



Bellingham Technical College
Student Conduct Code
495B-121

495B-121-010

Definitions.

The following definitions shall apply for the purpose of this student conduct code.

- (1) "Board" means the board of trustees of Bellingham Technical College.
- (2) "College" means Bellingham Technical College.
- (3) "Student conduct officer" is a Bellingham Technical College administrator designated by the president or vice-president of student services to be responsible for implementing and enforcing the student conduct code. The president or vice-president of student services is authorized to reassign any and all of the student conduct officer's duties or responsibilities as set forth in this chapter as may be reasonably necessary.
- (4) "Conduct review officer" is the vice-president of student services 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. The president is authorized to reassign any and all of the conduct review officer's duties or responsibilities as set forth in this chapter as may be reasonably necessary.
- (5) "The president" is the president of the Bellingham Technical College. The president is authorized to delegate any and all of his or her responsibilities as set forth in this chapter as may be reasonably necessary.
- (6) "Disciplinary action" is the process by which the student conduct officer imposes discipline against a student for a violation of the student conduct code.
- (7) "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 instructional days or and expulsion are heard by the student conduct appeals board. Appeals of all other appealable disciplinary action shall be reviewed through brief adjudicative proceedings.
- (8) "Respondent" is the student against whom disciplinary action is initiated.

(9) "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) By sending the document by e-mail 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 e-mailed and deposited in the mail.

(10) "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) By sending the document by e-mail and first-class mail to the specified college official's office and college e-mail address.

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

(11) "College premises" includes all campuses of Bellingham Technical College, wherever located, and includes all land, buildings, facilities, vehicles, equipment, and other property owned, used, or controlled by the college.

(12) "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, noncredit courses, online 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."

(13) "Day" and "business day" mean a weekday, excluding weekends and college holidays.

(14) "Alcohol" or "alcoholic beverages" means the definition of liquor as contained within RCW 66.04.010 as now law or hereinafter amended.

(15) "Drugs" means a narcotic drug as defined in RCW 69.50.101, a controlled substance as defined in RCW 69.50.201 through 69.50.212, or a legend drug as defined in RCW 69.41.010.

495B-121-020

Authority.

The board of trustees, acting pursuant to RCW 28B.50.140 (14), delegates to the president of Bellingham Technical College the authority to administer disciplinary action. Administration of the disciplinary procedures is the responsibility of the vice-president of student services or designee. The vice-president

of student services or the student conduct officer shall serve as the principal investigator and administrator for alleged violations of this code.

495B-121-030

Statement of student rights.

As members of the Bellingham Technical College academic community, students are encouraged to develop the capacity for critical judgment and to engage in an independent search for truth. Freedom to teach and freedom to learn are inseparable facets of academic freedom. The freedom to learn depends upon appropriate opportunities and conditions in the classroom, on the campus, and in the larger community. Students should exercise their freedom with responsibility. The responsibility to secure and to respect general conditions conducive to the freedom to learn is shared by all members of the college community.

The following enumerated rights are guaranteed to each student within the limitations of statutory law and college policy, which are deemed necessary to achieve the educational goals of the college.

(1) Academic freedom.

(a) Students are guaranteed the rights of free inquiry, expression, and assembly upon and within college facilities that are generally open and available to the public.

(b) Students are free to pursue appropriate educational objectives from among the college's curricula, programs, and services, subject to the limitations of RCW 28B.50.090

(3)(b).

(c) Students shall be protected from academic evaluation which is arbitrary, prejudiced, or capricious, but are responsible for meeting the standards of academic performance established by each of their instructors.

(d) Students have the right to a learning environment that is free from unlawful discrimination, inappropriate and disrespectful conduct, and any and all harassment, including sexual harassment.

(2) Due process.

(a) The rights of students to be secure in their persons, quarters, papers, and effects against unreasonable searches and seizures is guaranteed.

(b) No disciplinary sanction may be imposed on any student without notice to the accused of the nature of the charges.

(c) A student accused of violating this code of student conduct is entitled, upon request, to procedural due process as set forth in this chapter.

495B-121-040

Prohibited student conduct.

Prohibited student conduct for which the college may impose sanctions includes, but is not limited to, any of the following:

(1) Any act of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and fabrication.

(a) Cheating includes any attempt to give or obtain unauthorized assistance relating to the completion of an academic assignment.

(b) Plagiarism includes taking and using as one's own, without proper attribution, the ideas, writings, or work of another person in completing an academic assignment. Prohibited conduct may also include the unauthorized submission for credit of academic work that has been submitted for credit in another course.

(c) Fabrication includes falsifying data, information, or citations in completing an academic assignment and also includes providing false or deceptive information to an instructor concerning the completion of an assignment.

(2) Any other acts of dishonesty. Such acts include, but are not limited to:

(a) Forgery, alteration, submission of falsified documents or misuse of any college document, record, or instrument of identification;

(b) Tampering with an election by or for college students; or

(c) Furnishing false information, or failing to furnish correct information, in response to the request or requirement of a college officer or employee.

(3) Obstruction or disruption of:

(a) Any instruction, research, administration, disciplinary proceeding, or other college activity; or

(b) Any activity that is authorized to occur on college property, whether or not actually conducted or sponsored by the college.

(4) Assault, physical abuse, verbal abuse, threat(s), intimidation, harassment, bullying, stalking or other conduct which harms, threatens, or is reasonably perceived as threatening the health or safety of another person or another person's property. For purposes of this subsection:

(a) Bullying is physical or verbal abuse, repeated over time, and involving a power imbalance between the aggressor and victim.

(b) Stalking is intentional and repeated harassment or repeated following of another person, which places that person in reasonable fear that the stalker intends to injure the person, another person, or the property of the person or another person, and the stalker either intends to frighten, intimidate, or harass the person, or knows or reasonably

should know that the person is frightened, intimidated or harassed, even if the stalker lacks such an intent.

(5) Cyberstalking, cyberbullying or online harassment. Use of electronic communications including, but not limited to, electronic mail, instant messaging, electronic bulletin boards, and social media sites, to harass, abuse, bully or engage in other conduct which harms, threatens, or is reasonably perceived as threatening the health or safety of another person. Prohibited activities include, but are not limited to, unauthorized monitoring of another's e-mail communications directly or through spyware, sending threatening e-mails, disrupting electronic communications with spam or by sending a computer virus, sending false messages to third parties using another's e-mail identity, nonconsensual recording of sexual activity, and nonconsensual distribution of a recording of sexual activity.

(6) Attempted or actual damage to, or theft or misuse of, real or personal property or money of:

(a) The college or state;

(b) Any student or college officer, employee, or organization; or

(c) Any other person or organization, or possession of such property or money after it has been stolen.

(7) Failure to comply with the direction of a college officer or employee who is acting in the legitimate performance of his or her duties, including failure to properly identify oneself to such person when requested to do so.

(8) Participation in any activity which unreasonably disrupts the operations of the college or infringes on the rights of another member of the college community, or leads or incites another person to engage in such an activity.

(9) Weapons. Possession, holding, wearing, transporting, storage or presence of any firearm, dagger, sword, knife or other cutting or stabbing instrument, club, explosive devices, or any other weapon apparently capable of producing bodily harm is prohibited on the college campus, subject to the following exceptions:

(a) Commissioned law enforcement personnel or legally authorized military personnel while in performance of their duties;

(b) A student with a valid concealed weapons permit may store a pistol in his or her vehicle parked on campus in accordance with RCW 9.41.050 (2) or (3), provided the vehicle is locked and the weapon is concealed from view; or

(c) The president may grant permission to bring a weapon on campus upon a determination that the weapon is reasonably related to a legitimate pedagogical purpose. Such permission shall be in writing and shall be subject to such terms or conditions incorporated in the written permission.

This policy does not apply to the possession and/or use of disabling chemical sprays when possessed and/or used for self-defense.

(10) Hazing. Hazing includes, but is not limited to, any initiation into a student organization or any pastime or amusement engaged in with respect to such an organization that causes, or is likely to cause, bodily danger or physical harm, or serious mental or emotional harm, to any student.

(11) Tobacco, electronic cigarettes, and related products. The use of tobacco, electronic cigarettes, and related products in any building owned, leased, or operated by the college or in any location where such use is prohibited, including twenty-five feet from entrances, exits, windows that open, and ventilation intakes of any building owned, leased, or operated by the college, except in designated areas. "Related products" include, but are not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, pipes, bidi, clove cigarettes, water pipes, hookahs, chewing tobacco, personal vaporizers, vape pens, electronic nicotine delivery systems and snuff.

(12) Alcohol. Being observably under the influence of any alcoholic beverage, or otherwise using, possessing, selling or delivering any alcoholic beverage, except as permitted by law and authorized by the college president.

(13) Marijuana. Being observably under the influence of marijuana or the psychoactive compounds found in marijuana, or otherwise using, possessing, selling, or delivering any product containing marijuana or the psychoactive compounds found in marijuana and intended for human consumption, regardless of form. While state law permits the recreational use of marijuana, federal law prohibits such use on college premises or in connection with college activities.

(14) Being observably under the influence of any legend drug, narcotic drug, or controlled substance as defined in chapters 69.41 and 69.50 RCW, or otherwise using, possessing, delivering, or selling any such drug or substance, except in accordance with a lawful prescription for that student by a licensed health care professional.

(15) Obstruction of the free flow of pedestrian or vehicular movement on college property or at a college activity.

(16) Conduct that is disorderly, lewd, or obscene.

(17) Breach of the peace.

(18) Discriminatory action which harms or adversely affects any student or college employee because of his/her race, color, national origin, mental or physical disability, gender, sexual orientation, age, creed, or religion.

(19) Sexual violence. Sexual or gender-based misconduct perpetrated against a person's will or where a person is incapable of giving consent including, but not limited to, rape, sexual assault,

sexual battery, gender-based stalking, and sexual coercion, regardless of the relationship between the perpetrator and the victim.

(20) Sexual harassment. Conduct that includes, but is not limited to, engaging in unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other sexual conduct, including verbal, nonverbal, electronic or social media communication, or physical touching that would substantially interfere with a reasonable person's ability to participate in or benefit from the college's program, or to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment.

(21) Other harassment. Conduct that has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with a reasonable person's work or educational performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working or educational environment, when such conduct is directed at an individual because of race, national origin, disability, age, religion, sexual orientation, gender or any other legally protected classification. Harassing conduct may include, but is not limited to, physical conduct, verbal, written, social media and electronic communications.

(22) Theft or misuse of computer time or other electronic information resources of the college. Such misuse includes, but is not limited to:

- (a) Unauthorized use of such resources or opening of a file, message, or other item;
- (b) Unauthorized duplication, transfer, or distribution of a computer program, file, message, or other item;
- (c) Unauthorized use or distribution of someone else's password or other identification;
- (d) Use of such time or resources to interfere with someone else's work;
- (e) Use of such time or resources to send, display, or print an obscene or abusive message, text, or image;
- (f) Use of such time or resources to interfere with normal operation of the college's computing system or other electronic information resources;
- (g) Use of such time or resources in violation of applicable copyright or other law;
- (h) Adding to or otherwise altering the infrastructure of the college's electronic information resources without authorization; or
- (i) Failure to comply with the college's electronic use policy.

(23) Unauthorized possession, duplication, or other use of a key, keycard, or other restricted means of access to college property, or unauthorized entry onto or into college property.

(24) Abuse or misuse of any of the procedures relating to student complaints or misconduct including, but not limited to:

- (a) Failure to obey a subpoena;
- (b) Falsification or misrepresentation of information;
- (c) Disruption or interference with the orderly conduct of a proceeding;

- (d) Interfering with someone else's proper participation in a proceeding;
- (e) Destroying or altering potential evidence, or attempting to intimidate or otherwise improperly pressure a witness or potential witness;
- (f) Attempting to influence the impartiality of, or harassing or intimidating, a student conduct committee member; or
- (g) Failure to comply with any disciplinary sanction(s) imposed under this student conduct code.

(25) Operation of any motor vehicle on college property in an unsafe manner or in a manner which is reasonably perceived as threatening the health or safety of another person.

(26) Safety violations. Safety violation includes any non-accidental conduct that interferes with or otherwise compromises any college policy, equipment, or procedure relating to the safety and security of the campus community, including tampering with fire safety equipment and triggering false alarms or other emergency response systems.

(27) Violation of any federal, state, or local law, rule, or regulation or other college rules or policies, including college traffic and parking rules.

(28) Ethical violation. The breach of any generally recognized and published code of ethics or standards of professional practice that governs the conduct of a particular profession for which the student is taking a course or is pursuing as an educational goal or major.

(29) Aiding, abetting, inciting, encouraging, or assisting another person to commit any of the foregoing acts of misconduct.

In addition to initiating discipline proceedings for violations of the student conduct code, the college may refer any violations of federal, state, or local laws to civil and criminal authorities for disposition. The college shall proceed with student disciplinary proceedings regardless of whether the underlying conduct is subject to civil or criminal prosecution.

495B-121-050

Disciplinary sanctions.

Disciplinary actions include, but are not limited to, the following sanctions that may be imposed upon students according to the procedure outlined in WAC 495B-121-070 through 495B-121-200.

- (1) Disciplinary warning: A verbal statement to a student that there is a violation and that continued violation may be cause for further disciplinary action.
- (2) Written reprimand: Notice in writing that the student has violated one or more terms of this code of conduct and that continuation of the same or similar behavior may result in more severe disciplinary action.

(3) Disciplinary probation: Formal action placing specific conditions and restrictions upon the student's continued attendance depending upon the seriousness of the violation and which may include a deferred disciplinary sanction. If the student, subject to a deferred disciplinary sanction, is found in violation of any college rule during the time of disciplinary probation, the deferred disciplinary sanction, which may include, but is not limited to, a suspension or a dismissal from the college, shall take effect immediately without further review. Any such sanction shall be in addition to any sanction or conditions arising from the new violation. Probation may be for a limited period of time or may be for the duration of the student's attendance at the college. A student who is on disciplinary probation may be deemed "not in good standing" with the college. If so, the student shall be subject to the following restrictions:

(a) Ineligible to hold an office in any student organization recognized by the college or to hold any elected or appointed office of the college.

(b) Ineligible to represent the college to anyone outside the college community in any way, including representing the college at any official function, or any forms of intercollegiate competition or representation.

(4) Restitution: Reimbursement for damage to or misappropriation of property, or for injury to persons, or for reasonable costs incurred by the college in pursuing an investigation or disciplinary proceeding. This may take the form of monetary reimbursement, appropriate service, or other compensation.

(5) Disciplinary suspension: Dismissal from the college and from the student status for a stated period of time. There will be no refund of tuition or fees for the quarter in which the action is taken.

(6) Professional evaluation: Referral for drug, alcohol, psychological or medical evaluation by an appropriately certified or licensed professional may be required. The student may choose the professional within the scope of practice and with the professional credentials as defined by the college. The student will sign all necessary releases to allow the college access to any such evaluation. The student's return to college may be conditioned upon compliance with recommendations set forth in such a professional evaluation. If the evaluation indicates that the student is not capable of functioning within the college community, the student will remain suspended until future evaluation recommends that the student is capable of reentering the college and complying with the rules of conduct.

(7) Dismissal: The revocation of all rights and privileges of membership in the college community and exclusion from the campus and college-owned or controlled facilities without any possibility of return. There will be no refund of tuition or fees for the quarter in which the action is taken.

(8) Refund of fees: Refund of fees for the quarter in which disciplinary action is taken shall be in accordance with the college's refund policy.

A student suspended on the basis of conduct that disrupted the orderly operation of the campus or any facility of the college may be denied access to all or any part of the campus or other college facility.

(9) No contact order: An order directing a student to have no contact with a specified student, college employee, a member of the college community, or a particular college facility.

495B-121-060

Statement of jurisdiction.

The student conduct code shall apply to student conduct that occurs on Bellingham Technical College premises and facilities, to conduct that occurs at or in connection with college sponsored activities, or to off-campus conduct that in the judgment of the college adversely affects the college community or the pursuit of its objectives. 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, online education, practicums, supervised work experiences or any other college-sanctioned social or club activities. Students are responsible for their conduct from the time of application for admission 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. These standards shall apply to a student's conduct even if the student withdraws from college while a disciplinary matter is pending. The college 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.

495B-121-065

Statement of purpose.

(1) Bellingham Technical College is maintained by the state of Washington for the provision of programs of instruction in higher education and related community services. Like any other institution having its own special purposes, the college must maintain conditions conducive to the effective performance of its functions. Consequently it has special expectations regarding the conduct of the various participants in the college community.

(2) Admission to the college carries with it the prescription that the student will conduct himself or herself as a responsible member of the college community. This includes an expectation that the student will obey appropriate laws, will comply with the rules of the college and its departments, and will maintain a high standard of integrity and honesty.

(3) Sanctions for violations of college rules or conduct that interferes with the operation of college affairs may be applied by the college, and the college may impose sanctions independently of any action taken by civil or criminal authorities. In the case of minors, misconduct may be referred to parents or legal guardians.

(4) The rules and regulations prescribed in this title shall be observed by guests and visitors while on campus, at all college functions and events, and on or within any other college-controlled or college-owned property. Guests and visitors who willfully refuse to obey college security or other duly designated college authorities to desist from conduct prohibited by such rules and regulations may be ejected from the premises. Refusal to obey such an order may subject the person to arrest under the provisions of the Washington criminal trespass law, in addition to such other sanctions as may be applicable.

495B-121-070

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 him or her 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 the student conduct officer may take disciplinary action based upon the available information.

(3) 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 his or her 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.

(4) 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 495B-121-040;

(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.

495B-121-080

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 twenty-one days of service to 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 the respondent has been summarily suspended.
- (7) The student conduct committee shall hear appeals from:
 - (a) The imposition of disciplinary suspensions in excess of ten instructional days;
 - (b) Dismissals; and
 - (c) Discipline cases referred to the committee by the student conduct officer, the conduct review officer, or the president.
- (8) 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.
- (9) Except as provided elsewhere in these rules, disciplinary warnings and dismissals of disciplinary actions are final action and not subject to appeal.

495B-121-090

Brief adjudicative proceedings—Initial hearing.

- (1) Brief adjudicative proceedings shall be conducted by a conduct review officer designated by the president. The conduct review officer shall not participate in any case in which he or she 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.
- (2) 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 both of the parties within ten 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 twenty-one days of service of the initial decision, the initial decision shall be deemed the final decision.
- (4) If the conduct review officer upon review determines that the respondent's conduct may warrant imposition of a disciplinary suspension of more than ten instructional days or expulsion, the matter shall be referred to the student conduct committee for a disciplinary hearing.

495B-121-100

Brief adjudicative proceedings—Review of an initial decision.

- (1) An initial decision is subject to review by the president, provided the respondent files a written request for review with the conduct review officer within twenty-one days of service of the initial decision.
- (2) The president shall not participate in any case in which he or she 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 each party 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) If the president, upon review, determines that the respondent's conduct may warrant imposition of a disciplinary suspension of more than ten instructional days or expulsion, the matter shall be referred to the student conduct committee for a disciplinary hearing.

495B-121-110

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 administrative staff member (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 administrative staff member 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 for disqualification of a committee member pursuant to RCW 34.05.425(4).

495B-121-120

Appeal—Student conduct committee.

- (1) Proceedings of the student conduct committee shall be governed by the Administrative Procedure Act, chapter 34.05 RCW, and by the Model Rules of Procedure, chapter 10-08 WAC. To the extent there is a conflict between these rules and chapter 10-08 WAC, these rules shall control.
- (2) The student conduct committee chair shall serve all parties with written notice of the hearing not less than seven days in advance of the hearing date, as further specified in RCW 34.05.434 and WAC 10-08-040 and 10-08-045. 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 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 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) Each party may be accompanied at the hearing by a non-attorney assistant of his/her choice. A respondent may elect to be represented by an attorney at his or her own cost, but will be deemed to have waived that right unless, at least four 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 is represented by an attorney, the student conduct officer may also be represented by a second, appropriately screened assistant attorney general.

495B-121-125

Student conduct appeals committee hearings—Presentations 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 he/she 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 assure maintenance of the record of the proceeding that is 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.

495B-121-130

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 days following the latter 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 so be 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 the respondent, 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.

495B-121-135

Appeal from student conduct committee initial decision.

(1) A respondent 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 twenty-one 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 an argument as to why the appeal should be granted. 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 all parties within forty-five 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) The president may, at his or her discretion, suspend any disciplinary action and/or impose interim sanctions pending review of the merits of the findings, conclusions, and disciplinary actions imposed.

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

495B-121-140

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 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 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 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 his or her privilege to enter into 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) The hearing will be conducted as a brief adjudicative proceeding.

(b) 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.

(c) 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.

(d) If the student 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.

(e) 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.

(f) 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.

DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES FOR CASES INVOLVING ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

495B-121-150

Supplemental sexual misconduct—Procedures.

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.

Application of the following procedures is limited to student conduct code proceedings involving allegations of sexual misconduct by a student. In such cases, these procedures shall supplement the student disciplinary procedures in WAC 495B-121-050 through 495B-121-140. In the event of conflict between the sexual misconduct procedures and the student disciplinary procedures, the sexual misconduct procedures shall prevail.

495B-121-160

Supplemental sexual misconduct—Definitions.

The following supplemental definitions shall apply for purposes of student conduct code proceedings involving allegations of sexual misconduct by a student:

- (1) A "complainant" is an alleged victim of sexual misconduct, as defined in subsection (2) of this section.
- (2) "Sexual misconduct" is prohibited sexual or gender-based conduct by a student including, but not limited to:
 - (a) Sexual activity for which clear and voluntary consent has not been given in advance;
 - (b) Sexual activity with someone who is incapable of giving valid consent because, for example, he or she is underage, sleeping or otherwise incapacitated due to alcohol or drugs;
 - (c) Sexual harassment;
 - (d) Sexual violence which includes, but is not limited to, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating/intimate violence, and sexual or gender-based stalking;

(e) Nonphysical conduct such as sexual or gender-based digital media stalking, sexual or gender-based online harassment, sexual or gender-based cyberbullying, nonconsensual recording of sexual activity, and nonconsensual distribution of a recording of a sexual activity.

495B-121-170

Supplemental complaint process.

The following supplemental procedures shall apply with respect to complaints or other reports of alleged sexual misconduct by a student.

- (1) The college's Title IX compliance officer, coordinator, or designee shall investigate complaints or other reports of alleged sexual misconduct by a student. Investigations will be completed in a timely manner and the results of the investigation shall be referred to the student conduct officer for disciplinary action.
- (2) Informal dispute resolution shall not be used to resolve sexual misconduct complaints without written permission from both the complainant and the respondent. If the parties elect to mediate a dispute, either party shall be free to discontinue mediation at any time. In no event shall mediation be used to resolve complaints involving allegations of sexual violence.
- (3) College personnel will honor requests to keep sexual misconduct complaints confidential to the extent this can be done without unreasonably risking the health, safety and welfare of the complainant or other members of the college community or compromising the college's duty to investigate and process sexual harassment and sexual violence complaints.
- (4) The student conduct officer, prior to initiating disciplinary action, 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.
- (5) 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 his or her 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 that prompt notice of the protective disciplinary sanctions and/or conditions is received.

495B-121-180

Supplemental appeal rights.

- (1) The following actions by the student conduct officer may be appealed by the complainant:
 - (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.
- (2) A complainant may appeal a disciplinary decision by filing a notice of appeal with the conduct review officer within twenty-one days of service of the notice of the discipline decision provided for in WAC 495B-121-170. The notice of appeal may include a written statement setting forth the grounds of appeal. Failure to file a timely notice of appeal constitutes a waiver of this right and the disciplinary decision shall be deemed final.
- (3) If the respondent appeals a decision imposing discipline for a sexual misconduct violation in a timely manner, the college shall notify the complainant of the appeal and provide the complainant an opportunity to intervene as a party to the appeal.
- (4) Except as otherwise specified in this supplemental procedure, 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.
- (5) An appeal by a complainant from the following disciplinary actions involving allegations of sexual misconduct against a student shall be handled as a brief adjudicative proceeding:
 - (a) Exoneration and dismissal of the proceedings;
 - (b) A disciplinary warning;
 - (c) A written reprimand;
 - (d) Disciplinary probation;
 - (e) Suspensions of ten instructional days or less; and/or
 - (f) Any conditions or terms imposed in conjunction with one of the foregoing disciplinary actions.
- (6) An appeal by a complainant from disciplinary action imposing a suspension in excess of ten instructional days or an expulsion shall be reviewed by the student conduct committee.
- (7) In proceedings before the student conduct committee, respondent and complainant shall have the right to be accompanied by a non-attorney assistant of their choosing during the appeal process. The complainant may choose to be represented at the hearing by an attorney at his or her own expense, but will be deemed to have waived that right unless, at least four business days before the hearing, he or she files a written notice of the attorney's identity and participation with the committee chair, and with copies to the respondent and the student conduct officer.

(8) In proceedings before the student conduct committee, complainant and respondent shall not directly question or cross examine one another. All questions shall be directed to the committee chair, who will act as an intermediary and pose questions on the parties' behalf.

(9) Student conduct hearings involving sexual misconduct allegations shall be closed to the public, unless respondent and complainant both waive this requirement in writing and request that the hearing be open to the public. Complainant, respondent and their respective non-attorney assistants and/or attorneys may attend portions of the hearing where argument, testimony and/or evidence are presented to the student conduct committee.

(10) 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. The notice will also inform the complainant of his or her appeal rights.

(11) The complainant may appeal the student conduct committee's initial decision to the president subject to the same procedures and deadlines applicable to other parties.

(12) The president, on the same date that the final decision is served upon the respondent, shall serve a written notice informing 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. Judicial review of the decision may be available to the complainant or respondent.

495B-121-190

Brief adjudicative proceedings authorized.

This chapter 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) Parking violations;
- (2) Outstanding debts owed by students or employees;
- (3) Use of college facilities;
- (4) Residency determinations;
- (5) Use of library - Fines;
- (6) Challenges to contents of education records;
- (7) Loss of eligibility for participation in institution-sponsored athletic events;
- (8) Student conduct appeals involving the following disciplinary actions:

- (a) Suspensions of ten 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;
- (e) Summary suspensions; and
- (f) 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.
- (9) Appeals of decisions regarding mandatory tuition and fee waivers.

Brief adjudicative proceedings are informal hearings and shall be conducted in a manner which will bring about a prompt fair resolution of the matter.

Note: Subsections (1) through (7) and (9) are types of issues that colleges typically use a brief adjudicative proceeding to resolve and are included here merely for illustrative purposes.

495B-121-200

Brief adjudicative proceedings—Agency record.

The agency record for brief adjudicative proceedings shall consist of any documents regarding the matter that were considered or prepared by the presiding officer for the brief adjudicative proceeding or by the reviewing officer for any review. These records shall be maintained as the official record of the proceedings.