

**Report of the Ad Hoc Committee to Review the Administrative Boards of
Harvard College and Harvard Kenneth C. Griffin Graduate School of Arts &
Sciences**

March 27, 2025

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I. Introduction

In October 2024, Hopi Hoekstra, Edgerley Family Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS), charged an Ad Hoc Committee to review the Administrative Boards of Harvard College and Harvard Kenneth C. Griffin Graduate School of Arts & Sciences (hereafter AHCAB).

As the charge states:

“The Faculty of Arts and Sciences has delegated to the administrative boards of the Harvard College and of the Harvard Kenneth C. Griffin Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (Harvard Griffin GSAS) the power to enforce the regulations of the Faculty relating to education and for the conduct of all ordinary matters of administration and discipline. By consistently applying the regulations of the Faculty, the boards foster student growth as individuals, scholars, and members of our academic community.

As bodies empowered by the Faculty, periodic review ensures that our practices evolve to accommodate changes in policy and our society. This review is intended to explore a number of key issues including the members and composition of the boards, the framework used for sanctioning students in disciplinary cases, the appeals process, and how the boards educate the community about their work.”

The charge specifically asked the committee to consider the following:

- Review the composition of the administrative boards, developing recommendations, for example, regarding the number of members, terms of service, representation from relevant units, the proportion of faculty and their different statuses, and staff members, and the chairpersonship of the Board.
- Review the process by which the boards separate the determination of whether there has been a rule violation from the deliberations regarding sanctioning.
- Evaluate the framework used for sanctioning students in disciplinary cases, including currency and efficacy of the sanctions used given the faculty's goals for discipline and best practices in student conduct administration, e.g. the threshold between informal and formal responses; the principles underpinning the sanctioning framework, such as consistent treatment based on behavior; and how precedents are and/or should be used in the deliberations of the boards.
- Review historical reasoning for the threshold for appeal to the Faculty Council and the range of responses available to the Council as it relates to the College and Harvard Griffin GSAS.
- Investigate the definition of "in good standing" as it relates to the College vs. Harvard Griffin GSAS and clarify what it means for students to fall out of that status; determine what negative implications being out of good standing has for a student, e.g. for funding or fellowships, participation in academic or extracurricular activities, or implications for other Harvard Schools in their interactions with the student.
- Develop practical recommendations for educating students, faculty, and administrators about the work of the administrative boards, and the distinct roles and approaches taken by the graduate and undergraduate boards. This will be informed by information regarding how the boards share information about their activities and outcomes, including how those practices are evolving.

After consultation with the Dean's office, the committee decided to limit its review to the handling of cases of social misconduct (as opposed to academic misconduct) by these two bodies. At the level of Harvard College, as explained below, this meant reviewing primarily the Disciplinary Committee of the Harvard College Ad Board (hereafter DCAB). The Petitions Committee of the Ad Board hears student petitions for academic policy exceptions and was not included in this review. Academic dishonesty by undergraduates, which had long fallen into the purview of the Ad Board, is now handled by the Honor Council, which formed as a separate body in 2015 and was also not in our purview.

In the case of the Harvard Griffin GSAS Ad Board, which hears cases of academic misconduct as well as social misconduct by graduate students, we focused our review only on the latter cases.

We proceeded with our work following the process described in Section II below. In Section III, we share a brief history of the Administrative Boards of Harvard College and Harvard Griffin GSAS and previous reviews. Section IV provides an overview of the current structures and procedures of the undergraduate DCAB and the graduate Ad Board. In Section V, we offer our impressions, and in Section VI, we develop and explain our recommendations. In Section VII we offer some closing thoughts. The recommendations are listed in summary form in the final Section VIII.

II. Committee work

A. Committee membership

The Ad Hoc Committee to Review the Administrative Boards of Harvard College and Harvard Griffin GSAS was chaired by Ann Blair, Carl H. Pforzheimer University Professor. The other members of the committee were:

- Edo Berger, Professor of Astronomy
- Suzannah Clark, Morton B. Knafel Professor of Music
- Matt Nock, Edgar Pierce Professor of Psychology
- Anne Shreffler, James Edward Ditson Professor of Music
- Dan Smail, Frank B. Baird, Jr. Professor of History
- Joy St. John, Director of Admissions, Harvard College
- John Wakeley, Professor of Organismic and Evolutionary Biology

In addition, Valerie Beilenson, Deputy Chief of Staff in the FAS Dean's Office, provided staff support.

B. Committee process

AHCAB met weekly as a full committee from November 2024 through February 2025. In addition to regular Friday meetings lasting up to two hours, the committee convened on other occasions to talk with and gather information from relevant parties.

Over the course of these four months, AHCAB met with and/or gathered written input from:

- The Secretary of the Faculty (Susan Lively)
- The Disciplinary Committee of the Harvard College Administrative Board
- The Danoff Dean of Harvard College (Rakesh Khurana)
- The Dean of Student Services of Harvard College (Mike Burke)

- The Harvard Griffin GSAS Interim Dean of Students and Assistant Dean of Student Success (Dan Volchok)
- Faculty who served as personal advisors to students appearing before the College and Harvard Griffin GSAS Ad Boards in AY2023-2024
- Harvard College Resident Deans
- The Harvard Griffin GSAS Administrative Board, including the Dean of Harvard Griffin GSAS (Emma Dench)
- Faculty and senior administrators who were previous longstanding members of the College Administrative Board
- Faculty Deans of the Harvard College Houses
- Currently enrolled undergraduate students who have appeared before the Disciplinary Committee of the Administrative Board (by survey and in person)
- Currently enrolled Harvard Griffin GSAS students who have appeared before the Harvard Griffin GSAS Ad Board for social behavior cases (by survey)
- The Assistant Dean and Secretary of the Harvard College Administrative Board (Titus Adeleke) and the Case Manager (Summer Shafer) for the Office of Academic Integrity and Student Conduct (OAISC)
- Members of the Docket Committees of Faculty Council from AY2021-2022 through AY2023-2024
- The Co-Presidents and Academic Life Officer of the Harvard Undergraduate Association

III. Brief history of Harvard's disciplinary bodies

Universities have required disciplinary bodies since the origins of universities themselves. At Harvard, the bodies currently charged with certain disciplinary matters, the Administrative Boards of the College and the Graduate School, have been in place since 1890. Legislation of June 24, 1890 says: "To delegate with full powers, until further order of this Faculty, to the Administrative boards of the Graduate School, the College and the Scientific School respectively, the enforcement of the regulations of the Faculty relating to each of those departments, and the conduct of all ordinary matters of administration and discipline." Further legislation of November 25, 1890 clarifies: "Cases of discipline shall be acted upon by the Administrative Boards of the Graduate School, Harvard College, and the Lawrence Scientific School, respectively, and their action shall be final, except in such cases as in their judgment should be punished by expulsion or dismissal, which shall be referred by them to the Faculty. But no student shall be suspended by any administrative board without the concurrence of two-thirds of all the members of that Board."

In 1890-1891 the College Ad Board consisted of sixteen members, including thirteen members of the ladder faculty, one tutor, and two instructors. This distribution, more or less, remained in force until the 1950s. The College reorganized in 1952, creating the

position of Allston Burr Senior Tutor, the holders of which were to act as House-based deans of students and were also expected to serve on the College Ad Board. They appear on the roster for the Ad Board for the first time in the 1952-1953 academic year. Some of them were ladder faculty and some were not. By 1970, the Resident Deans were most often lecturers or administrative deans, and from this point forward increasingly few ladder faculty have served on the Ad Board. This has been the pattern since then, despite the fact that reviews of the Ad Board that took place in 1981, 2002 and 2009-2010 have each recommended increasing the number of ladder faculty on the Ad Board.

On May 19, 1970, a Faculty vote taken in light of the “new Harvard-Radcliffe residential pattern” that began in the fall of 1970 asked the Governing Boards of Harvard College and of Radcliffe College to “dissolve the existing Administrative Board” and to form instead “a joint Harvard-Radcliffe Administrative Board ... as a standing committee of the Faculty; and that in accordance with the Fifth and Eleventh Statutes of the University the Faculty delegate to this Board ordinary matters of administration and discipline, including the power to impose all disciplinary penalties except dismissal and expulsion, which shall continue, as at present, to require votes by the full Faculty.” In 2009, given the increased size of the FAS and the importance of maintaining the privacy of the cases of misconduct so severe as to warrant dismissal and expulsion, the FAS voted to delegate to the Faculty Council its prerogative to review and approve (or not) Ad Board recommendations to expel or dismiss a student.

The Harvard Griffin GSAS Ad Board has also been a distinct entity since 1890 and (to the best of our knowledge) has remained stable in its composition, structure, procedures, and remit for the entirety of its history. It is chaired by the Dean of Harvard Griffin GSAS and comprises the Harvard Griffin GSAS Dean of Students and multiple ladder faculty members as well as senior administrators.

The disciplinary landscape of the FAS has gradually expanded to include additional bodies which generally still exist today in various states of activation. At a time of crisis following the campus protests of 1969, the University formed a separate committee tasked with fact-finding and (when needed) sanctioning student acts of civil disobedience. In 1970, the FAS authorized the FAS Committee on Rights and Responsibilities (CRR), which had been formed in 1969, to engage in fact-finding and sanctioning student infractions of the University-wide Statement on Rights and Responsibilities (USRR) which was also adopted at this time. At the time, the CRR was composed of faculty and students, with students (graduate and undergraduates combined) holding half the votes. In practice, this committee did not function effectively. As described in an email to a Crimson reporter in 2000 by John Fox, Secretary of FAS: “After the first term or so the student members decided that they did not much care for disciplining their peers. A few other students felt that any administration or faculty participation in student discipline was wrong anyway. These objections led students to boycott the process by which students were elected to the committee. The Faculty tried to revise the election process and the structure for the CRR to make it more palatable,

but students continued their boycott. Finally, in 1985, a faculty committee was appointed to recommend a new body, rather different from the old CRR, which would nevertheless continue to have student members: the Student-Faculty Judicial Board (SFJB) the formation of which was approved by vote of the Faculty in 1987.” The SFJB exists today, as described in the College Handbook (2024-2025 ed. p. 72; hereafter “College Handbook”), “to hear those disciplinary cases for which there is no clear Faculty legislation or accepted precedent within this community for response.” The SFJB heard one case in 1989 involving a student who had forged student IDs. Four cases have been sent to the SFJB since 2008. The three in 2009 all involved plagiarism and were sent back to the College Ad Board to adjudicate. The fourth occurred in 2022 and involved a student from the Harvard Griffin GSAS. It was sent back to the Harvard Griffin GSAS Ad Board to adjudicate. The SFJB is currently populated and, to the best of our knowledge, there are at present no plans to retire the board.

Meanwhile, a University-wide CRR (UCRR), distinct from the FAS CRR, was formed in 1970 to handle violations of the USRR that spanned multiple Schools at Harvard. The UCRR is designed to coordinate fact-finding processes for incidents involving multiple Schools while leaving the final disciplinary decisions to the Schools themselves. In summer 2024, a working group convened by the President and Provost proposed procedures for the UCRR to engage in fact-finding “in cases involving possible violations of the University-wide Statement on Rights and Responsibilities (USRR) involving students from two or more Faculties or cases alleging that students from one Faculty have disrupted the performance of normal duties and activities within another Faculty” (document of July 2024: https://provost.harvard.edu/sites/hwpi.harvard.edu/files/provost/files/ucrr_procedures.pdf).

In 2003 the College set up an Office of Sexual Assault Prevention and Response which worked to centralize the wide range of campus and extra-campus support services and educational resources related to sexual assault. In 2014 President Drew Faust convened a University-wide Task Force on the Prevention of Sexual Assault. As a result of the findings of the Task Force, the first University-wide Title IX policy and procedures were implemented later that year, including the formation of the Office for Sexual and Gender-Based Dispute Resolution, now named Office for Dispute Resolution or ODR (<https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2014/07/qa-with-harvards-title-ix-officer/>). In 2021, the Office of Sexual Assault Prevention and Response was merged with the university Title IX Office and renamed the Office for Gender Equity. For allegations arising from incidents of sexual and gender-based misconduct, formal complaints are submitted to the University Title IX Coordinator and investigated by the ODR. The determination regarding responsibility is then sent to the Ad Board of the relevant School, so that it may separately consider the imposition of discipline.

In 2014, the FAS approved the implementation of the Harvard College Honor Code and the formation of the College Honor Council charged with both investigating and sanctioning violations of academic integrity. The Honor Council membership includes

undergraduates and graduate students (in their capacities as teaching fellows), in addition to members of OAISC (Office of Academic Integrity and Student Conduct), Resident Deans, and other faculty members. At present, no members of the ladder faculty serve on the Honor Council. [In case it is of interest the Honor Council currently comprises: 4 senior administrators, 31 Harvard College students, 4 TFs in Harvard Griffin GSAS, 5 Allston Burr Resident Deans (who are all Lecturers) and a further 6 members of the faculty (2 Senior preceptors and one Preceptor, 2 Associate senior lecturers and one Lecturer)]. At the time of the formation of the Honor Council, the Office of the Administrative Board transitioned to the Office of Academic Integrity and Student Conduct (OAISC), which now oversees both the Honor Council and the Ad Board. The Harvard Griffin GSAS Ad Board was not affected by the implementation of the Honor Council and continues to investigate and sanction cases of academic dishonesty by graduate students.

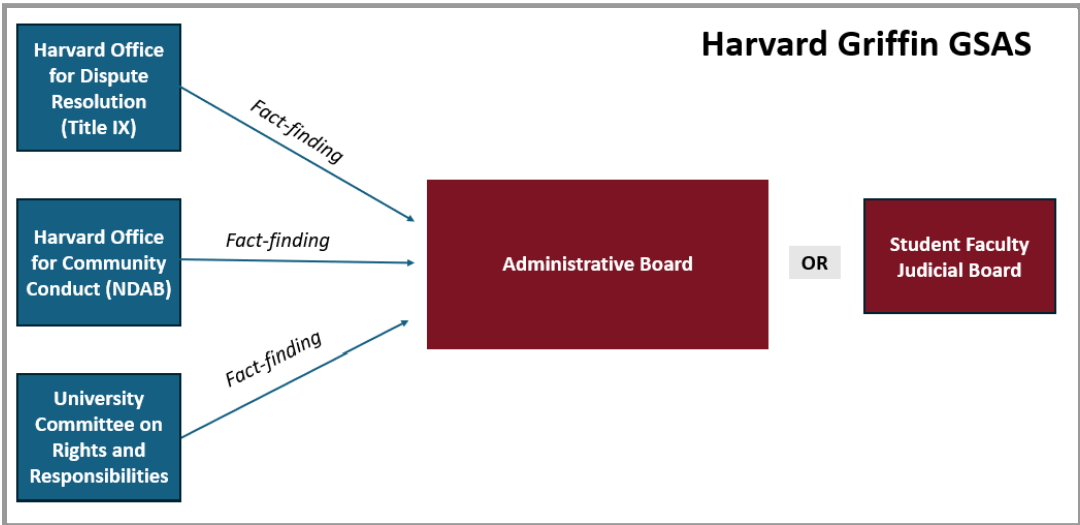
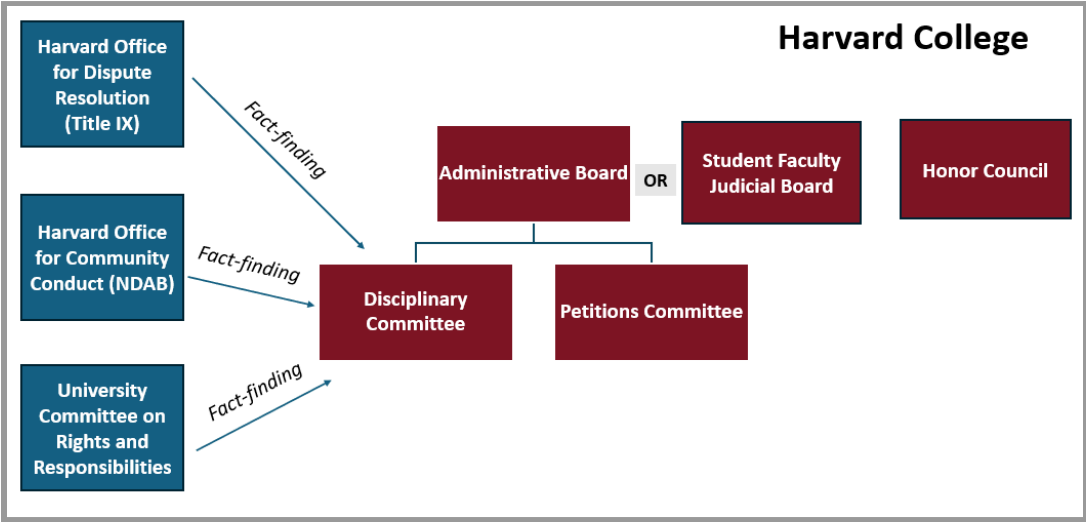
In 2023, the FAS approved Non-discrimination and Anti-bullying (NDAB) policies and procedures administered by the University Office for Community Conduct (OCC). In late January 2025 the OCC expanded the guidelines for the interpretation and enforcement of these policies. When cases of this kind arise, Local Designated Resources receive reports and complaints and recommend supportive measures; if disciplinary sanctions are deemed necessary, they are determined by the DCAB (College Handbook p. 49) or the Harvard Griffin GSAS Ad Board as appropriate.

Also in 2023, the Administrative Board of Harvard College distributed its work between two newly formed committees with distinct membership and meeting times. The Petitions Committee (chaired by the Secretary of the Ad Board) hears petitions for exceptions to academic policies (e.g. for make-up exams, simultaneous enrollment, taking more than 24 credits in one semester, late withdrawals, and the like). The Disciplinary Committee (DCAB), chaired by the Dean of the College, considers disciplinary cases. These are of two kinds. On the one hand the DCAB determines sanctions in cases investigated by specialized fact-finding bodies (by the Office of Dispute Resolution in Title IX cases, by the Office for Community Conduct for NDAB cases, or by the University Committee on Rights and Responsibilities for violations of the USRR involving multiple schools). On the other hand the DCAB investigates and sanctions cases of misconduct that lie directly in its purview (as discussed below in section IV.A). Mike Burke, Dean of Student Services, reports that the split into separate committees for Petitions and for Discipline was designed

to alleviate the burden on all members, but was also designed to help attract ladder faculty to join the College Ad Board. In its prior formulation, members of the College Ad Board had to join weekly meetings several hours in duration and dealt mostly with requests for exceptions to policies (i.e. petitions) and academic review. By separating the work into committees, we could have different members specialize in the varying work and attract faculty to the disciplinary committee with the promise of

an easier workload and a focus on student conduct. It also made it possible to remove ladder faculty from the routine business of considering petitions and to reserve their contributions instead for the DCAB.

The thirteen Allston Burr Resident Deans and four Resident Deans of First-Year Students are now distributed roughly equally among the Disciplinary Committee, the Petitions Committee, and the Honor Council. The Resident Deans each serve on one of these and it is expected that they will rotate among the different bodies after 2-3 years in order to ensure that they gain experience in each of these contexts. Resident Deans play a crucial role on these committees given their uniquely holistic perspective on students, both in the residential setting and in the classroom. Allston Burr Resident Deans are members of the faculty by virtue of their appointment as resident dean and hold dependent appointments as lecturers in various FAS departments.



The history outlined above reveals two significant changes in the disciplinary landscape over the past half-century. First, in the aftermath of the campus protests of 1969, and continuing up to summer 2024, efforts have been made to develop alternative means for handling cases of expressive speech or political protest. The failure of earlier efforts suggests that this is an ongoing problem. Second, from 1970 onward, the number of bodies in the College and Harvard Griffin GSAS empowered to make findings in cases of student misconduct has expanded. These now include the SFJB (which replaced the FAS CRR), the UCRR, the ODR, the Honor Council, the DCAB, and the University OCC. All disciplinary bodies operate under the authority of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. However, non-disciplinary actions (which are not made by the DCAB), such as placing a student on involuntary leave, may be taken directly by the Dean of Students (for the College and Harvard Griffin GSAS) or the Dean of Academic Programs (in Harvard Griffin GSAS); College Handbook, pp. 42-44 and <https://gsas.harvard.edu/policy/involuntary-leaves-absence>). This administrative action is generally a response to risks to campus and personal safety, or a failure to follow administrative procedure (e.g., not enrolling for the minimum credits in a term).

IV. Current structure and procedures of the Ad Board

A. Composition and philosophy of the Disciplinary Committee of the College Ad Board

Within the College, the Disciplinary Committee of the Ad Board (DCAB) plays a central role in this constellation of specialized fact-finding bodies. As a body possessing authority to determine whether there has been a rule violation, it is responsible for investigating instances of social misconduct that do not otherwise fall into the purview of the other fact-finding bodies. As a disciplinary body, it determines sanctions in cases of social misconduct and also receives referrals of cases from the ODR, OCC, and, potentially, the UCRR. (Note that the Honor Council applies sanctions in cases involving academic misconduct.)

Examples of social misconduct that fall entirely within the purview of the DCAB are indicated in the College Handbook, pp. 53-65. The list is extensive and includes: underage possession or consumption of alcohol, possession or use of illicit drugs, physical violence, hazing, harassment, disorderly conduct, vandalism, lying or incivility to a university officer, misuse of campus or computer resources, theft, possession-sale-use of illegal item or weapon, misuse-[wrongful] possession-sale of ID, violations of fire safety regulations. “A disciplinary case begins with an allegation in the form of a complaint or report made to OAISC by an officer of the University (Harvard University Police, members of Residential Life, faculty, teaching fellow, staff, etc.), by another student (peer), or by an outside agency (such as the police or courts).” (Procedures Manual of the OAISC, 2024-2025 edition [hereafter “OAISC Procedures”], p. 65) The DCAB, unlike the other fact-finding bodies, has limited fact-finding capabilities of its own and is not designed to conduct extensive investigations. For this reason, it normally relies on a body of evidence consisting of the complaint, a response written by the

student, any materials the student chooses to provide, and the oral statements made by the student. Witness statements may be requested and acquired from any relevant parties involved in an incident to provide further context, but their participation cannot be required. In each case, the evidence is reviewed and considered by a Subcommittee of the DCAB, which also meets with the student (should the student wish to meet). The case is then referred to the whole DCAB along with the Subcommittee's recommendation if the Subcommittee decides to make a recommendation. During the proceedings, the student is represented by their Resident Dean and may also request the presence of a personal advisor (any officer of the University who is not related to the student): "A personal advisor is someone with whom a student can speak freely about the Board process, their experiences etc., and who can provide support for the student throughout the process. The procedures further specify that the personal advisor has access to a redacted version of all case material, may help the student write their initial and response statements, may attend any Subcommittee meetings with the student, can attend the student's appearance before the Board, and can provide general advice and support." (OAISC Procedures, p. 48) The DCAB as a whole then determines an appropriate disciplinary response on the basis of a holistic assessment of the evidence at its disposal, including any prior disciplinary record of the student. Although the DCAB may follow the recommendation of the Subcommittee, it is not bound to that recommendation and retains the full range of disciplinary action afforded to it by the Faculty.

In 2024-25, the DCAB has twenty members: eight Harvard College senior administrators, five Resident Deans, plus seven other faculty members – three senior lecturers and four ladder faculty members in the fall semester, three in the spring. In 2022-23 and 2023-24 the Ad Board did not include any ladder faculty members, beyond the Dean of the College who serves as Chair but by tradition does not vote except in cases of a tie. In the six years prior to that there was one ladder faculty member, other than the Dean of the College, on the Ad Board. The greatest number of ladder faculty on the College Ad Board in recent history was four in 2015-16.

Serving on the DCAB requires a significant time commitment. Members set aside time in their schedules for weekly meetings lasting 2 to 3 hours during the term, though about half are canceled due to a lack of business. Occasionally, members are called to serve outside term time as needed. In preparation for meetings, they review extensive case statements and engage in thorough deliberations, striving to reach decisions that are educationally beneficial.

In discussions with the review committee, DCAB members consistently emphasized that even when disciplinary measures are imposed, the primary purpose of college discipline is pedagogical and restorative—an approach that seemingly emerged in the 1960s. However, this philosophy is poorly represented in the College Handbook and procedural guidelines. The passage below, from the Procedures of the Ad Board (circulated to those

who appear before or serve on the Ad Board), is the only explicit statement of this philosophy we could find:

Harvard College has adopted a pedagogic model of college discipline, as opposed to a model based on the criminal justice system. While discipline may be imposed, the goal is for the College to effectively reach its students and engage with them about their behavior and the reasons why they may not have met the community standards for conduct within the Harvard community (OAISC Procedures, p. 39).

The philosophy of the DCAB, in other words, largely exists as a form of tacit knowledge that is transmitted indirectly through experience on the DCAB. This philosophy was reviewed and explicitly endorsed by the Committee to Review the Ad Board which reported in April 2009:

In the educational model, while discipline may be imposed, the goal is for the College to effectively reach its students and to engage with them about their behavior and our expectations for conduct within our community. The College's underlying premise is that, except in the rarest of circumstances, students involved in disciplinary cases ultimately will graduate from Harvard; thus the imperative is to help students understand the rules and the consequences of their actions so that they can learn greater responsibility within the College, the University and beyond. The criminal justice model fundamentally begins with the premise that the College's goal is to impose punishment and that therefore all the protections of the criminal justice system should be made available to students facing disciplinary charges. After thoughtful consideration of the various positions presented, the Committee endorsed the Board's pedagogic approach to discipline.

In our committee's meetings with current and former members of the DCAB, we found that this philosophy was widely understood as the bedrock of the approach to college discipline. Our review committee endorses the Ad Board's educational philosophy and recommends below various measures designed to improve understanding of this philosophy and the procedures of the Ad Board across our community. Two principles of the DCAB seem especially important to affirm: 1- that these disciplinary bodies assess behavior regardless of its motivation; 2- that the disciplinary process concerns individual student behavior.

B. Composition and philosophy of the Harvard Griffin GSAS Ad Board

The Harvard Griffin GSAS Administrative Board investigates and sanctions violations of the norms of academic integrity as well as social behavior. The board is chaired by the Dean of Harvard Griffin GSAS and in 2024-25 it is composed of eighteen further

members: six senior administrators in Harvard Griffin GSAS, the FAS Dean for Student Services, the Registrar, one senior lecturer and nine ladder faculty members (<https://gsas.harvard.edu/about/committees/administrative-board>). The Harvard Griffin GSAS Ad Board meets whenever new cases arise. The board does not meet as a whole each time. For each case, there must be a quorum of at least three administrators and three faculty members plus the Board chair to hear a case. For this reason, the Harvard Griffin GSAS Ad Board can be understood as relying on a broader pool of faculty and administrators who are available to meet and form the necessary quorum when need arises. The review committee learned that the philosophy of the Harvard Griffin GSAS Ad Board is not educational in the same way as that of the College Ad Board since graduate students are considered to be adults rather than adults-in-information. Nonetheless, proceedings are conducted so as to maximize opportunities for growth. We could not find any previous reviews of the Harvard Griffin GSAS Administrative Board.

C. Outcomes

Both Ad Boards have at their disposal the same range of outcomes. These are described in most detail in the OAISC Procedures, as cited below; they also appear here: <https://gsas.harvard.edu/about/committees/administrative-board>

- Scratch: finding of no responsibility which fully exonerates the student
- Take no action: “This finding in a disciplinary case ordinarily means that a serious accusation has been made but the facts of the matter were not, or could not be, substantiated.” (p. 20)
- Admonish: “This does not change the student’s standing in the College, but it is a vote that can carry serious consequences if a pattern of misconduct or carelessness develops. Admonition is a finding of responsibility and a warning from the Board that a student has violated the rules or standards of conduct in the College, and it begins a state of jeopardy (i.e. it signals to the student that the Board may respond to future misconduct with formal disciplinary action).” (p. 51)
- Disciplinary Probation: “The length of time of disciplinary probation communicates to the student the gravity of the matter. Probation typically lasts between one and two terms. ... Any further violations reviewed by the Board—even one less serious than the initial cause of the probation vote—during the term of probation can likely prompt a requirement to withdraw. ... The student is not in good standing for the term of probation and any transcript ordered in this period will note the probation.” (p. 51) Probation does not figure on a student’s record after the period of probation has elapsed.
- Requirement to Withdraw: “The educational goal of the vote is to put the student in a better position to succeed upon the student’s return to the College. ... Generally, the Board requires students to withdraw for two terms, but in more serious cases may require a student to withdraw for three or even four terms.” (p. 52) The outcome will become a permanent part of the student’s transcript (p. 86).
- The Ad Boards may recommend dismissal or expulsion but these two most serious outcomes can only be enacted by vote of Faculty Council. Dismissal “severs a student’s relationship with Harvard College and University. ... A student

who is dismissed may be readmitted only in rare instances and by a vote of the Faculty Council. ... A student who is expelled may never be readmitted or restored to good standing.” (p. 23) A decision to dismiss or expel a student may not be appealed.

D. Timeliness of disciplinary decisions

Ordinarily the time elapsed from the beginning of a case to a decision by the DCAB is expected to last from two to four weeks, depending on how much information the Board receives during the investigation. However, this estimate is often more aspirational than factual; for example, some DCAB cases last year took two months. Title IX and NDAB complaints, which mirror the same procedures and timelines, take a significantly longer time between a complaint being filed and a decision being made—from months to more than a year. Outside of external court cases that may prolong an open complaint, the Office of Dispute Resolution and the Office for Community Conduct adhere to set timelines that are detailed in their procedures (<https://oge.harvard.edu/procedures> and https://provost.harvard.edu/files/provost/files/non-discrimination_and_anti-bullying_policies.pdf, respectively).

From time to time, the DCAB faces a cluster of cases that tax its capacity to handle cases at its normal scheduled meetings. In those situations, the DCAB typically meets more frequently and outside term time if needed in order to proceed through each case individually. Even so, students sometimes have to wait for a considerable length of time for the resolution of their cases. Especially complex are those cases that reach the DCAB shortly before Commencement. Since students with a pending disciplinary case are not considered to be in good standing, they may not receive their degrees. But the College is aware that depriving a student of the Commencement experience would itself be highly punitive, so the procedures of the OAISC include an important grace clause: when a student is prevented from receiving their degree at Commencement due to an unresolved case or due to being on probation for a period that extends past Commencement, the student is nonetheless allowed to participate in Commencement and the House ceremony. The student in that situation will receive an envelope without a diploma and will be awarded their degree once their disciplinary case is resolved or their term of probation has ended. The review committee learned that every year a few students are in this situation.

Harvard Griffin GSAS cases are usually completed within two months. However, this time frame could be extended based on the investigation and/or scheduling issues. Individual cases are assigned to previously scheduled board meetings when all materials, including the student's response statement, are received.

E. Reconsiderations and appeals

In some circumstances, students may ask the relevant Ad Board to “reconsider” a disciplinary decision. They may also initiate an “appeal” to the Faculty Council. These are distinct procedures.

Under the procedures currently in force, both undergraduate and graduate students may request a reconsideration from the DCAB or the Harvard Griffin GSAS Ad Board as appropriate “provided that new materially relevant information becomes available or there is reasonable evidence of a procedural error” (College Handbook, p. 67; and similarly in <https://gsas.harvard.edu/policy/harvard-griffin-gsas-administrative-board>).

Harvard Griffin GSAS students may appeal a requirement to withdraw for more than one term, but not a sanction of probation.

<https://gsas.harvard.edu/policy/harvard-griffin-gsas-administrative-board>).

Undergraduates, by contrast, may appeal a requirement to withdraw for more than one term or probation for more than one term (OAISC Procedures, p. 63).

Appeals are allowed on two grounds

(<https://oaisc.fas.harvard.edu/reconsiderations-and-appeals/>):

1. The relevant Administrative Board made a procedural error that may change the outcome of the decision; or
2. Based upon a review of the annual disciplinary statistics of the relevant Administrative Board, the sanction imposed was inconsistent with the Board’s usual practices and inappropriate.

When a student files an appeal, the relevant Board sends the full case with an accompanying letter explaining the decision to the Docket Committee of the Faculty Council. The Docket Committee reviews the case to determine whether it meets one of the two grounds for appeal: procedural error or sanctions inconsistent with usual practice. If the Docket Committee deems the appeal valid, the full case documentation is forwarded to members of Faculty Council. The Ad Board chair and secretary then appear before the Faculty Council to answer questions.

Faculty Council decides by majority vote whether to ask the Board to revisit its decision. If they vote to do so, they provide the Board with the vote outcome and a brief summary of the discussion in Faculty Council.

At present, members of Faculty Council with conflicts of interest regarding a case are asked to recuse themselves from any decision-making role.

The current appeals process seems to have originated around 1996, although in earlier years individual students could ask a faculty member to bring their case to an FAS meeting. Appeals have become more common in recent years.

F. Reporting

OAISC and Harvard Griffin GSAS Student Services post online broad statistics about disciplinary cases and outcomes year by year at:

<https://bpb-us-e1.wpmucdn.com/websites.harvard.edu/dist/b/160/files/2024/09/2018-2023-Disciplinary-Cases.pdf> linked from <https://oaisc.fas.harvard.edu/data/> and: <https://gsas.harvard.edu/about/committees/administrative-board>.

The categories used for reporting purposes are very schematic and limited to the following broad categories: academic procedure, social behavior, social behavior-alcohol, social behavior-drugs, social behavior-sexual. These categories have been designed to meet state reporting requirements. The lack of detail is also a consequence of FERPA regulations introduced in 1974, which forbid sharing any information about an individual student that could be recognized by anyone in the community. The reported statistics do not include statistics concerning the success rate of appeals. A successful appeal leads to a reconsideration, and the outcome of that reconsideration is reported in the statistics.

V. Overall impressions

The members of this Review Committee are grateful for the opportunities we had for learning about the Ad Boards. Their operations, so essential to student life at Harvard, were unfamiliar to many of us. We raise below some recommendations for disseminating a better understanding of the Ad Boards across our community. We were deeply impressed by the selfless labor contributed by the members—both past and present—of the Ad Boards, their unwavering commitment to the students and to the institution, and the thoughtful and philosophical approach that they bring to their deliberations. Understandably, the students do not necessarily perceive the benefit of the disciplinary philosophy and process at the time. At present, there is no mechanism in place for assessing student perceptions of their experiences before the Ad Board. A post-graduate survey may offer important insights into these questions but would require careful preparation (including asking students to authorize the Secretary of the DCAB or of the Harvard Griffin GSAS Ad Board to contact them years later).

Our discussions with members of the DCAB raise an important question about whether the relatively narrow range of disciplinary outcomes available to the Board makes it possible to be genuinely educational and restorative in nature, in keeping with the board's philosophy. The review committee welcomes the prospect that, following FAS

legislation approved in 2023, the College Ad Board will assign educational programs and restorative practice initiatives when they seem appropriate. At present, these options are not adequately described and understanding of them not sufficiently disseminated outside the Ad Board.

Shifts in the cultural context have clearly generated new challenges. For example, the review committee heard from many constituencies about what they describe as the greater litigiousness of undergraduate students in recent years. Students have sought the advice of lawyers in preparation for the Ad Board process, even though the OAISC procedures state that students are expected to write their own statements in their own words. The reasoning behind that requirement is that students writing their own statements is seen as part of the educational nature of the process, which risks being undermined when professional legal documents are commissioned. Our impression is that the use of lawyers, at least for the students whose families can afford the costs, can introduce a more adversarial aspect to the procedures and also risks creating inequities among student experiences of discipline.

Harvard's disciplinary ecosystem is complex and constantly evolving. The Ad Boards serve as a central organism connected to many other bodies. Since we were charged with reviewing the two Ad Boards, we have focused on a few high-level recommendations, leaving implementation to those who are expert in running these and related administrative and disciplinary processes. We find that the Ad Boards have been working carefully and well, but the DCAB especially suffered from an unusually difficult year in 2023-24. We see greater involvement of ladder faculty in the DCAB (on the model of the Harvard Griffin GSAS Ad Board where many ladder faculty serve) and the formation of an appeals committee comprising ladder faculty with experience on one of the Ad Boards as the most important steps to strengthening the connections between the DCAB and the faculty on whose behalf they work.

VI. Responses to the Committee's charge and recommendations

- A. *Charge:* Review the composition of the administrative boards, developing recommendations, for example, regarding the number of members, terms of service, representation from relevant units, the proportion of faculty and their different statuses, and staff members, and the chairpersonship of the Board.**

***Recommendation A.1:* Increase the number of ladder faculty on the DCAB through the development of a pool.**

Rationale: A greater presence of ladder faculty on the Ad Board has been a recommendation in all prior documents reviewing the Ad Board and is a top priority among the recommendations of this committee. We realize that this service can be

onerous and we recommend that consideration be given to the idea of forming a pool of ladder faculty who would be available to serve for a period of three years on the DCAB. It is important to be clear about why we are making this recommendation. Because the Ad Board is a standing committee of the FAS to which the faculty has delegated responsibility for all matters of administration and discipline, ladder faculty should have a presence on the DCAB, in addition to the Senior Lecturers and Lecturers who have traditionally provided ample and valuable service. Secondly, we believe that greater ladder faculty service on the DCAB is essential for disseminating information about the practices and principles of the DCAB among the faculty and its role in campus life. More direct familiarity with the functioning of the Ad Board among colleagues can also build trust and confidence in this body to whom the faculty have delegated the administration of discipline.

We envision two circumstances under which a pool of experienced and available ladder faculty could be tapped beyond the faculty members serving on the DCAB at a given point in time: 1) When the arrival of multiple cases around the same time threatens to swamp the regular schedule of the DCAB, experienced members of the pool could be asked to serve on one of the many subcommittees needed to handle these cases; 2) In case of an appeal (see below, recommendation C.1), experienced members of the pool would be selected to form a committee of ladder faculty to evaluate the merits of the appeal. As we note below, bodies that consider appeals are generally expected to have experience with the process being appealed, whereas members of the Docket Committee and of Faculty Council who currently hear appeals typically have no prior experience of the procedures of the DCAB. In the past some ladder faculty served for up to ten years on the College Ad Board. The presence of such long-serving ladder faculty members was highly valued and may well be possible in the future. But at the moment, given how few ladder faculty understand the workings of the DCAB, we recommend building the number of ladder faculty with experience on it, through a model of active service for one year followed by service in a pool which might be tapped only occasionally during the year or not at all. We recommend that a minimum number of ladder faculty serve on the DCAB every year. That number can be determined by the FAS Dean. We recommend a number around four, in keeping with the best year for ladder faculty membership in the last ten years. The DCAB would benefit from a combination of long-serving ladder faculty members in addition to a rotation of, say, two new ladder faculty members each year, who would help to expand the pool of ladder faculty with experience on the DCAB.

No recommendation for change to the Harvard Griffin GSAS Ad Board membership.

Rationale: With ten faculty members (nine ladder faculty members and one lecturer) among its nineteen members, the Harvard Griffin GSAS Ad Board includes strong faculty representation. More than one of the faculty members on this Ad Board who spoke with the review committee reported that it was the best-run committee they had served on at

Harvard. The Harvard Griffin GSAS Ad Board benefits from having multiple long-serving faculty members and from a lighter load of disciplinary cases than the DCAB.

Recommendation A.2: Guard against conflicting roles held by members of the DCAB or Harvard Griffin GSAS Ad Board or of committees which hear appeals (Docket Committee, Faculty Council, or a new Appeals Committee)

Rationale: We learned that the DCAB has a robust recusal practice for all kinds of conflicts of interest. For example, the Resident Dean from the student's house does not vote on that student's case. We recommend continuing to observe this practice and formalizing it by recording who has recused themselves from any particular case in such a way that this record is available for future reference. This review committee was concerned that members of the Ad Board could be asked to perform duties that would create conflicts with their role on the DCAB. We note for example that in 1972 the chair of the CRR recommended that Senior Tutors (known today as Resident Deans) not serve on the CRR on the grounds that "Senior Tutors are already overworked, are reluctant to serve and should not be asked to bear the burden and stigma of CRR membership which adversely affects their ability to carry out their other responsibilities" (Donald G.M. Anderson, Memorandum of Nov 9, 1972, section 4, p.7). This review committee is also concerned about the potential erosion of the trust in and authority of Resident Deans if they were asked to take on disciplinary roles beyond those they already have as members of the DCAB. Similarly we recommend that faculty serving on committees hearing an appeal (i.e. Docket Committee, Faculty Council, or a new Appeals Committee) be required to recuse themselves from cases in which they have been previously involved, e.g. while serving on the Ad Board or as personal advisor to the student involved, and from other cases arising from the same incident in the event of a cluster of related cases. These recusals should be made explicitly and recorded for future reference.

B. *Charge:* Review the process by which the boards separate the determination of whether there has been a rule violation from the deliberations regarding sanctioning.

Recommendation B.1: The DCAB Subcommittee report should involve fact-finding and the determination of whether there has been a rule violation. The subcommittee report should not include a recommended sanction since the sanction is determined by the full DCAB.

Rationale: The DCAB is both a fact-finding and a sanctioning body. In current procedures a Subcommittee of the DCAB engages in fact-finding and produces a written report which is shared with the student and to which the student may respond. At present, the Subcommittee's report may also include a recommended sanction, but the final decision about sanctioning is made by the whole DCAB which need not follow the Subcommittee's recommendation. We recommend that the Subcommittee's report

present only the results of their fact-finding without any recommendation concerning the disciplinary decision. In this way fact-finding will be kept more clearly separate from the sanctioning process and students will be spared the stress of a potential reversal of the Subcommittee's recommendation by the final decision of the DCAB. It is understood that members of the Subcommittee may continue to orally report a recommendation to the DCAB during consideration of the case.

C. Charge: Review historical reasoning for the threshold for appeal to the Faculty Council and the range of responses available to the Council and as it relates to the College and Harvard Griffin GSAS.

***Recommendation C.1:* Replace the current system of referring appeals to the Docket Committee and Faculty Council with an appeals committee consisting of faculty members who have prior experience of disciplinary cases on the DCAB or the Harvard Griffin GSAS Ad Board.**

Rationale: In the normal course of affairs, one would expect that an appeal would be considered by a body possessing extensive knowledge about the procedures by which the case was initially decided and experience with the manner in which the available sanctions are matched to the unique circumstances of individual students and adjusted in light of any prior disciplinary record. One of the oddities of the current procedure lies in the fact that appeals of cases decided by the DCAB and Harvard Griffin GSAS Ad Board are sent to the Docket Committee, and then, in some cases, to Faculty Council, neither of which is a body that itself has the necessary expertise. Only occasionally and accidentally do these bodies include a member who possesses the requisite knowledge and experience of Harvard's Ad Boards. Most faculty members who have served on Faculty Council and on the Docket Committee reported that they were unaware of their role in hearing and deciding on appeals in Ad Board cases until they were presented with such a case.

Thus, we recommend that the FAS Dean consider forming an appeals committee consisting of a small group of ladder faculty who have prior experience on an Ad Board (graduate or undergraduate). All appeals would be forwarded to this committee for their decision about whether the appeal has merit.

We can imagine two possible strategies for implementation. In the first scenario, the proposed appeals committee makes the final determination concerning the merit of an appeal. If the appeal has merit, the committee returns the case to the DCAB or GSAS Ad Board for reconsideration. If not, the appeal is declined.

Alternatively, the proposed appeals committee serves the role currently occupied by the Docket Committee. If the committee determines that an appeal has merit, it presents the case at a meeting of the Faculty Council which then decides whether to return the case to the DCAB or Harvard Griffin GSAS Ad Board for reconsideration. In this scenario, see section D.2 below for the recommendation that members of the Faculty Council receive

training in their decision-making role. As noted above (recommendation A.2) we recommend that faculty serving on any committees charged with considering appeals be required to recuse themselves explicitly from cases in which they have previously been involved, e.g. while serving on the Ad Board or as personal advisors, and from other cases arising from the same incident in the event of a cluster of related cases.

Recommendation C.2: Appeals to Faculty Council (via docket committee or a new appeals committee) be allowed only in cases where the sanction is a requirement to withdraw.

Rationale: At the moment undergraduates may appeal a sanction of probation for more than one semester, while graduate students may not. The origins of this discrepancy remain unclear, but these thresholds have been in place since at least 2008. To resolve this discrepancy the committee recommends aligning the rules for undergraduates with those for graduate students, i.e. allowing an appeal only in a case where the sanction is a requirement to withdraw. The rationale is that although probation may be stressful it does not impede a student's academic progress and appears only temporarily on a student's record, during the time they are on probation. The committee feels that the appeals process should be limited to the sanction of a requirement to withdraw. By removing the less serious sanction of probation from the set of appeals that are forwarded to the Docket Committee or the proposed appeals committee, faculty time and energy can be fully invested in the cases where that input matters the most. Reconsideration requests directed back to the respective Ad Boards remain an option for students placed on probation.

- D. **Charge: Develop practical recommendations for educating students, faculty, and administrators about the work of the administrative boards, and the distinct roles and approaches taken by the graduate and undergraduate boards.**

Recommendation D.1: At the end of each semester the College and Harvard Griffin GSAS Ad Boards should present a brief report to the Faculty Council summarizing highlights of their work during the preceding term (or year in the fall report) and any changes to procedures.

Rationale: The DCAB and the Harvard Griffin GSAS Ad Board are very aware that they are charged with carrying out discipline on behalf of the faculty. But this awareness is not sufficiently reciprocated, since most faculty members have no direct involvement with and only a limited understanding of their activities. A brief report every semester to Faculty Council would not jeopardize the confidentiality of the disciplinary cases or decisions but would serve as a reminder of the Ad Boards' activities on behalf of the FAS. The Docket Committee would mention that report during the appropriate FAS Faculty Meeting and a representative of the Ad Boards would be available for questions that might arise. This report could also be an opportunity for the Ad Boards to reflect

periodically on how their processes might be improved or evolve. The Harvard Griffin GSAS Ad Board and the DCAB Administrative Board publish reports online: <https://gsas.harvard.edu/about/committees/administrative-board> and <https://bpb-us-e1.wpmucdn.com/websites.harvard.edu/dist/b/160/files/2024/09/2018-2023-Disciplinary-Cases.pdf> linked from <https://oaisc.fas.harvard.edu/data/>. The Honor Council issues especially detailed reports (see <https://oaisc.fas.harvard.edu/data/#honor-council-reports>). None of these reports have been regularly presented to the Faculty Council or the full Faculty, however.

Recommendation D.2: Assess and (if needed) enhance training for members of the DCAB and Harvard Griffin GSAS Ad Board; introduce training for members of all committees who would hear appeals.

Rationale: The DCAB offers in-person training at the start of the academic year with the newly constituted board and a refresher meeting is conducted at the beginning of the spring term. Whenever new members join after the initial training, they meet individually with the secretary of the DCAB for training and orientation. The Resident Deans also receive careful training for their many duties, including service on the DCAB, notably in the form of regular meetings of new Resident Deans with longer-serving ones.

Harvard Griffin GSAS does not hold an annual training for the full board, but holds an on-boarding training session virtually for any new board members prior to their first hearing.

The committee recommends regularly soliciting feedback about existing training (e.g. from new members who join each year) and considering ways to enhance it. These could include asynchronous online training and documents to read, along the lines of training that members of the Title IX Appellate Panels receive (see https://oge.harvard.edu/sites/hwpi.harvard.edu/files/oge/files/appellate_panelist_training_2023-24.pdf and <https://oge.harvard.edu/files/oge/files/fy21tixsxlharosmappellatepanelbasicsandrefresher.pdf> for examples). Shadowing a case might offer another effective opportunity for training, since Ad Board members speak of the importance of learning from the experience of serving. We recommend extending training to any faculty serving on committees who hear appeals.

Recommendation D.3: Require that all faculty who accept a student's request to serve as a personal advisor receive training on the procedures of the DCAB and Harvard Griffin GSAS Ad Board and on the role assigned to personal advisors.

Rationale: The faculty members who met with the committee to talk about their service as personal advisors to students regretted not having received more information or training about the process. This training could draw on materials made for new members of the Ad Board, with special instructions provided for those serving as personal

advisors, explaining their role in providing support, as detailed above p. 9 (OAISC Procedures, p. 48).

Recommendation D.4: OAISC and Harvard Griffin GSAS Student Services should develop ways to further educate the FAS community about the work of the Ad Boards.

Rationale and specific suggestions: The disciplinary landscape is complex and has evolved significantly in the 21st century. Committee members learned a great deal in the course of this review, highlighting the fact that FAS colleagues are rarely well informed about the role of the two Ad Boards. The committee hopes that greater understanding of Ad Board proceedings will encourage participation of ladder faculty on these bodies. We suggest a number of possible measures:

- Add discussion of the two Ad Boards and a presentation from OAISC to the New Faculty Institute
- Ensure education about the two Ad Boards to Directors of Undergraduate Studies, Directors of Graduate Studies, and Department Chairs, e.g. by annually attending one of their regular meetings.
- Provide more detailed examples of cases heard by the two Ad Boards by compiling a set of thoroughly anonymized infractions and the resulting disciplinary decisions. These may be used for training and to increase community understanding.
- Develop an Executive Summary of the OAISC Procedures Manual for the College Ad Board that can be made public and consider making the entire document available on the OAISC website.

E. Charge: Investigate the definition of “in good standing” as it relates to the College vs. Harvard Griffin GSAS and clarify what it means for students to fall out of that status

Recommendation: No change to existing procedures.

Rationale: It is common practice for higher education institutions to have criteria for students to be on track to graduate, which is known as being “in good standing.” Typically, students who have been required to withdraw or who have been placed on probation are not considered to be in good standing. This status prevents them from graduating and also places certain restrictions on their activities, including participation in clubs and eligibility to receive awards. The restriction from graduating stems from College regulations. Other restrictions on the activities of students who are not in good standing emanate not from DCAB or College directives but rather from whatever rules those extracurricular activities and application processes have established for themselves (e.g. requiring participants in the activity to be in good standing, or that

applicants for a fellowship be in good standing at the time of application or at the time of holding the fellowship or both).

The College and Harvard Griffin GSAS both follow this conception of “in good standing,” though with a distinction with respect to probation. In the College, students who have been placed on probation are not considered to be in good standing. Although they are not in good standing, students on probation continue to make academic progress and, if relevant, to receive financial aid. We affirm the policy that undergraduates who are not in good standing may not serve as Course Assistants (for policies on hiring CAs see <https://infoforfaculty.fas.harvard.edu/book/instructional-support-staff>). In Harvard Griffin GSAS, by contrast, students who have been placed on probation remain in good standing. This allows graduate students to continue to make academic progress, e.g. by teaching and by receiving funding from external bodies that might otherwise be jeopardized by not being in good standing. The committee reviewed this distinction and makes no recommendation for change. College practices are in line with national norms, and the logic informing the Harvard Griffin GSAS's policy seems sound.

F. Charge: Evaluate the framework used for sanctioning students in disciplinary cases, including currency and efficacy of the sanctions used given the faculty's goals for discipline and best practices in student conduct administration

Recommendation F.1: No change to existing framework.

Rationale: The review committee supports the principles and practices of the DCAB and Harvard Griffin GSAS Ad Board on all these counts. These disciplinary bodies are attentive to the students who come before them and seek to reduce the stress of the process insofar as possible. They are committed to the principles of applying discipline consistently in response to student behaviors and of adjudicating each case individually. In reaching disciplinary decisions they are attentive both to the range of outcomes typically applied in individual cases and to the impact of changing circumstances.

Recommendation F.2: Annual self-assessments of the Ad Boards

Rationale: The committee recommends annual self-assessments during which the Ad Boards would each take stock of their decisions during the past year and how they compared with decisions reached in previous years based on existing statistics. The Ad Boards should take this opportunity to review and document their procedures and consider further internal improvements to them. The Ad Boards should review their sanctioning practices to ensure that sanctions are (a) changing appropriately given changing circumstances and (b) not drifting, i.e. not becoming more lenient or more severe, over somewhat longer timescales.

G. Additional recommendations

Recommendation G.1: Regular Ad Board reviews

Rationale: The committee recommends that the Dean of FAS initiate a regular review of the Ad Boards roughly every ten years. The committee encourages the members of the DCAB to engage in periodic internal discussion of their procedures and sanctions, in particular in light of the newly available “educational sanctions” (discussed by the Faculty in December 2023 and approved in FAS Faculty Meeting in February 2024).

Recommendation G.2: Create mechanisms to gather feedback from students about their experience with the Ad Boards.

Rationale: At the moment, the members of the Ad Boards have few opportunities to receive unfiltered opinions from the students who have appeared before them. They do hear from students seeking reinstatement after the end of the period for which they were required to withdraw. In these letters students generally explain that they have benefitted from the disciplinary experience. The committee does not consider this genre of writing to constitute meaningful feedback by which the Ad Boards might assess their own work and improve their proceedings. We recommend finding other ways to gather feedback, such as:

- a. By adding a question about the student’s understanding of and experience with the DCAB to student exit surveys and sharing the answers with the Ad Board.
- b. By asking students who experience a DCAB or Harvard Griffin GSAS disciplinary procedure whether they authorize the Secretary of the relevant Ad Board to contact them after the end of their studies, say, five years later, to inquire about how they view the experience after a longer lapse of time.

Recommendation G.3: That the DCAB and Harvard Griffin GSAS Ad Boards continue to adhere to the general principles of assessing individual student behavior and of focusing on the behavior itself without regard to the content of accompanying speech and without trying to assess the merits of the motivations for that behavior.

VII. Closing reflections

The newly instituted fact-finding procedures of the University Committee on Rights and Responsibilities from July 18, 2024

(https://provost.harvard.edu/sites/hwpi.harvard.edu/files/provost/files/ucrr_procedures.pdf) seek to add clarity to the manner in which the University will respond to violations of

the USRR in the future. These procedures have implications for the operations of the Ad Boards. The procedures indicate that the UCRR may, when needed in cases of possible violations spanning more than one Faculty, constitute a fact-finding committee (FFC) to determine whether there have been violations of the USRR. Although this body lies outside our purview, the new guidelines indicate that the DCAB and Harvard Griffin GSAS Ad Board will become involved in determining sanctions: “if the findings of the

Fact-Finding Committee become final without appeal, or an Appeals Panel affirms the FFC's findings, then the record will be forwarded to the disciplinary body of the Faculties in which the Respondent(s) are enrolled for determination of an appropriate disciplinary response."

Reading an account from the CRR in 1972 is a sobering reminder that in a context of significant and politicized disagreements on our campus, it will be difficult for any committee to reach decisions in politicized cases that will prove broadly convincing. The review committee feels strongly that the DCAB and Harvard Griffin GSAS Ad Board should continue to adjudicate instances of misconduct that may arise in a broad range of contexts while honoring the University's commitment to free speech. Specifically, disciplinary procedures should focus on individual behaviors without assessing their motivations or the content of accompanying speech.

As the committee was completing its work, the co-presidents of the Harvard Undergraduate Association (HUA) approached us expressing an interest in discussing undergraduate student participation in the disciplinary process. The committee met with both of them and the Academic Life Officer of the HUA on March 10. The student representatives presented several cogent arguments in favor of student participation in the Ad Board's disciplinary process, invoking the goal of shared community and participation by stakeholders, and citing the model of the Honor Council which draws on a pool of 31 undergraduates. They circulated a supporting document laying out their argument which referenced a Crimson article of October 26, 2012 ("Critics Call for Student Role on Ad Board") and listing other universities which already do this including Brown, Columbia, Cornell, Dartmouth, Princeton, the University of Pennsylvania, Yale, MIT, Stanford, and Duke. Since this proposal arrived after our committee had finished four months of consultations, we were unable to give it the fullest consideration. In our previous discussions with multiple stakeholders, the topic had not come up to any significant degree (one of our interlocutors mentioned it once). The committee was also unable to consider the possible participation of graduate students in the disciplinary processes of the Harvard Griffin GSAS or in the DCAB. We note that graduate students participate in the Honor Council in their capacity as TFs rather than as graduate students. Graduate students are not currently involved in any aspect of the Harvard Griffin GSAS Ad Board. The committee is unable to make recommendations on the question of undergraduate student participation in the Ad Board, and recommends that the topic be considered by OAISC and the Dean of the College.

VIII. Collected recommendations

A. Composition:

1. Increase the number of ladder faculty on the College's Disciplinary Committee through the development of a pool. No recommendation for change to the Harvard Griffin GSAS Ad Board membership.

2. Guard against conflicting roles held by members of the DCAB or the Harvard Griffin Ad Board or of committees that hear appeals.
- B. Deliberations on rule violation vs. sanctioning:
1. The DCAB subcommittee report should involve fact-finding and the determination of whether there has been a rule violation. It should omit recommendations of sanctions which are the purview of the full DCAB.
- C. Appeals:
1. Replace the current appeals process with an appeals committee consisting of faculty members who have prior experience of disciplinary cases on the DCAB or the Harvard Griffin GSAS Ad Board.
 2. Raise the threshold for undergraduates to appeal to sanctions of requirement to withdraw.
- D. Education:
1. At the end of each semester the College and Harvard Griffin GSAS Ad Boards should present a brief report to the Faculty Council summarizing their work during the preceding term (or year in the fall report) and any changes to their procedures.
 2. Assess and (if needed) enhance training for new members of the DCAB and Harvard Griffin GSAS Ad Board and for members of committees that hear appeals.
 3. Require that all faculty who accept a student's request to serve as a personal advisor receive training on the procedures of the DCAB or Harvard Griffin GSAS and on the role assigned to personal advisors.
 4. OAISC and Harvard Griffin GSAS should develop ways to further educate the FAS community about the work of the Ad Boards.
- E. Definition of 'in good standing':
1. No change to existing procedures.
- F. Sanctioning framework:
1. No change to existing framework.
 2. That the DCAB and Harvard Griffin GSAS Ad Board engage in annual self-assessments of their procedures and sanctioning practices.
- G. Additional recommendations:
1. That the Dean of FAS initiate a regular review of the Ad Boards roughly every ten years.
 2. That both Ad Boards develop mechanisms for gathering feedback about their procedures from students as they leave Harvard and also several years later.
 3. That the DCAB and Harvard Griffin GSAS Ad Boards continue to adhere to the general principles of assessing individual student behavior: i.e. with attention to the student's past disciplinary record, and a focus on the behavior itself without regard to the content of accompanying speech or to the merits of the motivations for that behavior.