed at a higher level is because there were prior violations, which the submitting faculty member would not have known. Because it could be a second offense, it is then processed as a second-level violation. This happened 2 times in academic year 2021. Some common reasons why violations were processed at a lower level include:

- A single faculty member submitting multiple reports the same day wanting the second report to mean a second violation had occurred even though the student was not necessarily aware of the first nor had they received the opportunity to go through the academic integrity workshop
- Faculty members using the language of the second-level violations, “committing plagiarism that exceeds the first-level violation threshold (such as using unattributed sources more than once within a major paper or submitting an assignment written by someone else)”
  - Example: student copied and pasted a discussion post without citation- about 1% of the total grade of the class, and student had no prior offenses
  - Example: student colluded on final exam with another student, student had no prior offenses, and was worth only 10% of the total grade
- Faculty members submitting the reports prior to talking to the student and determining there was a realistic explanation, and the faculty member withdrew the reports or asked for a lower sanction than originally reported

While not incredibly common, 6 cases (8.2%) were processed at lower levels than originally submitted by the faculty members (see Figure 5).

Figure 4. Level of Violation Requested

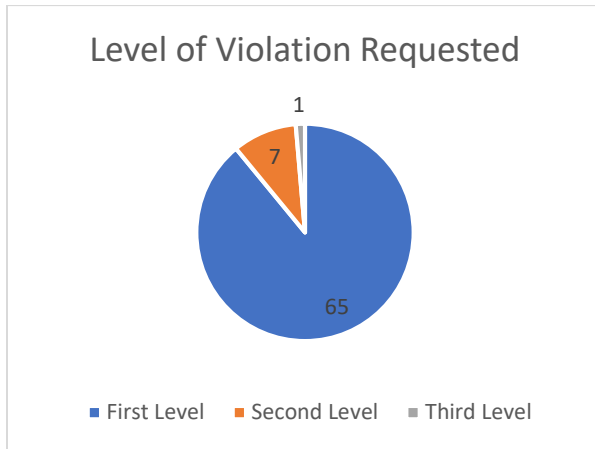
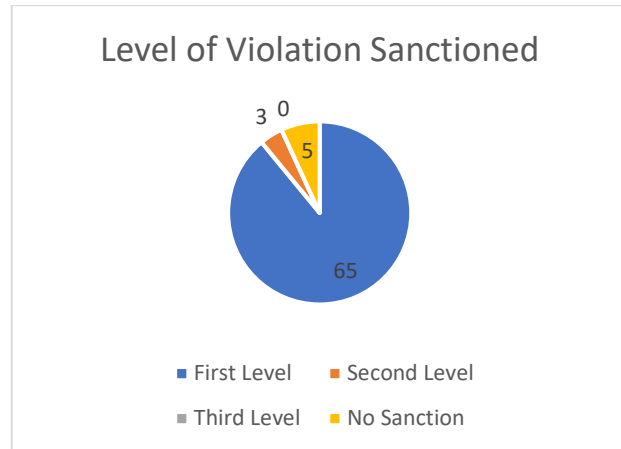


Figure 5. Level of Violation Sanctioned



The Associate Provost for Student Success reviews each violation reported to assess the level of the violation and sanction the student appropriately. One of the common reasons for difference between the violation requested and the violation sanctioned is the interpretation of the language “committing plagiarism that exceeds the first-level violation threshold (e.g. using unattributed sources more than once within a major paper or submitting an assignment written by someone else)” ([University Procedure #219](#)). In an effort to maintain some level of equity among all potential violations across all disciplines and colleges, the Associate Provost has only assessed a first-time violation at this level when it exceeds at least 25% of the total grade for the course. At anything less than that, a student could still potentially pass the course with a satisfactory grade even if awarded a zero on the assignment that is part of the sanction for first-

## Demographics

As noted in the diagrams below, the violations reported through the [Academic Integrity Violation Report](#) are a majority undergraduate (see Figure 6). 70 (95.89%) were undergraduate students. 2 (2.74%) were graduate students. 1 (1.37%) was a doctoral student. 42 (57.5%) were male, and 31 (42.5%) were female (as identified by ISRS) (see Figure 7). This was a big shift in gender from the prior year (which was 61.1% female and 38.9% male).

Figure 6. Program Level.

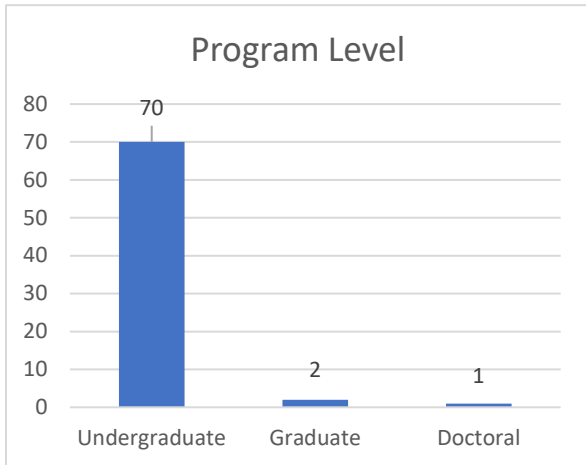
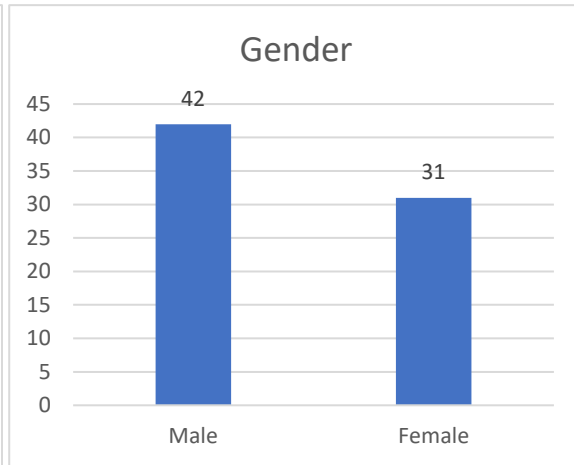
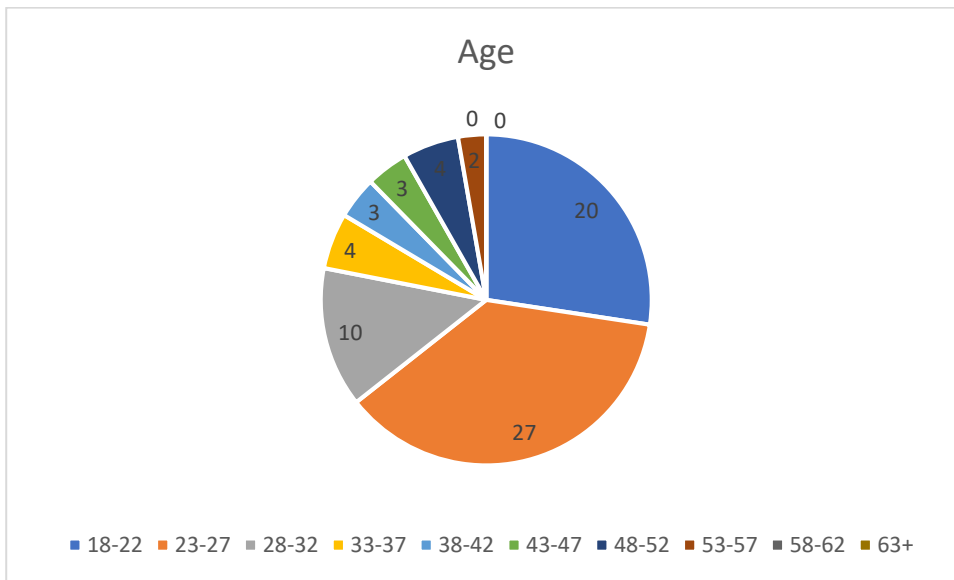


Figure 7. Gender.



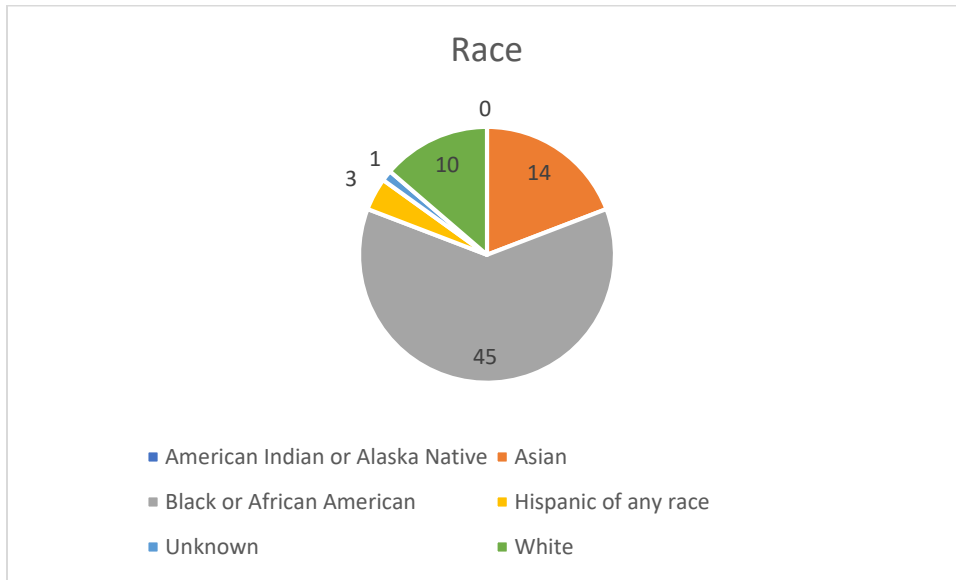
Age ranges for those with violations were between 18-57 years old (see Figure 8), with a vast majority being under the age of 33 (78.1%), which is a slight increase from the prior year (73.6%).

Figure 8. Age



The distribution of cases (see Figure 9) among students from different races was a majority of Black or African American (45 students, 61.6% (+13% from prior year) of total cases) or Asian (14 students, 19.2% (-11.4% from prior year) of total cases). White students represented only 13.7 % (10) of total cases, a decrease of 4.4% from prior year. There were also 3 students of Hispanic decent and 1 of American Indian or Alaska Native.

Figure 9. Race



## Common Barriers to Understanding Academic Integrity Concepts

In reviewing cases from 2017- 2021, the Associate Provost found some common barriers that existed for students who had academic integrity violations reported. Those include:

- English as a second, third, or fourth language
- Multiple languages and differences in verbal and written language
- Cultural differences in how plagiarism is defined and interpreted

Additionally, based on the quizzes completed at the first-level academic integrity workshop, many some students continue to believe that every cases of possible integrity violation should be defined in policy or procedure.

## Additional Challenges to Academic Integrity

Internally at Metropolitan State University, the Associate Provost has also noticed some trends with faculty reporting:

- Certain colleges or schools are more likely to report than others
- Certain violations have been elevated due to the language in the current procedure that states “willful violation of the ethical code of the profession for which the student is preparing” is a third-level violation” ([University Procedure #219](#))
- Certain faculty have different thresholds for what is a reportable violation or not
- Varying views of this policy and procedure as punitive versus educational

When paired with one or more of the common barriers to understanding for students, there is an elevated level of violations that can have longstanding impacts to students.

## Future Considerations

In future iterations of this report, the Associate Provost for Student Success would like to be able to make comparisons of these categories to the total population at Metropolitan State University.

- International Student Services coding
- Center for Accessibility Resources coding
- Further breakdown for Black or African American and Asian, whenever those updates become available in ISRS
- Further explore possibilities to breakdown success rates of the academic integrity workshops (scores and number of attempts to achieve a passing score of 80% or greater)

Additionally, policy and procedure revisions should include an informal process to resolve integrity violations (much like the grade appeals process).

If you have suggestions for additional analysis, please reach out to Associate Provost Bobbie Anderson at [roberta.anderson@metrostate.edu](mailto:roberta.anderson@metrostate.edu).

## Appendix: Academic Integrity Workshop Success Rates

One of the proposed activities identified last year was to breakdown the success rates of the academic integrity workshops. Some factors of success could include:

- Total number of students who were enrolled in the courses compared to those who successfully passed (a score of 80%)
- Number of attempts it took for students to pass
- Success rates for the level I workshop and the level II workshop
- Grade distribution for the level I workshop and the level II workshop

Upon further investigation, it was not as easy to compile these data as originally thought. One of the challenges is that Metro State has been using the same course shells for a long period of time. There was not an identified way to break down those data to only this reporting period in meaningful ways. However, a baseline for information was identified (see Table 1).

Table 1. Success Rates of Workshop

	Level One	Level Two
<b>Total Number of Students Registered</b>	298	64
<b>Total number of students who attempted some portion of the workshop</b>	256 (85.9% of total students)	40 (62.5% of total students)
<b>Total number of students who successfully passed (80%) or better</b>	234 (91.4% of students who attempted the quiz)	34 (85% of students who attempted the quiz)
<b>Total number of students who did not successfully pass</b>	22 (8.6% of students who attempted the quiz)	6 (15% of students who attempted the quiz)

The Associate Provost will work with colleagues from the Center for Online Learning to see what additional way the information can be analyzed to provide different outcomes.