

STUDENT AFFAIRS, NEBRASKA STATE COLLEGE SYSTEM

POLICY: 3200

Due Process

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BOARD POLICY

It is the policy of the Board to grant procedural due process to students accused of misconduct under the terms of Board Policy 3100. Regarding allegations of academic dishonesty; grade appeals; failure to pay a financial obligation; or, academic performance, achievement, probation and suspension each College will devise its own adjudication procedures. However, for allegations of misconduct identified in Board Policy 3100 that may result in disciplinary sanctions, the due process procedures outlined below shall be followed.

Nothing herein shall prohibit the College from resolving conduct issues informally if warranted by the individual circumstances including, but not limited to the responsiveness of the student, the severity of the offense, a student's prior misconduct, and the health and safety of the student and other members of the campus community. Informal resolution of conduct issues in which two (2) or more students are involved in a physical altercation with one another will not be permitted unless all students involved agree to informal resolution.

DISCIPLINARY SANCTIONS

Disciplinary sanctions may include warnings, demands for restitution or reimbursement, fines, a period of probation, remedial behavioral requirements, remedial educational requirements, suspension, or expulsion.

REQUESTS TO DELAY DUE PROCESS PROCEDURES

In the event that a concurrent civil or criminal action for the same behavior which forms the basis of misconduct allegations under the provisions of this policy is in progress, the accused student may request in writing to the Vice President or Dean responsible for Student Affairs as designated by the President, or equivalent administrator, that the College delay the continuance of the due process procedures. By requesting to delay until the external civil or criminal proceeding has concluded, the student agrees that he or she shall not attend any College classes or College-sponsored events or activities or shall not enter or use College property, including but not limited to living in residence halls, without specific written authorization from the Vice President or Dean responsible for Student Affairs as designated by the President. The Vice President or Dean responsible for Student Affairs as designated by the President, or equivalent administrator, may place reasonable limits on the length of the delay permitted.

WITHDRAWAL

At the discretion of the Vice President or Dean responsible for Student Affairs as designated by the President, a student may be allowed to voluntarily withdraw when continued enrollment no longer appears to be in the best interests of the student and/or College in conjunction with mutually agreed upon conditions that will be required for the student to reapply for admission. The Vice President or Dean responsible for Student Affairs as designated by the President will work with the Vice President for Academic Affairs to determine what, if any, academic penalties would apply. Any unresolved conduct issues will remain pending and must be resolved as a condition of readmission. Additional conditions may include, but not be limited to, the length of time a student must wait to reapply and/or the length of time a student has to reapply for admission.

PROCEDURE

1. The student shall be notified in writing by an appropriate College official that he/she is accused of misconduct. The student shall be made aware of grounds which would justify such action by way of the student handbook or other published College regulation.
2. The student shall be notified that he/she may elect one of three courses of action. The student shall be advised of a date (deadline) by which such an election must be communicated to the appropriate College official.

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- a. The student may admit the alleged violation and request, in writing, that the appropriate College official take whatever action seems appropriate.
 - b. The student may admit the alleged violation in writing and request a hearing before the appropriate hearing panel designated by the College. The hearing panel will determine the appropriate sanctions.
 - c. The student may deny the alleged violation, in which case, the appropriate College official shall refer him/her to the appropriate hearing panel designated by the College. The hearing panel will determine responsibility and the appropriate sanctions.

NOTE: If the student fails to respond to the appropriate College official in a timely manner according to the date (deadline) and/or fails to elect one (1) of the three (3) courses of action, the appropriate College official may address the alleged misconduct without providing further due process.

3. Under option 2a noted above, the College may address the alleged misconduct without providing further due process. The student's decision can be binding, if freely and knowingly made, even though suspension, expulsion or the imposition of a stigmatizing sanction might result. Students should be advised in writing of all risks associated with any waiver of due process rights and provided a reasonable amount of time to consider their decision and to confer with a family member or advisor.
4. If the student selects either option 2b or 2c as noted above, a hearing shall be conducted in accordance with the following procedure within ten (10) class days, unless the student requests an extension in writing, which shall not be unreasonably denied. Requests for an extension should be directed to the Vice President or Dean responsible for Student Affairs as designated by the President. Students studying abroad shall be under the direction of the accompanying College official until his/her return to campus, at which time, if needed, the due process procedures will commence.
 - a. Prior to the hearing, the student shall be entitled to the following:
 - Written notification of the time and place of the hearing with reasonable time allowed for grievant to prepare a presentation and defense.
 - A written statement of the allegations (incident or behavior) with sufficient particularity so that the student may prepare his/her defense.
 - The grounds which would justify disciplinary action cited in the student handbook or Board Policy and the possible sanctions that may be imposed.
 - Written notification of the names of the witnesses who are directly responsible for having reported the allegations, or, if there are no such witnesses, written notification of how the allegations came to the hearing panel's attention, and
 - A copy of all documentary evidence to go before the hearing panel.
 - b. The student shall be entitled to appear in person before the hearing panel, and may call witnesses on his/her behalf. If the student does not appear before the hearing panel, the hearing shall be held in his/her absence.

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- c. The student shall be entitled to be accompanied by a person of his or her own choosing from the College community to assist in the proceedings or by counsel at the student's expense. An attorney or advisor, if present at the request of the student, may be present to counsel the student, but may not directly participate in the hearing by making oral presentations or arguments, examine or cross-examine a witness, or object to testimony of a witness or to introduction of other evidence.
 - d. The student shall be entitled to ask questions of the hearing panel or any witnesses.
 - e. The student shall be entitled to an expeditious hearing of the case.
 - f. Hearings are closed to the public.
 - g. An audio recording of the hearing will be made and kept by the College consistent with document retention schedules.
 - h. The student shall be entitled to an explanation in writing of the reasons for any decisions rendered against him/her and the discipline imposed, and shall be given access to the hearing panel's decision for his/her personal records.
5. The hearing panel designated by the College shall be composed of College administrators, faculty, staff, and/or students. Such selection shall be at the approval of the President or designated Vice President or Dean as designated by the President. Individuals serving on this panel need not be disqualified because they have superficial knowledge of the background of the case, or because they may know the participants. The basic test shall be whether or not the panelist can judge the case fairly, without bias or prejudice, and solely on the evidence presented.
6. The hearing panel shall be the decision-making body acting independent of the President.
7. Technical rules of evidence or procedure need not be employed in hearing proceedings. A student's misconduct shall be determined by a preponderance of the evidence (i.e., it is more likely than not that misconduct occurred). Hearing decisions need not be unanimous. A simple majority vote shall be sufficient. Hearsay evidence is not required to be excluded, but a finding of misconduct on hearsay evidence alone is not appropriate in hearings, including a serious disciplinary case such as suspension or expulsion.
8. Members of the hearing panel shall have the opportunity to examine the case file beforehand, and to question the accused and witnesses at the hearing.
9. The student shall be notified of his/her right to appeal the decisions of the hearing panel to the Vice President or Dean responsible for Student Affairs as designated by the President. Appeals must be in writing and are due to the designated administrator within five (5) class days after the student received the hearing panels' decision. If the designated administrator was a member of the hearing panel, this step of the appeal process is not applicable and the student may appeal directly to the President. Appeals must be based on one (1) of the following grounds:
 - a. Procedural due process was violated;
 - b. The sanction was excessive;
 - c. The evidence did not support the decision; or,

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- d. Substantive new information is available that was not available at the hearing.
10. The student shall be notified of his/her right to appeal the decisions of the designated administrator to the President, who has final authority. Should the student appeal, any action assessed by the hearing panel shall be suspended until acted upon by the President. Appeals to the President are due within five (5) class days after the student receives the designated administrator's decision. Appeals to the President must be based on one (1) of the following grounds:
- a. Procedural due process was violated;
 - b. The sanction was excessive;
 - c. The evidence did not support the decision; or,
 - d. Substantive new information is available that was not available at the hearing.
11. Appeals of the President's decision may be submitted to the Chancellor but shall be limited to allegations that fair procedural process has not been provided in accordance with Board Policy 3200. Appeals to the Chancellor must be in writing and are due within five (5) class days after the student receives the President's decision. Should the student appeal, any action assessed by the hearing panel shall be suspended until acted upon by the Chancellor.

Legal reference: RRS 85-312 State colleges; morals of the pupils; faculty; religious test forbidden
RRS 85-602 Faculty, administrative staff, students; dismissal or expulsion; procedure
RRS 85-603 Faculty, administrative staff, student; dismissal or expulsion; order; contents; service

Policy Adopted: 1/28/77
Policy Revised: 6/5/93
Policy Revised: 3/11/94
Policy Revised: 4/11/03
Policy Revised: 6/2/06
Policy Revised: 3/28/08
Policy Revised: 3/25/11
Policy Revised: 4/20/12
Policy Revised: 6/19/18
Policy Revised: 9/12/19
Policy Revised: 7/24/20
Policy Revised: 6/17/21
Policy Revised: 4/27/22