

## **COS Sanctioning Considerations**

For any disciplinary system to be credible, consistency must be a central element. Ideally, over time, precedent should show that similar violations result in similar outcomes. This provides the community a basic understanding of the consequences that result from specific behavior. However, for a disciplinary system to be considered fair, it must be flexible enough to respond to each student as an individual and to the facts and circumstances of each individual case. Sanctions should reflect the institution's desire to educate the student and the community given a particular set of circumstances. Sanctioning decisions at Dartmouth strive to balance consistency of the process with fairness to individual students and a focus on what is educationally appropriate given the facts of each individual case.

If a committee determines that a student is responsible for a violation, it will determine a sanction based on the specific facts of the case, the student's level of intent, information about the student's previous disciplinary history, and the information that follows below about conduct expectations, aggravating and mitigating factors, and outcomes of previous cases. In cases of sexual abuse, physical violence or threatening harm, misappropriation and other misconduct that causes harm to another member of the community, aggravating factors may include whether or not the student responsible was substantially motivated by the victim's race, color, religion, sex, age, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, disability, or military or veteran status. Unless otherwise noted, the sanctions described below were for first-time offenses.

### **Misappropriation/Theft Summer 2004-Spring 2008**

Dartmouth is a community that values safety and trust. Students who undermine this trust by misappropriating college and personal property usually face serious sanctions. Theft that impacts other students' ability to complete their academic work (i.e. theft of academic materials or computers) usually results in a suspension.

Between summer 2004 and spring 2008, the COS or senior deans heard fourteen serious cases of theft. Four students who misappropriated laptop computers were suspended from one to four terms depending on the student's prior history and how/why the computer was taken. During this period of time, six students were found responsible for entering college facilities (sometimes through a window) and removing items including food, electronics, and clothing. These students said that they made poor decisions to take belongings after they had been consuming alcohol. The COS or Dean imposed a year of discipline (probation) for three students. The other three students who had prior disciplinary histories or misrepresented information were suspended for one, two and five terms.

Two students misappropriated items from the library including library books and student text books. The COS or dean imposed suspensions for both cases because of the significant value of the items that were removed or damaged (over \$1,000 in each case). Two students were also suspended for misappropriating credit cards and causing damage to property while misappropriating items from a store.