



Student Conduct

November 2002

Purpose

The goals of this survey were to determine respondent awareness of student conduct policies and sanctions and to find out perceived effectiveness of potential fines for violation of regulations.

Implications/Highlights

Students were generally unaware of conduct policies, the process followed when violations were reported and the penalties assigned. Most (70%) think the Office of Judicial Affairs should take action in cases of *major* violations that occur off campus, but many (44%) thought no action should take place for *minor* violations that occur off campus.

Participation Rate

Total Survey Response: N = 1133

Phone: N = 870 of 1332 contacted (65%)

Web: N = 263 of 1000 contacted (26%)

Findings

One-third of the respondents said they were aware that, as of last year, the local community police began informing the on-campus Judicial Affairs Office of all off-campus incidents which involved Penn State students.

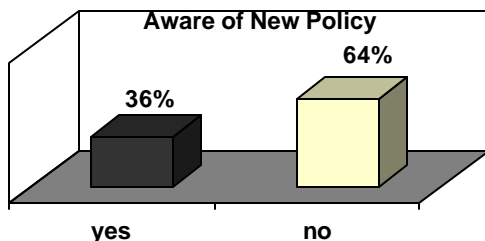


Figure 1. A third of the respondents were aware of the new policy

More of the women,* minority students,* upperclass seniors and juniors,* and those who live on-campus * indicated being aware of the new policy.

There was little change in student awareness of reporting off-campus violations since the 2001 survey.

Aware That Off-Campus Violations Are Reported to Judicial Affairs Office

2002	36%
2001	34%

*Statistically significant at the .05 level

Eleven percent of students thought the Office of Judicial Affairs helped them understand the consequences of violating Code of Conduct regulations.

Office Helps Students Understand Consequences

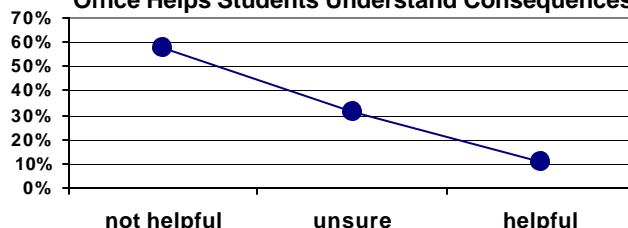


Figure 2. Few students felt Office of Judicial Affairs helped them understand consequences of violating Code of Conduct

A number of individuals suggested more information through flyers, email, and publicity about consequences would help encourage students to adhere to community standards.

Respondents were asked how they thought Judicial Affairs should handle off-campus incidents reported by the police involving:

- 'major violations' (rape, physical assault, theft, drugs)
- 'minor violations' (open container of alcohol, public urination)
- 'second time minor violations'

How Judicial Affairs Should Handle Off-Campus Incidents

	major violation	minor violation	second minor violation
take no action	8%	44%	20%
keep incident on file	21%	44%	33%
hold formal meeting/student	71%	12%	47%

Men were more likely to think the Office of Judicial Affairs should 'take no action' for both major and minor violations.*

First year students were more likely than sophomores, juniors, and seniors to say the Office of Judicial Affairs should 'hold a formal meeting with students' for major, minor, and repeated minor violations.*

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U.Ed. STA 03-166

Division of Student Affairs

Very few students were aware of the current campus penalties for violations that occurred off campus.

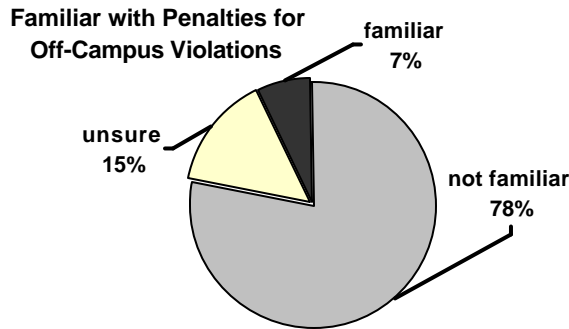


Figure 3. Few were familiar with penalties for off-campus violations. Students were generally unfamiliar with the Student Code of Conduct, the process followed when campus violations were reported, and the consequences for violations.

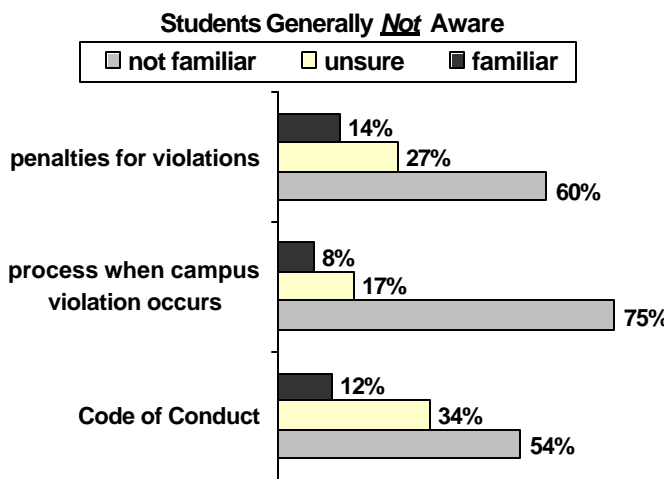


Figure 4. Few students were familiar with the Student Code of Conduct, the process followed when violations were reported, and the penalties for violations.

More first year students (16%) than sophomores (11%), juniors (12%) or seniors (10%) said they were familiar with the Student Code of Conduct. *

Fewer respondents in the 2002 than in the 2001 survey indicated being familiar with regulations and consequences.

Familiar with Code of Conduct		
	2002	2001
<u>penalties</u>		
on-campus	14%	17%
off-campus	7%	10%
<u>process</u>	8%	12%
<u>Code of Conduct</u>	12%	27%

Individuals commented that:

- information about conduct should be available in pamphlets and email
- students should be informed about sanctions
- include information about Code of Conduct in first year seminar
- if students were more aware of consequences, they might not commit illegal activity
- most students have no idea what happens after a violation

Many campuses fine students caught breaking regulations. One-third of respondents thought it would be effective to have a basic fine for all violations. One-fifth thought there should only be a fine for alcohol-related violations and slightly more than a third thought there should only be a fine for repeat violators of Code of Conduct regulations.

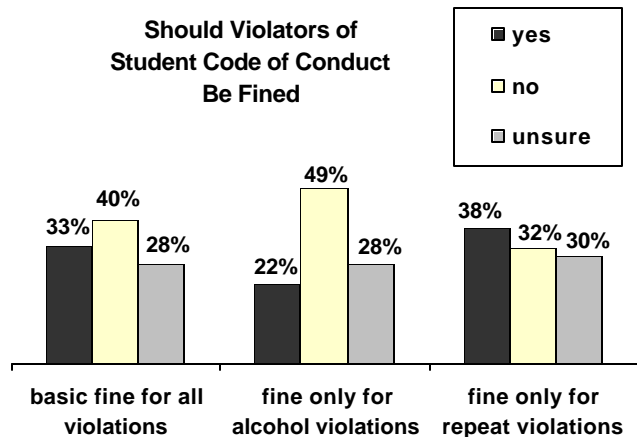


Figure 5. Students differed on how effective it would be to fine students.

More respondents in the 2002 than in the 2001 survey felt a basic fine for all violations would be an effective deterrent.

Effectiveness of Fines for Violations

	2002	2001
basic fine for all violations	33%	24%
fine alcohol violations only	22%	17%
fine repeat violations only	38%	51%

Respondents were asked how much a fine needed to be to result in fewer Student Conduct violations. Nine percent said fines are not effective while another nine percent said fines should be more than \$200.

Amount of Fine Effective to Decrease Violations

no fine	9%
\$1-\$25	12%
\$26-\$50	29%
\$51-\$75	5%
\$76-\$100	22%
\$101-\$200	14%
\$201 or more	9%

Of those who felt fines would be effective, the mean amount suggested was \$110.78.

Other suggestions to encourage adhering to the Code of Conduct were:

- contact parents when there is a violation
- harsher punishments
- publicize consequences
- stress the rules
- more awareness programs
- community service

*Statistically significant at the .05 level.