



**Students of Concern Team
Division of Enrollment & Student Services
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
AT FREDONIA**

**ANNUAL REPORT
2020 - 2021**

Students of Concern Team (SOC)

The Students of Concern (SOC) is a campus-wide, multidisciplinary team that provides a caring program of identification, intervention, and response while balancing the needs of the individual with those of the community.

The Students of Concern Team:

- Identifies students whose behavioral patterns have raised concern about their well-being;
- Centralizes communication to gain a more complete understanding of the whole individual student;
- Serves as a resource to the campus community and is designed for early intervention regarding behavioral issues to help support the health, safety, and success of students;
- Monitors the disposition of cases to gauge when follow-up is needed, whether the response was effective, and what lessons may be learned for future cases;
- Provides training and education to the University community.

SCOPE

SOC addresses issues related to any currently enrolled Fredonia student. The SOC Team may also address issues related to any population, without any official affiliation with the University, that may affect the safety and well-being of those on campus, and/or those formerly, but not currently, affiliated with the University.

The Team is currently chaired by the Executive Director of Student Wellness and Support. In addition, the Team is comprised of representatives from various departments, including:

- University Police
- Academic Advising
- Residence Life
- Counseling Center
- Student Conduct
- Care Coordinator (Prevention, Advocacy & Wellness)
- Academic Affairs (Associate Provost and Early Alert Coordinator)
- Student Engagement and Inclusion
- Office of VP for Enrollment and Student Services

Ad hoc members are added from other areas of the University on a case-by-case basis. All SOC Team actions are tailored to the needs of the specific student's circumstances and balanced with the needs of the campus community.

PURPOSE

Fredonia's Students of Concern Team facilitates the identification and management of behaviors which may disrupt or interfere with the day to day functions of the University.

**Due to COVID-19, the number of cases in spring 2020 was impacted when the campus moved to distance learning mid-March and the majority of students left campus and the surrounding area.*

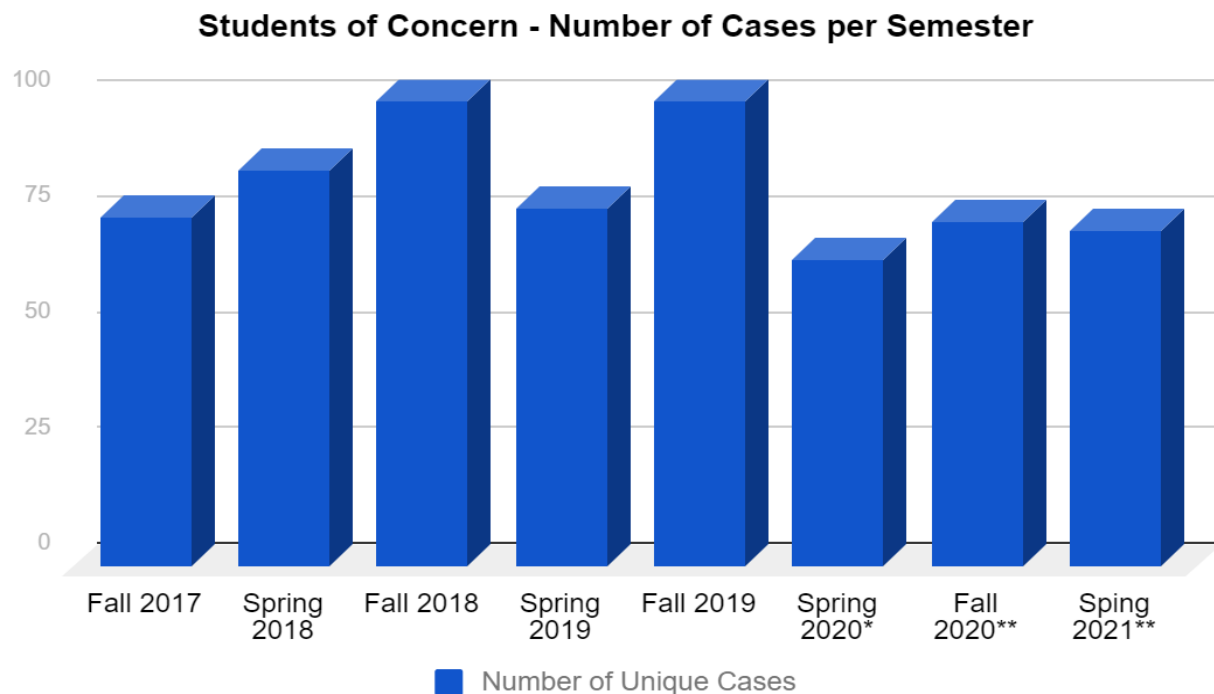
***Due to COVID-19, for the 2020-21 academic year, 50% of classes were remote and campus experience an overall reduced enrollment.*

The SOC Team:

- Serves as the coordinating hub of a network of existing resources, focused on prevention and early intervention in community situations involving members experiencing distress or engaging in harmful or disruptive behaviors;
- Assesses student needs and conducts an assessment in cases where the actions or behaviors of the student may pose a threat to the student or others;
- Develops intervention and support strategies and offer case coordination;
- Regularly reviews and assesses these situations and recommend actions in accord with existing University policies;
- Educates the campus community about how to identify and promptly report concerning behaviors.

ASSESSMENT DATA

Fredonia's team of professionals focused on behavioral intervention has existed since 2007. Initially launched as the Behavioral Intervention Team under Student Affairs, it has consisted of representation from various offices across campus. Only in the last four years has data been collected on the number and types of cases managed by the team.



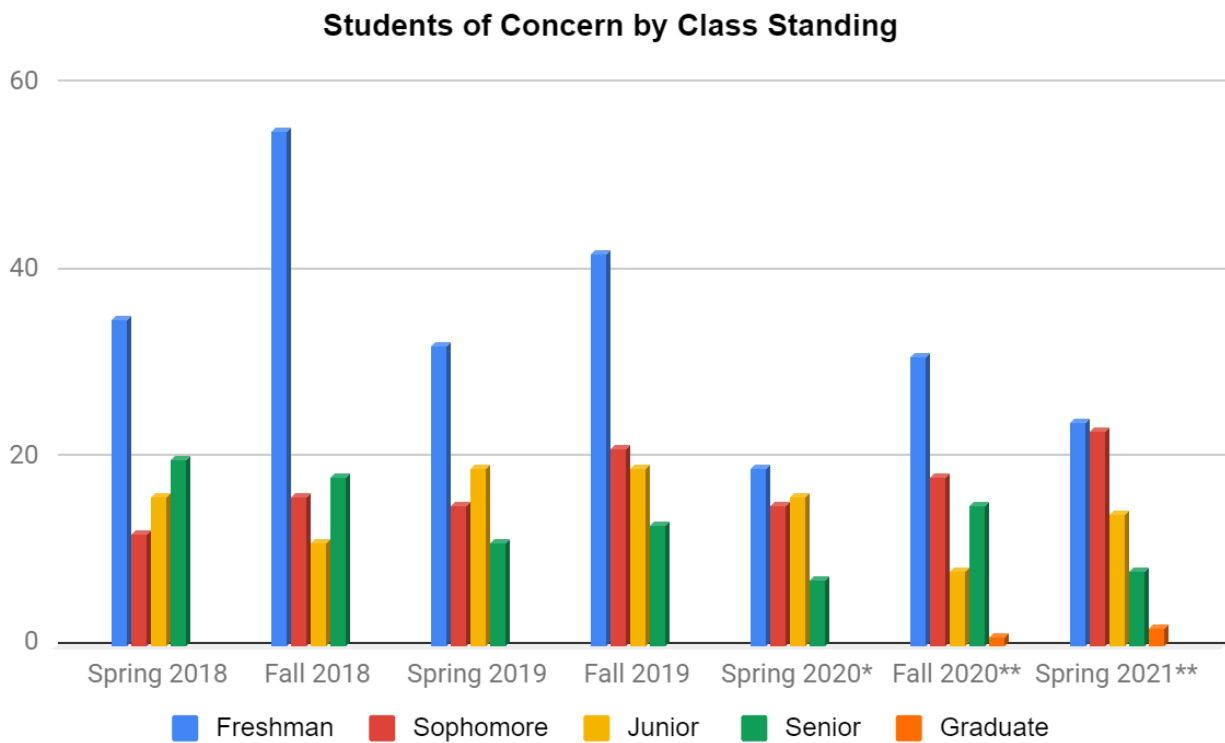
The majority of cases are discussed and reviewed on a weekly basis with a focus on evaluating risk assessment and identifying appropriate interventions. Cases are most

**Due to COVID-19, the number of cases in spring 2020 was impacted when the campus moved to distance learning mid-March and the majority of students left campus and the surrounding area.*

***Due to COVID-19, for the 2020-21 academic year, 50% of classes were remote and campus experience an overall reduced enrollment.*

frequently referred by Residence Life, Faculty, and University Police. The team uses the following steps in addressing each case: **Identification | Report of Behavior** → **Communication of Behaviors (discuss referred case)** → **Assessment (level of risk/concern)** → **Development of Action Plan/Intervention** → **Monitoring | Resolve | Revise**. The team follows each case until there is consensus that either the problem has been resolved to a great extent or the student is connected to/aware of the full array of services that are needed and the problem is being actively addressed.

Students of Concern by Class Standing



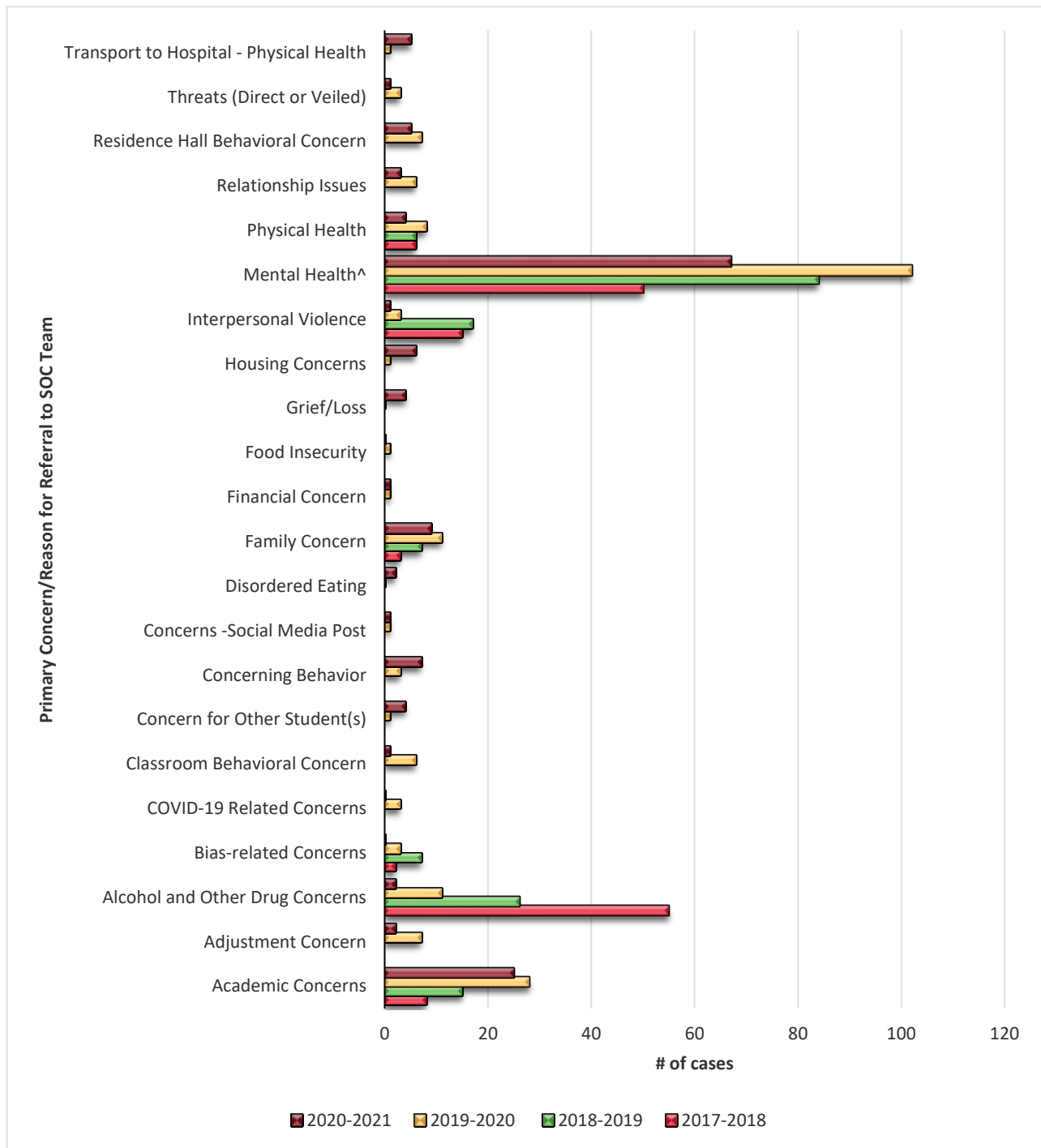
Since the team started collecting and monitoring the data, freshmen represent the largest number of referrals. This is likely related to both the proactive approach the campus takes to support students as they adjust to college and the challenges faced by students in their adjustment.

Data on the primary concern/reason for referral to the Students of Concern Team was first collected beginning fall 2017. With the implementation of Maxient for case management in Spring 2020, the team has been able to manage cases more efficiently and track data more effectively. Below, please find data from Fall 2017-Spring 2021. With Maxient, more robust data regarding the primary concerns/reasons for referrals has been tracked beginning Spring 2020.

Primary Concern | Reason for Referral to the SOC Team

*Due to COVID-19, the number of cases in spring 2020 was impacted when the campus moved to distance learning mid-March and the majority of students left campus and the surrounding area.

**Due to COVID-19, for the 2020-21 academic year, 50% of classes were remote and campus experience an overall reduced enrollment.



^Mental Health referrals includes, but is not limited to: *anxious symptoms, bizarre behavior, depressive symptoms, heightened emotional distress, mood swings/intense emotional outbursts, suicidal ideation, suicide attempt, and/or transport to hospital for mental health concerns.*

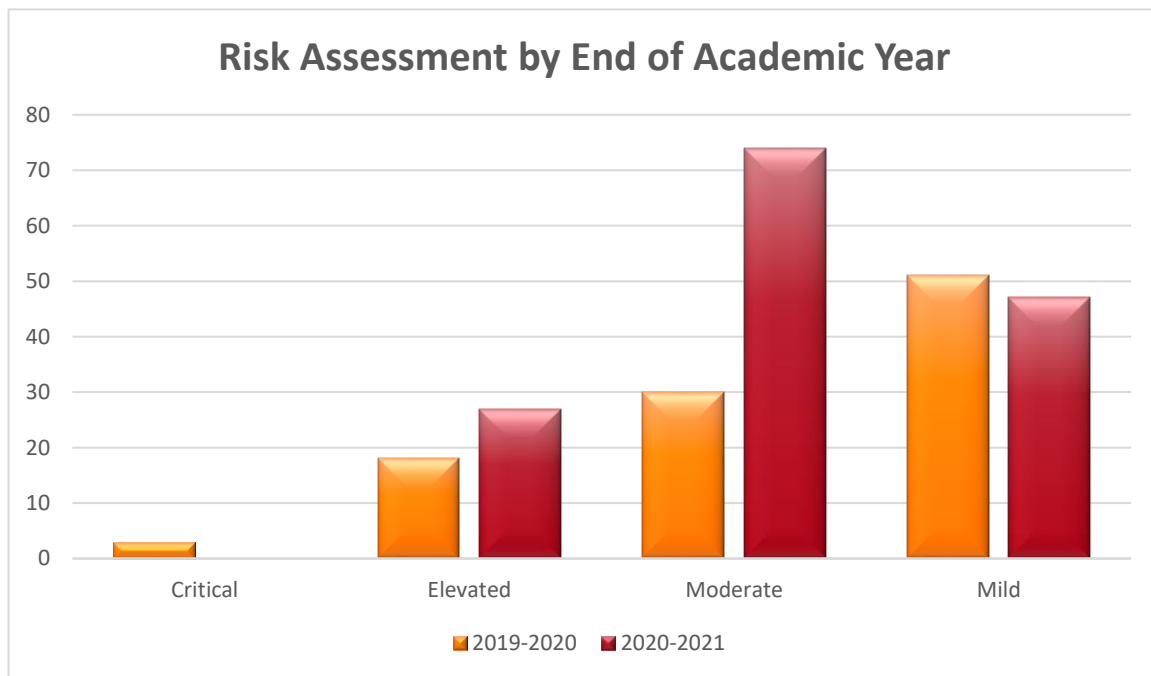
**Due to COVID-19, the number of cases in spring 2020 was impacted when the campus moved to distance learning mid-March and the majority of students left campus and the surrounding area.*

***Due to COVID-19, for the 2020-21 academic year, 50% of classes were remote and campus experience an overall reduced enrollment.*

Mental health concerns continue to be a primary reason for referral to the Students of Concern Team. Interventions often include referrals to the Counseling Center, wellness checks by Residence Life staff or University Police, outreach by the Care Coordinator, Academic Advising, EDP, FOP, and/or Athletics as appropriate, and/or case management through Prevention, Advocacy and Wellness Services and/or Student Conduct. While much of the SOC Team’s response is reactive to the mental health concerns of the student and the impact on the community, the frequency by which these cases are being referred to the SOC Team speaks to the need for proactive interventions that could benefit the campus community as a whole.

Academic Concerns were also a frequent primary reason for referral. With Associate Provost and Academic Advising membership on the SOC Team, collaboration with faculty and academic support services was commonly coordinated in these cases. Again, the frequency by which these types of cases have been referred to the SOC Team speaks to the benefit of training the campus community on academic and student support resources available, as well as identifying potential barriers to access.

Risk Assessment



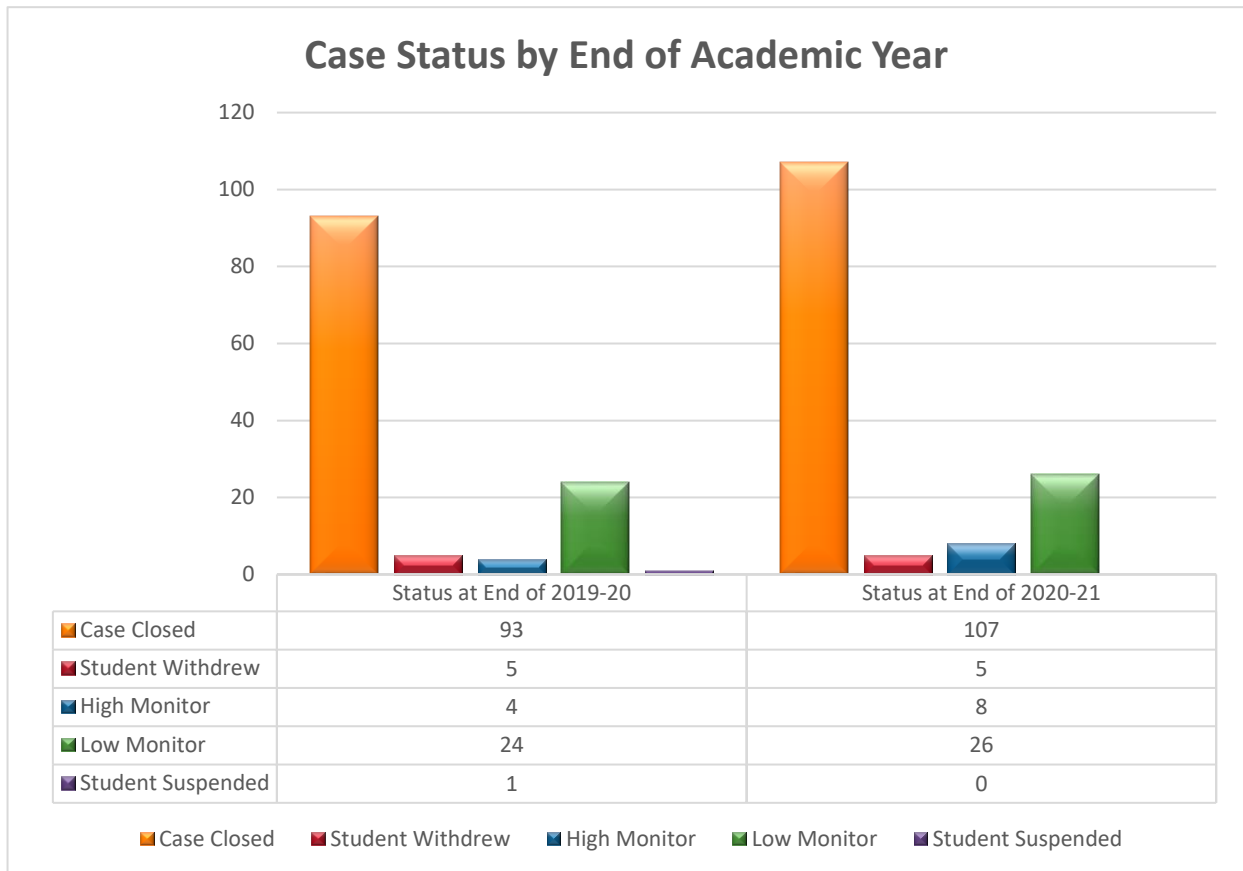
**Due to COVID-19, the number of cases in spring 2020 was impacted when the campus moved to distance learning mid-March and the majority of students left campus and the surrounding area.*

***Due to COVID-19, for the 2020-21 academic year, 50% of classes were remote and campus experience an overall reduced enrollment.*

National Behavioral Intervention Team Association (NaBITA) Risk Rubric

Beginning in fall 2019, the SOC Team trained on the utilization of the NaBITA Risk Rubric for objectively triaging and assessing the level of risk for cases, identifying safety concerns and deploying the appropriate intervention measure needed to address the concerns. The tool is the most widely used risk rubric by behavioral intervention teams (BIT) in the United States (Schiemann & Van Brunt, 2018), currently utilized by 92% of BITs. The Risk Rubric is designed to assign a subjective, yet specific level of risk to each case discussed, each time they are discussed. Rubric scales include the assessment of the issues of life stress and emotional health as well as issues of hostility of violence to others. An overall summary of risk is reviewed and documented each time a case is discussed and shifts over time as interventions are deployed or the situations evolves. Interventions are determined based on the level of risk and are individualized to each student’s need and case characteristics.

Case Status

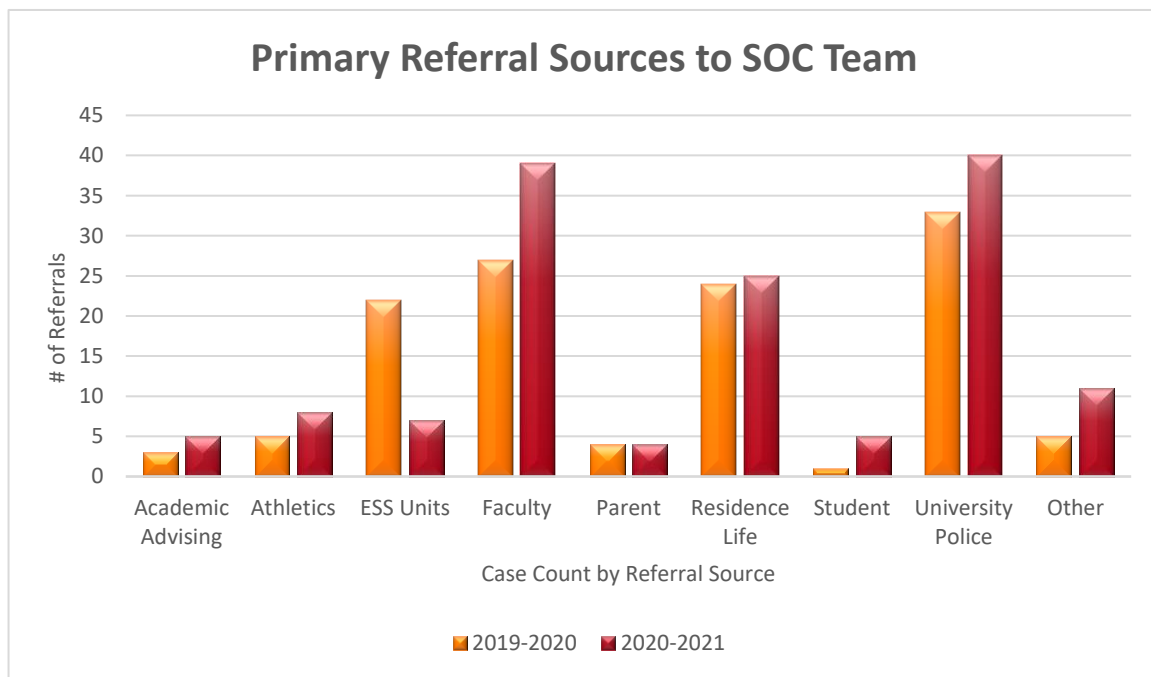


**Due to COVID-19, the number of cases in spring 2020 was impacted when the campus moved to distance learning mid-March and the majority of students left campus and the surrounding area.*

***Due to COVID-19, for the 2020-21 academic year, 50% of classes were remote and campus experience an overall reduced enrollment.*

Each closed case is almost always a success story. This means the case was triaged, an intervention was implemented whereby a student was provided with or connected to an appropriate resource, and the case reached a level of risk that is either low or no longer present. The number of closed cases over the last two years speaks to the proactive nature of the committee: An alert campus community member identified a concern, the SOC Team was notified, and an intervention (or several) occurred. In a few cases, the intervention becomes supporting a student in seeking a withdrawal. However, in most cases, the intervention is an outreach, a warm hand-off to an appropriate support, and follow-up to reassess the student's status and needs. Cases that remain on the team's radar are rated at either low monitor (checking in with student and monitoring progress) or high monitor (more frequent monitoring, regular assessment of student's status and well-being).

Primary Referral Sources to SOC Team



As the chart denotes, referrals come from a variety of sources. Without the caring identification by members of the campus community, the SOC Team would not be nearly as effective in providing the appropriate supports. SUNY Fredonia's Residence Halls are staffed with trained and attentive Resident Assistants – fellow students who are in tune with the needs of residents and strong advocates for their peers, helping them to get the assistance and support they may benefit from. Referrals from faculty are also frequent and speak to the attention and awareness SUNY Fredonia's faculty have of their students. Additionally, University Police in its primary role providing safety and security to the campus community, is able to identify cases whereby students may benefit from an additional intervention by the

**Due to COVID-19, the number of cases in spring 2020 was impacted when the campus moved to distance learning mid-March and the majority of students left campus and the surrounding area.*

***Due to COVID-19, for the 2020-21 academic year, 50% of classes were remote and campus experience an overall reduced enrollment.*

SOC Team. As is evident, referrals come from all over campus and this speaks to both the care and support of the SUNY Fredonia community and the acknowledgement that the well-being of students is the responsibility of the whole campus.

POINTS OF PRIDE

1. **Big Blue Resource Folders** – In fall 2020, all employees received a Big Blue Resource folder that included a series of handouts on How to Help Students in Distress and flyers on the Crisis Text Line, a list of on- and off-campus frequently utilized resources, and a flow-chart that guides the helper on what to do when concerned about a student. These folders are also included in every welcome packet distributed to new employees by Human Resources. The folders are meant to be easily located resources for employees to have at their fingertips when looking to support a student.
2. **Mental Health Speaker Series** – For spring 2021, a Mental Health Speaker Series was launched in partnership with the Professional Development Center and our community partnership with the Suicide Prevention Alliance of Chautauqua County. Over the course of the semester, 14 programs were offered to the entire campus community via Zoom. Topics included, but were not limited to, *Preventing Targeted Lethal Violence on College Campuses*, *Talk Saves Lives: An Introduction to Suicide Prevention*, *Suicide Prevention for Gatekeepers*, and *Students of Concern – How to Respond to Students in Distress*.
3. **With COVID-19 restrictions and impact, many SOC Team assessments, on-going evaluations and interventions included work with students who were not physically on-campus.** Assessing and evaluating a Student of Concern case often meant meeting with a student via Zoom or over the phone and connecting the student with supports in the same manner. This year, follow-up to interventions was more frequent and often occurred in multiple ways – emails, texts, phone calls, Zoom meetings, and in-person visits when possible. Faculty and staff appeared more in tune with both identifying students of concern early on and a willingness to be a part of the intervention.
4. Relatedly, this year, **the SOC Team saw an increase in the number of referrals from Academic Affairs, specifically faculty.** It is hypothesized that the reasons for this are multifaceted: outreach by the Students of Concern Team through the distribution of the Big Blue Resource Folders and the Mental Health Speaker Series; a cultural shift on campus as all were impacted by COVID-19. The impact of the pandemic on higher education has been profound. Faculty were now having to be creative about both engaging students and monitoring their progress. With encouragement from administration, faculty appeared to be more active in monitoring their students' progress and reaching out to those who fell off the radar. Those off-the-radar students were some of the most common referrals the SOC Team received this semester – a increase over past semesters.

*Due to COVID-19, the number of cases in spring 2020 was impacted when the campus moved to distance learning mid-March and the majority of students left campus and the surrounding area.

**Due to COVID-19, for the 2020-21 academic year, 50% of classes were remote and campus experience an overall reduced enrollment.

-
5. This year, the team **closed over 100 cases**, providing interventions and supporting students in their pursuit of academics and engagement in university life. On par with last year, this data speaks to the effectiveness of the team and the circle of support provided by Fredonia's campus community that both identifies students of concern and assists in supporting the student.

Assessment Conclusion

On May 17th and June 17th, 2021, the SOC Team met to review this year's data and a draft of this report. Through detailed and engaging discussion, team members identified lessons learned, highlights, and areas of growth and improvement. This final report is based upon those valuable discussions. Without the dedication, engagement, and often difficult work of the Students of Concern Team members, the successful outcomes would not occur.

Expectations & Goals for 2020-21

While 2020-21 was considerably different than any year in the history of the institution, the SOC Team has eagerly planned for 2021-22, keeping in mind the evolving nature of the pandemic and acknowledging that the SOC Team's operations must evolve as well. For 2021-22, the SOC Team expects to:

- Continue to increase engagement and education of the campus community on what to look for and how to assist students. With a new Human Resources Director and new Provost on campus, education in the prevention of violence and proactive intervention is paramount. The SOC Team will also continue to enhance its website and training for faculty and staff with the goal of *turning bystanders into upstanders*.
- Over the last year, it became evident that our team needs to establish a parental notification process. This will be drafted for implementation in 2021-22.
- On-going training of the SOC Team members is critical. While review and updates on our policies and procedures is important, specialized training in Cultural Competency and Developing and Deploying Interventions will be one of many topics of professional development for the team this coming year.

**Due to COVID-19, the number of cases in spring 2020 was impacted when the campus moved to distance learning mid-March and the majority of students left campus and the surrounding area.*

***Due to COVID-19, for the 2020-21 academic year, 50% of classes were remote and campus experience an overall reduced enrollment.*