The Daily Campus

THE INDEPENDENT VOICE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT SINCE 1896 • VOLUME CXXIX, NO. 69

Thursday, January 22, 2026



How much cheating and AI misuse goes on at UConn?

by Kevin Guinan
STAFF WRITER
HE/HIM/HIS
kcg21003@uconn.edu



Students busy studying on Sept. 8, 2025, in Homer D. Babbidge Library. The class workload increased as the university entered its third week of the semester.
PHOTO BY SCARLETT DOYLE, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

The Office of Community Standards at the University of Connecticut Storrs is conducting less investigations on academic misconduct amidst rising AI misuse cases, according to data obtained by The Daily Campus through the Freedom of Information Act.

The data contains all academic misconduct on the Storrs campus investigated by the Office of Community Standards between the academic years 2015-16 and 2024-25. The school year with the most investigations was in 2020-21 with a total of 377 misconduct cases.

While remote learning's negative impact on academic integrity can be seen through a spike in cases, other impacts of technology on academic integrity are less clear, such as generative artificial intelligence.

The lack of clarity on AI's impact stems from a sharp drop in reported misconduct following the 2020-21 peak. A year later, in 2021-22, the lowest amount of academic integrity complaints from the past decade were recorded at Storrs, with just 108 cases.

ChatGPT was released during academic year 2022-23, debuting on Nov. 30, 2022. Generative AI came as a disruption to many academic integrity standards, with professors across different colleges responding by switching from online to handwritten assignments, according to Inside Higher Ed.

Professors at UConn have also responded to the misuse of AI, with one history professor returning to in-person exams because of the ease of academic misconduct online.

Despite this, misconduct cases have remained far lower than their COVID counterparts. In the most recent data obtained for the 2024-25 academic year, 132 students received academic integrity complaints, which is one less case than there was almost a decade ago during the 2015-16 school year.

Overall cases may be at a lower rate than they were five years ago, but the number of complaints where AI is involved is steadily increasing. In 2022-23 there was a total of 23 cases which used AI, but that jumped to 73 in 2023-24, marking a 217.4% increase.

There have been a total of 105 cases of misconduct with AI since 2022. Of the 105 cases, 51 or 48.6% came from classes within the Department of History. Of those 51 cases, 33 involved worksheet six for the U.S. History Since 1877 class.

The head of the Department of History, Mark Healey, said in an email that the amount of reported misconduct within history classes is a reflection on the department's strict stance against AI use.

"The short answer is that the higher number of cases is almost certainly due to our taking [of] a strong stance against the use of AI for writing assignments," Healey said. "I would imagine the numbers from last fall are even higher."

The current Academic, Scholarly and Professional Integrity Misconduct policy does not include a specific violation for misusing AI, but rather leaves much of the decision process up to instructors to set expectations for AI use in the course, according to a Word document prepared by the Office of Community Standards for the FOIA Freedom of Information Act request.

After a student is accused of misconduct, hearing panels decide whether a student is in violation based on a preponderance of the evidence standard. The received records included a rationale section about how the board came to their decision, which provided insight into how students accused of AI misuse have countered the charge.

Two examples of students countering their charge come from May 2025. In both cases, the board found the cases to not violate the student code. The two charges are from different dates and classes, but both involved papers from history classes and were found not guilty on very similar rationales.

"[T]he Hearing Panel has determined that there is or is not a preponderance of the evidence that the respondent submitted a paper...that contained generative artificial intelligence. The submitted paper by the respondent showed that there was a different level of writing sophistication compared to the work previously submitted in the semester. However, the previous writing samples were taken from a handwritten in-class writing assignment, which could differ from writing that was done longitudinally by the respondent," the rationale said, adding that AI detection tools can be unreliable.

"Additionally, the instructor indicated that the respondent's previously submitted writing was good, but the final submission of the assignment was unusually well written," the rationale continued. "The student did provide the hearing panel with a previous draft of the assignment that was reflective of previous written assignments submitted to the course. The draft showed similarities to the final submission of work."

A complaint for a paper submitted four days before for a Historians Craft class had the exact same rationale about writing sophistication and a previous draft provided to the hearing panel, with the only words that changed in the rationale being the class and paper title.

UConn's handling of academic misconduct began to get reformed after cases peaked during COVID. The Academic Integrity Task Force created in 2021 had five main goals to help "unify policies and procedures of Academic, Scholarly, and Professional Integrity," according to the document.

Since students and faculty are responsible for filing their own reports, policy changes may not cause rates of misconduct to change. However, knowing the number of complaints received provides context to the outcome of the task force and its priorities.

One outcome was the task force advocating to unite the processes for undergraduate and graduate students accused of misconduct. They still remain separated between the Office of Community Standards and the Graduate School as of last semester, with work still being done to combine them, according to the word document.

"One of the major roadblocks to why this has not been done was that the report called for an Office of Academic and Scholarly Integrity to be created that would provide educational materials and manage all alleged academic, scholarly, and professional integrity misconduct," the document said. "Unfortunately, due to budget constraints this was not able to have been created, so it is being managed by the OCS and the Graduate School who work collaboratively together."

The Academic Integrity Task Force's five main goals are: make recommendations on UConn's strategic approach to academic integrity standards, ensure institutional congruence and participant fairness, provide insights and committee updates, give recommendations on procedures to address misconduct and give recommendations for student, faculty and staff development.

The task force was behind the new Academic, Scholarly and Professional Integrity and Misconduct (ASPIM) policy which went into effect on Aug. 28, 2023. Prior to the policy change, there was one definition for academic integrity used to decide if a student violated the code or not.

"Academic misconduct is dishonest or unethical academic behavior that includes, but is not limited to, misrepresenting mastery in an academic area (e.g., cheating), failing to properly credit information, research, or ideas to their rightful originators or representing such information, research, or ideas as your own (e.g. plagiarism)," according to the 2012 Academic Integrity in Undergraduate Education and Research Policy.

The new policy enacted in 2023 expands on the definitions of cheating and plagiarizing while adding definitions for "misrepresenting" and "noncompliance."

The definition for misrepresenting is "deliberately knowing and providing false or misleading information, including information about oneself or others." Noncompliance is defined as the "failure to conform with codified and publicly available academic, scholarly, or professional standards, processes, or protocols."

In the documents provided, the Office of Community Standards began filing cases under these different charges on Sept. 12, 2023. Since recording these different charges, the amount of cheating has decreased significantly and plagiarism has slightly increased.

For more... dailycampus.com The_DailyCampus The_DailyCampus The Daily Campus

SUPERHEROES | PAGE 6
Movies to look out for in the new DCU

EDITORIAL | PAGE 7
is the free press still free?

WBB | PAGE 12
No. 1 UConn to kickoff Big East road trip against Georgetown

WE ARE NOT THE DAILY DIGEST