

**Confidential and Subject to the Rules of the Administrative Board of
Harvard College**

**ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD OF HARVARD COLLEGE
SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT**

May 17, 2024

I. The Complaint and Response

The Office of Academic Integrity and Student Conduct (OAISC) is investigating a concern of misconduct on April 20, 2024, involving Student A, [Redacted - PII] ([Redacted - PII] '26), and Student C. It is reported that on April 20, 2024, the students disrupted the China Conference at the Harvard Kennedy School (HKS) by interrupting the speaker, making loud noises, and chanting, with the result of HUPD escorting the students out of the event.

Case Managers of the Administrative Board, Jon McIlvaine and Summer Shafer, individually met with Student A, [Redacted - PII] and Student C and their Board Representatives, Allston Burr Resident Dean of [Redacted - PII], [Redacted - PII] and Allston Burr Resident Dean of [Redacted - PII] [Redacted - PII] [Redacted - PII] between April 23, 2024 and April 25, 2024, to explain the confidentiality rules of the College, the procedures followed by the Board in disciplinary cases, and the complaint that was made against them.

Case materials were emailed to each student after their initial meetings. Students responded to the charges by submitting an initial statement on May 1, 2024. Each student's statement was exchanged with the other students on May 8, 2024.

On receipt of the full information, the Dean of the College appointed a subcommittee of the Board to meet with the student concerning these allegations. The subcommittee was composed of Interim Allston Burr Resident Dean of Dunster House, Gregory Davis (chair), and Resident Dean of First-Year Students in Elm Yard, Alysha Johnson Williams.

The rules of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, in the section on "Standards of Conduct in the Harvard Community" in the *2023-2024 Harvard College Student Handbook*, state that,

It is the expectation of the College that all students, whether or not they are on campus or are currently enrolled as degree candidates, will behave in a mature and responsible manner. This expectation for mature and responsible conduct also encompasses accountability for one's own well-being, including responsible decision-making regarding physical and mental health. Further, the College expects every student to be familiar with the regulations governing membership in the Harvard community, set forth in the pages that follow. Because students are expected to show good judgment and use common sense at all times, not all kinds of misconduct or behavioral standards are codified here. The College takes all these diverse principles very seriously; together they

create a foundation for the responsible, respectful society that Harvard seeks to foster among its students, faculty, and staff.

Harvard College Student Handbook, Page 49

The section on “Honesty” in the *2023-2024 Harvard College Student Handbook*, states that,

The College expects that all students will be honest and forthcoming in their dealings with the members of this community. Further, the College expects that students will answer truthfully questions put to them by a properly identified officer of the University. Failure to do so ordinarily will result in disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, the requirement to withdraw from the College.

All students are required to respect private and public ownership; instances of theft, misappropriation, or unauthorized use of or damage to property or materials not one’s own will ordinarily result in disciplinary action, including requirement to withdraw from the College.

A student who commits an offense against law and order during a public disturbance or demonstration or who disregards the instructions of any other University officer at such a time is subject to disciplinary action and may be required to withdraw.

Harvard College Student Handbook, Page 53

Additionally, the section on “Faculty Resolutions in the *2023-2024 Harvard College Student Handbook* states that,

The University places special emphasis, as well, upon certain values which are essential to its nature as an academic community. Among these are freedom of speech and academic freedom, freedom from personal force and violence, and freedom of movement. Interference with any of these freedoms must be regarded as a serious violation of the personal rights upon which the community is based. Furthermore, although the administrative processes and activities of the University cannot be ends in themselves, such functions are vital to the orderly pursuit of the work of all members of the University. Therefore, interference with members of the University in performance of their normal duties and activities must be regarded as unacceptable obstruction of the essential processes of the University.

Harvard College Student Handbook, Page 53

This Subcommittee Report will be shared with each student and they will be given the opportunity to respond in writing before the case is considered by the Board. The recommendations regarding possible outcomes included at the conclusion of this Subcommittee Report are a starting point for the discussion of the Administrative Board regarding this case. In all cases, the Board is not limited in its discussion and has the full range of sanctions allowed by the Faculty available to it.

II. Investigation of the Complaint

Student A's Subcommittee Appearance

On May 10, 2024, Student A met with the subcommittee by Zoom. They were accompanied by their Board Representative, [Redacted - PII]

During their appearance, Student A apologized for violating the Statement of Rights and Responsibilities and expressed regret that she had not seen clarification from the University regarding how the Statement applied to events like the ambassador's speech. As a [Redacted - PII] [Redacted - PII] of the disruption, Student A said that her main intention was to protect free speech by displaying dissent and truth-telling over the claims of the Chinese Communist Party's ambassador. In her eyes, the disruption served to help the audience think critically about the ambassador's speech and did not prevent the audience from hearing it in the first place. Ultimately, Student A felt that her actions did not limit the ambassador from giving his overall message and took up little time.

Reflecting on the lessons they have learned from the incident, Student A expressed regret for not fully understanding the guidelines on dissenting disruptions for Harvard. She did not wish to break any rules or get [Redacted - PII] involved in disciplinary action. Moreover, she lamented the various threats to her safety and the safety of others that came from their public action. Notwithstanding this, she would have still protested the ambassador's speech and felt that she was acting in the spirit of both her family's legacy and the lessons she's learned at Harvard.

[Redacted - PII] Subcommittee Appearance

[Redacted - PII] did not respond to offers to meet with the Subcommittee.

Student C's Subcommittee Appearance

On May 10, 2024, Student C met with the subcommittee by Zoom. She was accompanied by her Board Representative, [Redacted - PII]

During her appearance, Student C reiterated that she did not plan to disrupt the ambassador's speech and was only there to record the disruptions of Student A, [Redacted - PII] and others. She felt compelled to speak over the ambassador only after witnessing [Redacted - PII] being handled roughly by an event organizer and hearing the ambassador begin to speak about Taiwan – a subject of close personal significance to Student A and her family. Ultimately, she felt that her actions did not limit the ambassador from giving his overall message and took up little time.

Reflecting on the lessons she has learned from the incident, Student C indicated that she would not have changed any of her actions. As she was not intimately involved in the planning of the group protest and trusted [Redacted - PII] assessment that their actions would not violate school policy, she felt she acted out of compassion for her family and to rebut the ambassador's claims.

III. Conclusions and Recommendations

The subcommittee recommends that **Redacted - PII** be admonished for inappropriate social behavior involving a violation of the University Statement on Rights and Responsibilities. We recognize that some members of the Board may wish to consider alternative outcomes.