



## STUDENT CONDUCT HEARING PROCEDURES

Policy Name:	Student Conduct
Policy Number:	5030
Applicable Code/Law:	WAC 132G-121

### **WAC 132G-121-025**

#### **Statement of Jurisdiction**

(1) The student conduct code shall apply to student conduct that occurs:

- (a) On College premises;
- (b) At or in connection with College sponsored activities; or
- (c) Off-campus and is conduct that in the judgment of the College adversely affects the College community or the pursuit of its objectives.

(2) Jurisdiction extends to, but is not limited to, locations in which students are engaged in official College activities including, but not limited to, foreign or domestic travel, activities funded by the associated students, athletic events, training internships, cooperative and distance education, on-line education, practicums, supervised work experiences or any other College-sanctioned social or club activities.

(3) Students are responsible for their conduct from notification of acceptance at the College through the actual receipt of a degree, even though conduct may occur before classes begin or after classes end, as well as during the academic year and during periods between terms of actual enrollment.

(4) These standards shall apply to a student's conduct even if the student withdraws from College while a disciplinary matter is pending. The student conduct officer has sole discretion, on a case by case basis, to determine whether the student conduct code will be applied to conduct that occurs off-campus.

## **WAC 132G-121-030**

### **Definitions**

The following definitions shall apply for purposes of this student conduct code:

- (1) “**Student conduct officer**” is a College administrator designated by the president to be responsible for implementing and enforcing the student conduct code.
- (2) “**Conduct review officer**” is the vice president of students, equity and success, or other College administrator designated by the president to be responsible for receiving and for reviewing or referring appeals of student disciplinary actions in accordance with the procedures of this code.
- (3) “**The president**” is the president of the College. The president is authorized to:
  - (a) Delegate any responsibilities as set forth in this Chapter as may be reasonably necessary; and
  - (b) Re-assign any and all duties and responsibilities as set forth in this Chapter as may be reasonably necessary.
- (4) “**Disciplinary action**” is the process by which the student conduct officer imposes discipline against a student for a violation of the student conduct code.
- (5) “**Disciplinary appeal**” is the process by which an aggrieved student can appeal the discipline imposed by the student conduct officer. Disciplinary appeals from a suspension in excess of ten (10) instructional days or an expulsion are heard by the student conduct appeals board. Appeals of all other appealable disciplinary action shall be reviewed through brief adjudicative proceedings.
- (6) “**Respondent**” is the student against whom disciplinary action is initiated.
- (7) “**Service**” is the process by which a document is officially delivered to a party. Unless otherwise provided, service upon a party shall be accomplished by:
  - (a) Hand-delivery of the document to the party; or
  - (b) Sending the document by email and by certified mail or first -class mail to the party’s last known address.Service is deemed complete upon hand-delivery of the document or upon the date the document is emailed and deposited in the mail.
- (8) “**Filing**” is the process by which a document is officially delivered to a College official responsible for facilitating a disciplinary review. Unless otherwise provided, filing shall be accomplished by:

- (a) Hand delivery of the document to the specified College official or College official's assistant; or
- (b) Sending the document by email and first class mail to the specified College official's office and College email address.

Papers required to be filed shall be deemed filed upon actual receipt during office hours at the office of the specified College official.

(9) **“College premises”** shall include all campuses of the College, wherever located, and includes all land, buildings, facilities, vehicles, equipment, and other property owned, used, or controlled by the College.

(10) **“Student”** includes all persons taking courses at or through the College, whether on a full-time or part-time basis, and whether such courses are credit courses, non-credit courses, on-line courses, or otherwise. Persons who withdraw after allegedly violating the code, who are not officially enrolled for a particular term but who have a continuing relationship with the College, or who have been notified of their acceptance for admission are considered “students” for purposes of this Chapter.

(11) **“Business day”** means a week-day, excluding weekends, College holidays, or periods of closure.

(12) A **“Complainant”** is an alleged victim of sexual misconduct.

(13) **“Sexual misconduct”** has the meaning ascribed to this term in WAC 132G-121-015 (13).

### **WAC 132G-121-035**

#### **Initiation of Disciplinary Action**

(1) All disciplinary actions will be initiated by the student conduct officer. If that officer is the subject of a complaint initiated by the respondent, the president shall, upon request and when feasible, designate another person to fulfill any such disciplinary responsibilities relative to the complainant.

(2) The student conduct officer shall initiate disciplinary action by serving the respondent with written notice directing such respondent to attend a disciplinary meeting. The notice shall briefly describe the factual allegations, the provision(s) of the conduct code the respondent is alleged to have violated, the range of possible sanctions for the alleged violation(s), and specify the time and location of the meeting. At the meeting, the student conduct officer will present the allegations to the respondent and the respondent shall be afforded an opportunity to explain what took place. If the respondent fails to attend the meeting after proper service of notice, the student conduct officer may take disciplinary action based upon the available information.

(3) The student conduct officer, prior to taking disciplinary action in a case involving allegations of sexual misconduct, will make a reasonable effort to contact the complainant to discuss the

results of the investigation and possible disciplinary sanctions and/or conditions (if any) that may be imposed upon the respondent if the allegations of sexual misconduct are found to have merit.

(4) Within ten days of the initial disciplinary meeting, and after considering the evidence in the case, including any facts or argument presented by the respondent, the student conduct officer shall serve the respondent with a written decision setting forth the facts and conclusions supporting their decision, the specific student conduct code provisions found to have been violated, the discipline imposed (if any), and a notice of any appeal rights with an explanation of the consequences of failing to file a timely appeal.

(5) The student conduct officer may take any of the following disciplinary actions:

(a) Exonerate the respondent and terminate the proceedings.

(b) Impose a disciplinary sanction(s), as described in WAC 132G-121-020.

(c) Refer the matter directly to the student conduct committee for such disciplinary action as the committee deems appropriate. Such referral shall be in writing, to the attention of the chair of the student conduct committee, with a copy served on the respondent.

(6) In cases involving allegations of sexual misconduct, the student conduct officer, on the same date that a disciplinary decision is served on the respondent, will serve a written notice informing the complainant whether the allegations of sexual misconduct were found to have merit and describing any disciplinary sanctions and/or conditions imposed upon the respondent for the complainant's protection, including disciplinary suspension or dismissal of the respondent. The notice will also inform the complainant of their appeal rights. If protective sanctions and/or conditions are imposed, the student conduct officer shall make a reasonable effort to contact the complainant to ensure prompt notice of the protective disciplinary sanctions and/or conditions.

## **WAC 132G-121-040**

### **Appeal from Disciplinary Action**

(1) The respondent may appeal a disciplinary action by filing a written notice of appeal with the conduct review officer within ten (10) days of service of the student conduct officer's decision. Failure to timely file a notice of appeal constitutes a waiver of the right to appeal and the student conduct officer's decision shall be deemed final.

(2) The notice of appeal must include a brief statement explaining why the respondent is seeking review.

(3) The parties to an appeal shall be the respondent and the conduct review officer.

(4) A respondent who timely appeals a disciplinary action, or whose case is referred to the student conduct committee, has a right to a prompt, fair, and impartial hearing as provided for in these procedures.

(5) On appeal, the College bears the burden of establishing the evidentiary facts underlying the imposition of a disciplinary sanction by a preponderance of the evidence.

(6) Imposition of disciplinary action for violation of the student conduct code shall be stayed pending appeal, unless respondent has been summarily suspended.

(7) The student conduct committee shall hear appeals from:

- (a) The imposition of disciplinary suspensions in excess of ten (10) instructional days;
- (b) Dismissals; and
- (c) Discipline cases referred to the committee by the student conduct officer, the conduct review officer, or the president.

(9) Student conduct appeals from the imposition of the following disciplinary sanctions shall be reviewed through a brief adjudicative proceeding:

- (a) Suspensions of ten instructional days or less;
- (b) Disciplinary probation;
- (c) Written reprimands; and
- (d) Any conditions or terms imposed in conjunction with one of the foregoing disciplinary actions.

(10) Except as provided elsewhere in these rules, disciplinary warnings and dismissals of disciplinary actions are final actions and are not subject to appeal.

(11) In cases involving allegations of sexual misconduct, the complainant has the right to appeal the following actions by the student conduct officer following the same procedures as set forth above for the respondent:

- (a) The dismissal of a sexual misconduct complaint; or
- (b) Any disciplinary sanction(s) and conditions imposed against a respondent for a sexual misconduct violation, including a disciplinary warning.

(12) If the respondent timely appeals a decision imposing discipline for a sexual misconduct violation, the College shall notify the complainant of the appeal and provide the complainant an opportunity to intervene as a party to the appeal.

(13) Except as otherwise specified in this Chapter, a complainant who timely appeals a disciplinary decision or who intervenes as a party to respondent's appeal of a disciplinary decision shall be afforded the same procedural rights as are afforded the respondent.

#### **WAC 132G-121-045**

##### **Brief Adjudicative Proceedings – Initial Hearing**

(1) Brief adjudicative proceedings shall be conducted by a conduct review officer. The conduct review officer shall not participate in any case in which they are a complainant or witness, or in which they have direct or personal interest, prejudice, or bias, or in which they have acted previously in an advisory capacity.

(2) The parties to a brief adjudicative proceeding are the respondent, the student conduct officer, and in cases involving sexual misconduct, the complainant. Before taking action, the conduct review officer shall conduct an informal hearing and provide each party:

- (a) An opportunity to be informed of the agency's view of the matter; and
- (b) An opportunity to explain the party's view of the matter.

(3) The conduct review officer shall serve an initial decision upon the respondent and the student conduct officer within ten (10) days of consideration of the appeal. The initial decision shall contain a brief written statement of the reasons for the decision and information about how to seek administrative review of the initial decision. If no request for review is filed within ten (10) days of service of the initial decision, the initial decision shall be deemed the final decision.

(4) In cases involving allegations of sexual misconduct, the conduct review officer, on the same date as the initial decision is served on the respondent, will serve a written notice upon the complainant informing the complainant whether the allegations of sexual misconduct were found to have merit and describing any disciplinary sanctions and/or conditions imposed upon the respondent for the complainant's protection. The notice will also inform the complainant of their appeal rights.

(5) If the conduct review officer upon review determines that the respondent's conduct may warrant imposition of a disciplinary suspension of more than ten (10) instructional days or expulsion, the matter shall be referred to the student conduct committee for a disciplinary hearing.

#### **WAC 132G-121-050**

##### **Brief Adjudicative Proceedings – Review of Initial Decision**

(1) An initial decision is subject to review by the president, provided a party files a written request for review with the conduct review officer within ten (10) days of service of the initial decision.

(2) The president shall not participate in any case in which the president is a complainant or witness, or in which they have direct or personal interest, prejudice, or bias, or in which they have acted previously in an advisory capacity.

(3) During the review, the president shall give all parties an opportunity to file written responses explaining their view of the matter and shall make any inquiries necessary to ascertain whether the sanctions should be modified or whether the proceedings should be referred to the student conduct committee for a formal adjudicative hearing.

(4) The decision on review must be in writing and must include a brief statement of the reasons for the decision and must be served on the parties within twenty (20) days of the initial decision or of the request for review, whichever is later. The decision on review will contain a notice that judicial review may be available. A request for review may be deemed to have been denied if the president does not make a disposition of the matter within twenty (20) days after the request is submitted.

(5) If the president upon review determines that the respondent's conduct may warrant imposition of a disciplinary suspension of more than ten (10) instructional days or expulsion, the matter shall be referred to the student conduct committee for a disciplinary hearing.

(6) In cases involving allegations of sexual misconduct, the president, on the same date as the final decision is served on the respondent, will serve a written notice upon the complainant informing the complainant whether the allegations of sexual misconduct were found to have merit and describing any disciplinary sanctions and/or conditions imposed upon the respondent for the complainant's protection, including suspension or dismissal of the respondent. The notice will also inform the complainant of their appeal rights.

#### **WAC 132G-121-055**

##### **Student Conduct Committee**

(1) The student conduct committee shall consist of five members:

(a) Two full-time students appointed by the student government;

(b) Two faculty members appointed by the president;

(c) One faculty member or administrator (other than an administrator serving as a student conduct or conduct review officer) appointed by the president at the beginning of the academic year.

(2) The faculty member or administrator appointed on a yearly basis shall serve as the chair of the committee and may take action on preliminary hearing matters prior to convening the committee. The chair shall receive annual training on protecting victims and promoting accountability in cases involving allegations of sexual misconduct.

(3) Hearings may be heard by a quorum of three members of the committee so long as one faculty member and one student are included on the hearing panel. Committee action may be taken upon a majority vote of all committee members attending the hearing.

(4) Members of the student conduct committee shall not participate in any case in which they are a party, complainant, or witness, in which they have direct or personal interest, prejudice, or bias, or in which they have acted previously in an advisory capacity. Any party may petition the Committee for disqualification of a committee member.

### **WAC 132G-121-060**

#### **Appeal – Student Conduct Committee**

(1) Proceedings of the student conduct committee shall be governed by the Administrative Procedures Act, Chapter 34.05 RCW.

(2) The student conduct committee chair shall serve all parties with written notice of the hearing not less than seven (7) days in advance of the hearing date. The chair may shorten this notice period if both parties agree, and also may continue the hearing to a later time for good cause shown.

(3) The committee chair is authorized to conduct prehearing conferences and/or to make prehearing decisions concerning the extent and form of any discovery, issuance of protective decisions, and similar procedural matters.

(4) Upon request filed at least five (5) days before the hearing by any party or at the direction of the committee chair, the parties shall exchange, no later than the third day prior to the hearing, lists of potential witnesses and copies of potential exhibits that they reasonably expect to present to the committee. Failure to participate in good faith in such a requested exchange may be cause for exclusion from the hearing of any witness or exhibit not disclosed, absent a showing of good cause for such failure.

(5) The committee chair may provide to the committee members in advance of the hearing copies of:

- (a) The conduct officer's notification of imposition of discipline (or referral to the committee); and
- (b) The notice of appeal (or any response to referral) by the respondent. If doing so, however, the chair should remind the members that these "pleadings" are not evidence of any facts they may allege.

(6) The parties may agree before the hearing to designate specific exhibits as admissible without objection and, if they do so, whether the committee chair may provide copies of these admissible exhibits to the committee members before the hearing.

(7) The student conduct officer, upon request, shall provide reasonable assistance to the respondent and complainant in obtaining relevant and admissible evidence that is within the College's control.

(8) Communications between committee members and other hearing participants regarding any issue in the proceeding, other than procedural communications that are necessary to maintain an



orderly process, are generally prohibited without notice and opportunity for all parties to participate, and any improper "ex parte" communication shall be placed on the record, as further provided in RCW 34.05.455.

(9) In cases heard by the committee, each party may be accompanied at the hearing by a non-attorney assistant of the party's choice. The respondent in all committee disciplinary appeals, or a complainant in a case involving allegations of sexual misconduct before the committee, may elect to be represented by an attorney at the person's own cost, but will be deemed to have waived that right unless, at least four (4) business days before the hearing, written notice of the attorney's identity and participation is filed with the committee chair with a copy to the student conduct officer. The committee will ordinarily be advised by an assistant attorney general. If the respondent or the complainant is represented by an attorney, the student conduct officer may also be represented by a second, appropriately screened assistant attorney general.

### **WAC 132G-121-065**

#### **Student Conduct Committee Hearings – Presentation of Evidence**

(1) Upon the failure of any party to attend or participate in a hearing, the student conduct committee may either:

(a) Proceed with the hearing and issuance of its decision; or

(b) Serve a decision of default in accordance with [RCW 34.05.440](#).

(2) The hearing will ordinarily be closed to the public. However, if all parties agree on the record that some or all of the proceedings be open, the chair shall determine any extent to which the hearing will be open. If any person disrupts the proceedings, the chair may exclude that person from the hearing room.

(3) The chair shall cause the hearing to be recorded by a method that such chair selects, in accordance with [RCW 34.05.449](#). That recording, or a copy, shall be made available to any party upon request. The chair shall ensure maintenance of the record of the proceeding required by [RCW 34.05.476](#), which shall also be available upon request for inspection and copying by any party. Other recording shall also be permitted, in accordance with [WAC 10-08-190](#).

(4) The chair shall preside at the hearing and decide procedural questions that arise during the hearing, except as overridden by majority vote of the committee.

(5) The student conduct officer (unless represented by an assistant attorney general) shall present the case for imposing disciplinary sanctions.

(6) All testimony shall be given under oath or affirmation. Evidence shall be admitted or excluded in accordance with [RCW 34.05.452](#).

(7) In cases involving allegations of sexual misconduct, no party shall directly question or cross examine one another. Attorneys for the parties are also prohibited from questioning the opposing party absent express permission from the committee chair. Subject to this exception,

all cross-examination questions shall be directed to the committee chair, who in such chair's discretion shall pose the questions on the party's behalf.

### **WAC 132G-121-070**

#### **Student Conduct Committee – Initial Decision**

(1) At the conclusion of the hearing, the student conduct committee shall permit the parties to make closing arguments in whatever form it wishes to receive them. The committee also may permit each party to propose findings, conclusions, and/or a proposed decision for its consideration.

(2) Within twenty (20) days following the later of the conclusion of the hearing or the committee's receipt of closing arguments, the committee shall issue an initial decision in accordance with [RCW 34.05.461](#) and [WAC 10-08-210](#). The initial decision shall include findings on all material issues of fact and conclusions on all material issues of law, including which, if any, provisions of the student conduct code were violated. Any findings based substantially on the credibility of evidence or the demeanor of witnesses shall be so identified.

(3) The committee's initial order shall also include a determination on appropriate discipline, if any. If the matter was referred to the committee by the student conduct officer, the committee shall identify and impose disciplinary sanction(s) or conditions (if any) as authorized in the student code. If the matter is an appeal by a party, the committee may affirm, reverse, or modify the disciplinary sanction and/or conditions imposed by the student conduct officer and/or impose additional disciplinary sanction(s) or conditions as authorized herein.

(4) The committee chair shall cause copies of the initial decision to be served on the parties and their legal counsel of record. The committee chair shall also promptly transmit a copy of the decision and the record of the committee's proceedings to the president.

(5) In cases involving allegations of sexual misconduct, the chair of the student conduct committee, on the same date as the initial decision is served on the respondent, will serve a written notice upon the complainant informing the complainant whether the allegations of sexual misconduct were found to have merit and describing any disciplinary sanctions and/or conditions imposed upon the respondent for the complainant's protection, including suspension or dismissal of the respondent. Complainant may appeal the student conduct committee's initial decision to the president, subject to the same procedures and deadlines applicable to other parties. The notice will also inform the complainant of their appeal rights.

### **WAC 132G-121-075**

#### **Appeal from Student Conduct Committee Initial Decision**

(1) A party who is aggrieved by the findings or conclusions issued by the student conduct committee may appeal the committee's initial decision to the president by filing a notice of appeal with the president's office within ten (10) days of service of the committee's initial decision. Failure to file a timely appeal constitutes a waiver of the right and the initial decision shall be deemed final.

(2) The notice of appeal must identify the specific findings of fact and/or conclusions of law in the initial decision that are challenged, and must contain argument why the appeal should be granted. If necessary to aid review, the president may ask for additional briefing from the parties on issues raised on appeal. The president's review shall be restricted to the hearing record made before the student conduct committee, and will normally be limited to a review of those issues and arguments raised in the notice of appeal.

(3) The president shall provide a written decision to the party and the student conduct officer within twenty (20) days after receipt of the notice of appeal. The president's decision shall be final and shall include a notice of any rights to request reconsideration and/or judicial review.

(4) In cases involving allegations of sexual misconduct, the president, on the same date that the final decision is served upon the respondent, shall serve a written notice informing the complainant of the final decision. This notice shall inform the complainant whether the sexual misconduct allegation was found to have merit, and describe any disciplinary sanctions and/or conditions imposed upon the respondent for the complainant's protection, including suspension or dismissal of the respondent.

(5) The president shall not engage in an ex parte communication with any of the parties regarding an appeal.

### **WAC 132G-121-080**

#### **Summary Suspension**

(1) Summary suspension is a temporary exclusion from specified College premises or denial of access to all activities or privileges for which a respondent might otherwise be eligible, while an investigation and/or formal disciplinary procedures are pending.

(2) The student conduct officer may impose a summary suspension if there is probable cause to believe that the respondent:

(a) Has violated any provision of the code of conduct; and

(b) Presents an immediate danger to the health, safety or welfare of members of the College community; or

(c) Poses an ongoing threat of substantial disruption of, or interference with, the operations of the College.

(3) Notice. Any respondent who has been summarily suspended shall be served with oral or written notice of the summary suspension. If oral notice is given, a written notification shall be served on the respondent within two (2) business days of the oral notice.

(4) The written notification shall be entitled "Notice of Summary Suspension" and shall include:

(a) The reasons for imposing the summary suspension, including a description of the conduct giving rise to the summary suspension, and reference to the provisions of the student conduct code or the law(s) allegedly violated;

(b) The date, time, and location when the respondent must appear before the conduct review officer for a hearing on the summary suspension; and

(c) The conditions, if any, under which the respondent may physically access the campus or communicate with members of the campus community. If the respondent has been trespassed from the campus, a notice against trespass shall be included that warns the student that their privilege to enter or remain on College premises has been withdrawn, that the respondent shall be considered trespassing and subject to arrest for criminal trespass if the respondent enters the College campus other than to meet with the student conduct officer or conduct review officer, or to attend a disciplinary hearing.

(5) The conduct review officer shall conduct a hearing on the summary suspension as soon as practicable after imposition of the summary suspension.

(a) During the summary suspension hearing, the issue before the conduct review officer is whether there is probable cause to believe that the summary suspension should be continued pending the conclusion of disciplinary proceedings and/or whether the summary suspension should be less restrictive in scope.

(b) The respondent shall be afforded an opportunity to explain why summary suspension should not be continued while disciplinary proceedings are pending or why the summary suspension should be less restrictive in scope.

(c) If the respondent fails to appear at the designated hearing time, the conduct review officer may order that the summary suspension remain in place pending the conclusion of the disciplinary proceedings.

(d) As soon as practicable following the hearing, the conduct review officer shall issue a written decision which shall include a brief explanation for any decision continuing and/or modifying the summary suspension and notice of any right to appeal.

(e) To the extent permissible under applicable law, the conduct review officer shall provide a copy of the decision to all persons or offices who may be bound or protected by it.

(6) In cases involving allegations of sexual misconduct, the complainant shall be notified that a summary suspension has been imposed on the same day that the summary suspension notice is served on the respondent. The College will also provide the complainant with timely notice of any subsequent changes to the summary suspension order.

## **WAC 132G-121-085 Sexual Misconduct Proceedings**

Both the respondent and the complainant in cases involving allegations of sexual misconduct shall be provided the same procedural rights to participate in student discipline matters, including the right to participate in the initial disciplinary decision-making process and to appeal any disciplinary decision.

**WAC 132G-121-090**

**Brief Adjudicative Proceedings Authorization**

This rule is adopted in accordance with RCW 34.05.482 through 34.05.494. Brief adjudicative proceedings shall be used, unless provided otherwise by another rule or determined otherwise in a particular case by the president, or a designee, in regard to:

- (1) Student conduct appeals involving the following disciplinary actions:
  - (a) Suspensions of ten (10) instructional days or less;
  - (b) Disciplinary probation;
  - (c) Written reprimands;
  - (d) Any conditions or terms imposed in conjunction with one of the foregoing disciplinary actions; and
  - (e) Appeals by a complainant in student disciplinary proceedings involving allegations of sexual misconduct in which the student conduct officer:
    - (i) Dismisses disciplinary proceedings based upon a finding that the allegations of sexual misconduct have no merit; or
    - (ii) Issues a verbal warning to respondent.