



THE UNIVERSITY
OF TEXAS AT DALLAS

Academic Dishonesty

Audit Report No. 2609

March 3, 2026



Audit and Advisory Services
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Executive Summary

Audit Objective

To evaluate the effectiveness of controls, policies, and procedures related to academic dishonesty.

Primary Risk Type(s)

Student Services & Enrollment Management

Date of Last Audit

There have been no previous audits in this area.

Controls and Strengths

- The Office of Community Standards and Conduct (OCSC) has a webpage with a comprehensive list of resources for [Preventing Academic Dishonesty](#).
- Each semester, OCSC pulls analytics on case trends from Maxient, the case management software, including total numbers of cases by school and class level, numbers of charges by type within each school and broken out by class level, and rates of recidivism.
- OCSC provides comprehensive training for faculty, new and returning members of the Disciplinary Committee, Hearing Officers, and University Housing.

Overall Conclusion

Generally, OCSC has good internal controls and policies in place over processes related to academic dishonesty. An improvement in the procedures related to metrics, monitoring, and reporting of case resolutions will help enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of controls.

Observations by Risk Level

Management has reviewed the observations and has provided responses and expected implementation dates. Detailed information is included in the attached report.

Observation	Risk Level	Management's Implementation Date
1. Case Resolutions – Metrics, Monitoring, and Reporting	Medium	02/23/2026

For details about the audit procedures, explanation of risk levels, and report distribution, please see Appendices A, B, and C, respectively, in the attached report.



Detailed Audit Results

The following is a reportable observation noting opportunities to enhance controls in the areas of metrics, monitoring, and reporting for academic dishonesty case resolutions. A minor recommendation related to updating language in the Student Code of Conduct policy was shared verbally with management. See Appendix B on page 7 for definitions of observation risk rankings.

1. Case Resolutions – Metrics, Monitoring, and Reporting

Medium Risk: With the possibility of staff turnover or interruptions to business activities, not having written policies and procedures for monitoring cases in Maxient or communicating upward case trends to deans could impact the ability of the department to ensure that case resolutions are accurately monitored and completed, and case data is accurately reported. Also, an absence of defined performance metrics increases the risk of delayed case resolution, which may lead to inconsistent enforcement of academic integrity policies, student dissatisfaction, and potential reputational harm to the university.

Observation

Audit and Advisory Services evaluated how trends in academic dishonesty cases are tracked, how upward trends are addressed and monitored, and how completions of academic dishonesty cases are monitored and addressed if not completed timely. The following was observed:

- OCSC does not have written procedures for the weekly process to monitor case resolutions in Maxient or for communicating upward case trends to deans.
- Case Resolution Forms (CRFs) were not completed as part of the close process for 42 out of 876 (4.8%) FY25 academic dishonesty cases (resolution dates/types were not in Maxient).
- OCSC has not defined performance metrics to track the goal of timely case completions.

Criteria

Written policies and procedures can help ensure efficiency and effectiveness in business continuity, and accuracy in case reporting. Performance metrics provide quantifiable data to assess efficiency, track progress against strategic goals, and identify areas for improvement.

Management's Action Plan

The Office of Community Standards and Conduct (OCSC) has developed a multi-faceted plan to address the **medium-risk observation** regarding **metrics, monitoring, and reporting** identified in the academic dishonesty audit. The audit noted that the OCSC lacked written procedures for monitoring case resolutions, had incomplete documentation for nearly 5% of cases, and had no defined performance metrics to track the timeliness of case completions. To resolve these issues, the OCSC has implemented the following measures:

Standardized Administrative Procedures

The OCSC established a formal **Administrative Disposition Process** to provide clear, step-by-step instructions for case managers. This standardization ensures **consistency in enforcement** and mitigates risks associated with staff turnover or business interruptions. The process is designed so that **a new employee following these standard procedures, which have been written out step by step, will be successful in the completion of a case.**



Timeliness and Performance Metrics

The OCSC implemented **Maxient Tasks** to serve as internal "to-do" lists that keep the resolution process on track. **Task Templates** are now used to **automatically calculate due dates** for specific actions, creating a visible timeline for case managers. This systemic approach provides the quantifiable data necessary to monitor efficiency and identify potential delays before they impact student satisfaction or university reputation.

Enhanced Analytics and Trend Reporting

A new **Analytics Instructions** document systemizes reporting methods to ensure upward trends are accurately communicated to leadership. Staff now have precise workflows and formulas to track:

- **Total case volume** and breakdowns by **student classification** (graduate vs. undergraduate).
- Case distribution across different **academic schools** and specific **types of charges**, such as plagiarism or cheating.
- The frequency of **AI-related referrals** and recidivism rates among repeat offenders.

Additionally, the OCSC is utilizing **Maxient Tags** which are standardized data points for actions like "Appealing sanctions", to ensure "cleaner" and more efficient data extraction for university reporting.

Action Plan Owner(s): Mr. Shaq Massey, Director, OCSC Mr. Sean Payne, Administrative Assistant, OCSC	Date Implemented 02/23/2026
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Overall Conclusion

Generally, OCSC has good internal controls and policies in place over processes related to academic dishonesty. An improvement in the procedures related to metrics, monitoring, and reporting of case resolutions will help enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of controls.



Appendix A: Information Related to the Audit

Background

The Office of Community Standards and Conduct (OCSC) encourages student learning, growth, and development by promoting awareness of the University’s expectations of behavior, holding students accountable for violations of these expectations, and developing educational sanctions designed to address the consequences of student decisions.¹ Within the Student Affairs Division, OCSC staff report to the Associate VP of Student Affairs and Dean of Students, and the office includes a director, assistant director, two conduct specialists, and an administrative assistant.

The OCSC website contains helpful information for faculty, staff, and students, including the Student Code of Conduct and Elements of Academic Dishonesty for Students. UT Dallas policies governing academic dishonesty cases can be found in the [Student Code of Conduct](#) and on their website at <https://conduct.utdallas.edu/students/dishonesty/>.

Audit Objective

To evaluate the effectiveness of controls, policies, and procedures related to academic dishonesty.

Scope

The scope of the audit was fiscal year 2025 – December 2025. The audit began in September 2025, and the audit concluded on February 4, 2026.

Methodology

The audit was conducted in conformance with the Institute of Internal Auditors’ Global Internal Audit Standards™. Additionally, we conducted the audit in conformance with generally accepted government auditing standards (GAGAS) as applicable. Both standards are required by the Texas Internal Auditing Act, and they require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, proper evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our observations and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

GAGAS also requires that auditors assess internal control when it is significant to the audit objectives. We used the Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission (COSO) framework in assessing internal controls².

Our procedures included interviews, observations of processes, reviews of documentation, and testing. The following table outlines our procedures and observations for each of the audit area objectives performed.

¹ <https://conduct.utdallas.edu/>

² <http://www.coso.org>



Audit Area	Procedures	Observations Related to the Audit Area
Gaining an Understanding	Gained an understanding of operations by interviewing key responsible parties within the program and reviewing policies, procedures, and other related documentation, as necessary. Performed a risk assessment to identify areas of high risk within operations, and focused audit procedures on those risks.	N/A
Faculty Training	Assessed if an effective training and communication strategy is in place to encourage faculty reporting of violations.	N/A
Tracking Trends in Cases	Assessed if trends in academic dishonesty cases are tracked and upward trends are addressed and monitored.	#1
Maxient Access	Performed testing to ensure that controls over access to the case management software are adequate and effective.	N/A
Timeliness of Case Resolutions	Assessed if completions of academic dishonesty cases are monitored and are addressed if not completed timely.	#1
Student Code of Conduct Review	Reviewed and assessed UTDSP5003 Student Code of Conduct policy.	Verbal

Follow-up Procedures

Though management is responsible for implementing the course of action outlined in the response, we will follow up on the status of implementation after the expected implementation dates. Requests for extension to the implementation dates may require approval from the UT Dallas Audit Committee. This process will help enhance accountability and ensure that prompt action is taken to address the observations.



Appendix B: Observation Risk Rankings

Audit observations are ranked according to the following definitions, consistent with UT System Audit Office guidance.

Risk Level	Definition
Priority	If not addressed immediately, a priority observation has a significant probability to directly affect the achievement of a strategic or important operational objective of UT Dallas or the UT System as a whole. These observations are reported to and tracked by the UT System Audit, Compliance, and Risk Management Committee (ACRMC).
High	High-risk observations are substantially undesirable and pose a high probability of adverse effects to UT Dallas either as a whole or to a division/school/department level.
Medium	Medium-risk observations are considered to have a moderate probability of adverse effects to UT Dallas either as a whole or to a division/school/department level.
Low	Low-risk observations are considered to have a low probability of adverse effects to UT Dallas either as a whole or to a division/school/department level.
Not Reportable	Some recommendations made during an audit are considered of minimal risk, and the observations are verbally shared with management during the audit or at the concluding meeting.



Appendix C: Report Submission and Distribution

We thank the Office of Community Standards and Conduct management and staff for their support, courtesy, and cooperation provided throughout this audit.

Respectfully Submitted,

DocuSigned by:

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Toni Stephens, CPA, CIA, CRMA, Chief Audit Executive

Distribution List

Members and ex-officio members of the UT Dallas Institutional Audit Committee

Responsible Vice President

Dr. Gene Fitch Jr., Vice President for Student Affairs

Action Plan Owner(s)

- Mr. Shaq Massey, Director, Office of Community Standards and Conduct
- Mr. Sean Payne, Administrative Assistant, Office of Community Standards and Conduct

Key Stakeholders

- Dr. Chad Thomas, Senior Associate VP for Student Affairs
- Dr. Amanda Smith, Associate VP for Student Affairs and Dean of Students

External Parties

- The University of Texas System Audit Office
- Legislative Budget Board
- Governor's Office
- State Auditor's Office

Engagement Team

- Project Manager: Mr. Rob Hopkins, CFE, Audit Manager
- Project Leader: Ms. Julia Lawshae, CFE, Internal Auditor III