

Procedures and Sanctions for Formal Grievances

Formal written grievance. Any student who feels s/he has been harassed by another student has the right to file a formal written grievance. Once a formal grievance is filed, the Community Board of Standards will hear the case. The student has the right to select an advisor, who may accompany her/him to any meetings relevant to the case, though the advisor may not speak at a hearing. The advisor must be a member of the College Community (e.g., student, staff or faculty).

Any third party who believes s/he has witnessed a situation of harassment may start an investigation process through the Chief Conduct Review Officer. Once the investigation is complete, the Rules Application Committee will review the evidence gathered in order to determine whether or not the issue will be pursued. The college reserves the right to take further action based on the findings of the investigation.

Notification of charges. The Chief Conduct Review Officer will then meet with the respondent and explain the grievance that has been filed. The respondent will be asked to respond to the formal grievance in written form. Both parties will be advised to have no contact during this time. Continued contact may result in further charges being incurred. The respondent has the right to select an advisor, who may accompany her/him to this meeting and subsequent hearings, though the advisor may not speak at a hearing. The advisor must be a member of the College community (e.g., student, staff or faculty). The Chief Conduct Review Officer will forward the petitioner's grievance and respondent's response to the Chair of the Rules Application Committee (RAC), and a hearing through the Community board of Standards will be scheduled.

Community Board of Standards Hearing. A Community Board of Standards hearing will be convened to determine responsibility and sanctions. Both the petitioner and the respondent will be asked to meet with the Board at that time. Each party will meet with the Board separately. Cases that involve multiple petitioners may be treated separately.

If the respondent chooses not to contest the terms of the grievance, then s/he is given a chance to explain his/her behavior to the Board and accept any sanctions determined by the Board. If the respondent chooses to dispute the charges, the Community Board of Standards will conduct a full hearing. This process will be handled in a timely manner. It should ordinarily take no longer than thirty business days.

Sanctioning guidelines. The college is committed, first, to the intellectual and social growth of all its members. To the extent that it is possible, persuasion and education are preferable to punishment. If the Board determines that a sanction is called for it will determine a sanction based on the severity of the case. Multiple offenses will result in increased sanctions. The sanctions may include educational training about diversity, probation, fines, parental notification (as permitted by FERPA), suspension and expulsion.

In all cases the petitioner will be notified as soon as practicable of the outcome of the hearing (i.e., the findings of the Board and what, if any, sanctions resulted). In the interest of privacy, third parties and witnesses will not be informed of the outcome of the hearing.

Appeals to the Dean of Students. The respondent has a right to appeal to the Dean of Students; however, the Dean cannot act unilaterally to reverse the Board's decision without consulting with the Board. The Dean must justify her/his decision, in writing, on the basis of an alternative interpretation of the same evidence presented at the hearing.

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