

Southwestern College

Student Policy Manual



2013 - 2014

(this manual supersedes all previous editions)

Southwestern College
Student Policy Manual



DEVELOPED AND PUBLISHED BY THE
SOUTHWESTERN COLLEGE
OFFICE OF STUDENT SERVICES

2013-2014

(THIS MANUAL SUPERSEDES ALL PREVIOUS EDITIONS)

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Standards of Student Conduct Procedures

References: *Education Code Section 66300; Accreditation Standard II.A.7.b*

In joining the academic community, the student enjoys the right and shares the responsibility of exercising the freedom to learn. Like other members of the academic community, each student's conduct is expected to be in accordance with the standards of the college that are designed to promote its educational purposes. A charge of misconduct may be imposed upon a student for violating provisions of college policy/procedure, state education statutes and regulations and/or administrative codes. Where a student is subject to charges of misconduct, such charges shall be processed in accordance with the Southwestern Community College District's policy and procedure No. 5500.

The Superintendent/President's designee shall, in consultation with the Academic Senate, establish procedures for the imposition of discipline of students in accordance with the requirements for due process of the Federal and State law and regulations.

The procedures shall clearly define the conduct that is subject to discipline and shall identify potential disciplinary actions including, but not limited to, the removal, suspension or expulsion of a student. The procedures shall be made widely available to students through the College Catalog and other means.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS VIOLATIONS

1. Cheating, or engaging in other academic dishonesty including copying from another's work; discussion prohibited by the instructor; obtaining exam copies without permission; and using notes, other information, or devices that have been prohibited.
2. Plagiarism in individual or group work or in a student publication, including the act of taking the ideas, words or specific substantive materials of another and offering them as one's own without giving credit to the sources.
3. Unauthorized preparation, giving, selling, transfer, distribution, or publication, for any commercial purpose, of any contemporaneous recording of an academic presentation in a classroom or equivalent site of instruction, including but not limited to handwritten or typewritten class notes.

4. Disruptive behavior, willful disobedience or the open and persistent defiance of the authority of, or persistent abuse of, college personnel which may or may not include habitual profanity or vulgarity.
5. Assault or battery upon another person or any threat of force or violence or causing, attempting to cause or threatening to cause physical injury to another person.
6. Possession, sale or otherwise furnishing any firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object, including but not limited to any facsimile firearm, knife or explosive, unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the student has obtained written permission to possess the item from the Superintendent/ President or his/her designee.
7. Unlawful possession, use, sale, offer to sell, furnishing, or being under the influence of any controlled substance; alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind; Unlawful possession of offering, arranging or negotiating the sale of any drug paraphernalia.
8. Committing or attempting to commit robbery or extortion.
9. Causing or attempting to cause damage and/or defacing College District property or private property on College District controlled facilities.
10. Theft, attempted theft, or knowingly receiving stolen College District property or private property.
11. Willful or persistent smoking in any area where smoking has been prohibited by law or by regulation of the College District.
12. Engaging in harassing or discriminatory behavior based on race, sex, gender, religion, sexual orientation, age, national origin, disability, or any other status protected by law.
13. Engaging in intimidating conduct or bullying against another student through words or actions, including direct physical contact; verbal assaults, such as teasing or name-calling; social isolation or manipulation; and cyber-bullying.
14. Committing sexual harassment as defined by law or by College District policies and procedures.
15. Willful misconduct which results in injury or death to a student or to college personnel or which results in cutting, defacing, or other injury to any real or personal property owned by the College District.
16. Misrepresentation and/or impersonation including arranging for or allowing another individual to impersonate or otherwise misrepresent the student, in person or in an online environment.
17. Dishonesty, forgery, alteration or misuse of college documents, records or identification, or knowingly furnishing false information to the College District.

18. Unauthorized entry upon or use of College District facilities.
19. Lewd, indecent or obscene conduct or gestures on College District-owned or controlled property, or at College District sponsored or supervised functions.
20. Engaging in expression which is obscene; libelous, or slanderous; or that incites students as to create a clear and present danger of the commission of unlawful acts on any College District premises, or the violation of lawful College District administrative procedures, or the substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the College District.
21. Engaging in physical or verbal disruption of instructional or student services activities, administrative procedures, public service functions, authorized curricular or co-curricular activities or prevention of authorization guests from carrying out the purpose for which they are College District property.
22. Engaging in physical or verbal intimidation or harassment of such severity or pervasiveness as to have the purpose of effect of unreasonably interfering with a student's academic performance, or College District employee's work performance, or of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive educational or work environment.
23. Violation of Board policies and/or procedures governing the use of student user accounts, computers, and telecommunication devices, including but not limited to the unauthorized entry, opening or viewing of a file; the unauthorized use of another individual's identification and password; arranging for, allowing, and/or impersonation of one person by another; sending obscene or abusive messages or files; and/or use of computing facilities to interfere with the work of another student or employee of the College District.
24. Violation of a duly issued restraining order, stalking, and/or a pattern of conduct with intent to follow, alarm, or harass another person, and/or which causes that person to reasonably fear for his or her safety, and where the pattern of conduct persisted after the person has demanded that the pattern of conduct cease.
25. Persistent, serious misconduct where other means of correction have failed to bring about proper conduct or where the presence of the student causes a continuing danger to the physical safety of students or others.
26. Violation of college regulations or state laws.

DISRUPTION IN CLASSROOMS, COLLEGE OFFICES AND/OR COLLEGE EVENTS

In the event a student is involved in either unethical practice or display of disruptive behavior which is considered not conducive to maintaining a proper learning environment in the classroom, and/or disrupting the business of the college, the student will be disciplined as outlined in the Disciplinary Action Procedures located in this procedure.

The instructor has the right to exercise immediate disciplinary action with respect to disruptive actions in the classroom and may temporarily exclude the student from the classroom effective for the remainder of the class period and the following class session.

The administrator has the right to exercise appropriate disciplinary action with respect to actions in a college office, event or area, including temporary exclusion from a college office.

The Dean of Student Services may impose an immediate interim suspension of 48 hours when he/she concludes that immediate suspension is required to protect lives or property and to ensure the maintenance of order.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION PROCEDURES

1. The faculty, college staff member or administrator concerned who believes disruptive behavior or a student conduct violation has occurred shall first attempt to resolve the misconduct by informal consultation with the student.
2. If this proves to be less than satisfactory, the faculty, college staff member or administrator will inform the School/Center Dean or Supervisor of the area. The School/Center Dean or Supervisor should meet with the faculty, college staff member or administrator, and the student(s) involved in an attempt to resolve the problem.
3. If the faculty/college staff member still believes that the issue has not been resolved satisfactorily at these levels, a completed "Report of Student Misconduct" shall be filed with the Dean of Student Services. In cases in which the College Police has been called or has become involved or in which the situation has become an issue of safety, steps 1 and 2 need not be adhered to.
4. The Dean of Student Services shall confer with the student for the purpose of reviewing the misconduct and attempting to resolve the matter.
5. The Dean of Student Services, or designee, may also obtain information relating to the misconduct from other parties involved. Whenever appropriate, the Dean of Student Services shall assess damage to property and injury to person(s).

6. Students charged with misconduct may be subject to the following sanctions:
 - a. **Verbal Warning:** oral notice to the student that continuation or repetition of misconduct may be cause for further disciplinary action.
 - b. **Written Reprimand:** Students are notified that continuation of conduct may result in further disciplinary action and may be considered in the event of future violations.
 - c. **Disciplinary Probation:** Any misconduct during the probation period will be cause for suspension or other disciplinary action.
 - d. **Disciplinary Suspension:** Exclusion from class, privileges or activities for a specified period of time as set forth in the notice of suspension.
 - e. **Expulsion:** Termination of student status. Expulsion requires formal action by the Governing Board.
 - f. Remand the case to formal hearing.

The Dean of Student Services shall have the power to impose suspension and to recommend expulsion. If the student does not accept the action of the Dean of Student Services, the student has the right to challenge and request a formal hearing under the Guidelines for Due Process. Students who have been suspended and waiting for a formal hearing will not be able to attend any on-campus or college sponsored activities.

If permissible, the student may contact his/her instructor(s) or appropriate college office by email or voicemail to receive class assignments or other information. Assignments or college documents can be turned into the Campus Police to be forwarded to the appropriate parties. If violation(s) of Student Conduct include issues of campus or personal safety, the student may be prohibited from contacting any college staff, faculty or other student.

The Governing Board shall consider any recommendation from the Superintendent/President for expulsion. The Governing Board shall consider an expulsion recommendation in closed session unless the student requests that the matter be considered in a public meeting. Final action by the Governing Board on the expulsion shall be reported in a public meeting.

GUIDELINES FOR DUE PROCESS

Procedural due process is the method established to resolve faculty, staff, and student conduct issues in a clear, fair, and orderly manner. These procedures apply to actions which interfere with or exert a harmful effect upon the function of the college. Due process is intended to achieve an equitable solution that will resolve the issue with due regard for the rights of the accused, the protection of the student body, and the interest of the College District. Any action taken by a student under this due process procedure shall preclude any further action.

The implementation of procedural due process on campus will consist of the following due process procedures, and will take place within a reasonable length of time.

I. PRELIMINARY ACTION PROCEDURE

A. SUBMITTING OF OFFICIAL FORMS

The Dean of Student Services shall receive and may issue any charge of alleged student misconduct. Charges may be made against a student by faculty, college staff or administrator. The complainant shall file a Report of Student Misconduct form with the Dean of Student Services hereafter called "Administrator".

B. NOTIFICATION OF CHARGES

Students charged with violations of the Standards of Student Conduct shall be notified that they are required to schedule an appointment with the Administrator to discuss such alleged violations and/or any disciplinary actions that may or will result if such charges are found to be true. The notice will be mailed to the student's address on file in the college's Admissions and Records by US Mail and Certified or FedEx mail.

A student who does not report to the Office of Student Services to address the student misconduct report will have an administrative hold placed on his/her records, in addition to possibly being dropped from his/her classes.

C. PRELIMINARY MEETING

The meeting with the Administrator shall consist of the following:

1. A copy of the Standards of Student Conduct Procedure No.5500 is given to the student.
2. The administrator and the student will review the misconduct charges.
3. The administrator informs the student of any disciplinary action(s) that may be taken.

D. ADMINISTRATOR ACTIONS

The Administrator will obtain information relating to the charge from the student and other persons. Whenever appropriate, the Administrator shall assess damage to property and injury to persons. The Administrator may take any of the following actions and will notify the student of that action:

- Dismiss the charge for lack of merit.
- Issue the student one or more of the following types of disciplinary actions, unless the Administrator and the student agree to another appropriate disciplinary action:
 1. **Verbal Warning:** Student receiving a warning will have met with the Dean of Student Services to discuss the inappropriate behavior.
 2. **Written Reprimand:** A student receiving a reprimand by the Administrator is thereby notified that continued conduct of the type described may result in further disciplinary action against the student.
 3. **Disciplinary Probation:** Any misconduct during the probation period will be cause for suspension or other disciplinary action.
 4. **Disciplinary Suspension:** Exclusion from class, privileges or activities for a specified period of time as set forth in the notice of suspension.
 5. **Expulsion:** Termination of student status. Administrator may recommend expulsion to the Superintendent/President. This action requires formal action by the Governing Board.
 6. Remand the case to formal hearing.

A letter notifying the student of the Administrator's decision shall be sent by US Mail and either certified or FedEx mail, specifying the mailing date of such letter. The Administrator is deemed to have notified the student of his or her decision on the date.

Students in violation of any additional college policies, procedures and/or state, federal regulations while on disciplinary action may be subject to the extension or addition of disciplinary sanctions. If additional misconduct(s) are filed, while students are on disciplinary action, the due process and procedures may be repeated again.

E. APPEAL TO GRIEVANCE AND ORDER COMMITTEE

From the date the student is notified of the Administrator's decision, any request for a hearing must be received postmarked or hand delivered in three (3) working days. Any appeal shall be made in writing and delivered to the Office of the Dean of Student Services. If the student is suspended, they can deliver the letter of appeal to the Campus Police, who will hand deliver the letter to the Office of Student Services.

The Administrator will convene the Grievance and Order Committee to conduct the formal hearing when school is in session, including the summer session.

II. HEARING PROCEDURE

A. FORMAL HEARING PROCESS

The Formal Hearing Process is the college's administrative due process to resolve misconducts. Parties are allowed to present testimony and witnesses to support their position.

B. THE HEARING PANEL

There shall be a standing Grievance and Order Committee which members are appointed to a Grievance and Order hearing panel, as needed. The Grievance and Order hearing panel shall be comprised of at least one member from each of the following groups:

1. Two students and two alternates (enrolled in 6 or more units) who shall be appointed by ASO president and;
2. Two full-time faculty and two alternates who shall be appointed by the Academic Senate and;
3. Two full-time classified personnel, and two alternates, except those designated as management, who shall be appointed by the Classified Senate and/or Classified Union and;
4. Two full-time management personnel and two alternates, (who shall be appointed by the Superintendent/President) with the exception of the Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Student Services.

C. SCOPE OF THE STUDENT GRIEVANCE AND ORDER HEARING

The Grievance and Order hearing panel shall limit the scope of its appeal hearing to the following:

1. Determine if the evidence supports the findings of the Administrator.
2. Determine if the disciplinary action levied by the Administrator is within range of disciplinary actions delineated in the Procedures No. 5500 Standards of Student Conduct.
3. Make recommendation(s) to the Dean of Student Services or designee.

D. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CHAIRPERSON

The Chairperson shall preside over the hearing and make rulings as to its conduct. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated and will result in exclusion of the person(s) from the proceedings.

E. RIGHT TO REPRESENTATION

This is an internal due process hearing conducted by Southwestern College. Parties are allowed to present testimony and witnesses to support their positions. However, parties are not allowed to be represented by legal counsel at any time during the hearing process.

F. FORMAL HEARING ORDER OF PROCEEDINGS**1. *Opening***

The Chair shall call the hearing to order, introduce the participants, explain the hearing is being recorded and proceedings are confidential, and announce the purpose of the hearing, e.g., "The Committee meets to hear an appeal of disciplinary action against (student's name) and/or to submit its findings to the Administrator".

2. *Evidence for hearing*

Any and all evidence will be entered for the record.

3. *Challenge of a Committee member*

Refer to Section J - Right to Challenge Committee Composition in this procedure.

4. *Request for Open Hearing*

Refer to Section K - Open and Closed hearing in this procedure.

All hearings are closed, unless otherwise requested.

5. *Identification of witnesses*

Witnesses are to identify themselves and state for the record, the reason for their presence.

6. *Swearing in of both parties*

Swear in both the complainant and defendant by the Administrative Secretary.

7. *Opening Statements*

Both parties will make opening statements.

Person who filed charges will make first opening statement

Each party will be given five minutes.

8. *Questioning Protocol*

Grievance and Order hearing panel members may ask questions of both parties.

Parties may submit questions to the chair.

The Chair will pose questions to appropriate party.

Rebuttal two minutes each.

9. *Calling Witnesses*

Witnesses are sworn in by the Administrative Secretary.

Witnesses are questioned by hearing members

Parties may submit questions to Grievance and Order hearing chair

10. *Closing Statements*

Both parties will make closing statements.

Person who filed charges will make first closing statement.

Each party will be given five minutes.

G. BURDEN OF PROOF AND OF PRODUCING EVIDENCE

The student seeking appeal has the burden of proving that the evidence filed in the Report of Student Misconduct did not support the Administrator's findings and/or the Administrator acted outside the scope of his/her authority or acted arbitrarily in imposing the appealed disciplinary measure. The student may present evidence in support of his or her position, and then the person filing the misconduct may present evidence to refute such evidence.

H. ARGUMENTS

Arguments will be presented first by the person filing the Report of Student Misconduct. The student shall be afforded an opportunity to make or waive an opening statement. After the opening statements, the person filing the Report of Student Misconduct shall have the first opportunity to present witnesses and other relevant evidence. The student shall have the opportunity to present witnesses and other relevant evidence.

I. EVIDENCE

- Irrelevant and unduly repetitious evidence shall be excluded.
- All evidence will be submitted 24 hours (one working day) prior to hearing.

J. RIGHT TO CHALLENGE COMMITTEE COMPOSITION

The student charged in the Report of Student Misconduct may challenge any member of the Grievance and Order hearing panel for cause. Grounds for cause shall be limited to any personal involvement in the situation giving rise to the disciplinary action, any statement made on the matters at issue, or any other act or statement indicating that person could not act in a neutral manner. Validity of any such challenges shall be determined by the Chair of the hearing panel. Five (5) panel members will be the minimum number to conduct a hearing.

K. OPEN/CLOSED HEARINGS

1. Hearings shall be confidential and closed to the general public, and witnesses shall be present only when testifying unless the student requests an open hearing. Both the person filing the Report of Student Misconduct and the student shall be entitled to call witnesses. Any questions directed to the witnesses will be in writing and given to the chair.
2. Members of the hearing panel may ask questions to either party upon recognition by the Chairperson. Either side may recall a witness, who again may be questioned by the hearing panel.
3. A brief caucus may be called by the Chairperson or any member, with all other person's excused except for the Grievance and Order hearing panel.
4. The hearing shall be recorded. The recording may be used by the Superintendent/President, in case of an appeal.

L. ABSENCE OF THE COMPLAINANT AND/OR THE DEFENDANT

It is imperative that all parties are present during the hearing process. Disruptive behavior will result in removal of the person(s), and the hearing will continue in their absence. If the student(s) and/or the college staff person(s) who are involved in the Report of Student Misconduct do not appear, or leave the hearing before its conclusion, the hearing shall proceed without the absent parties, and the hearing panel shall reach a decision based on the evidence presented.

M. CONCLUSION

The opportunity to make or waive a closing argument will be made first by the person filing the Report of Student Misconduct. The hearing panel shall recess to deliberate in closed session with all of the members. The Administrator and if appropriate, the appointed college legal counsel may be present to advise. The hearing panel shall reach its decision based upon the record of the hearing and shall not consider matters outside of that record.

Within one working day of the hearing, the Chairperson shall deliver to the administrator a written decision arrived at by majority vote of the hearing panel. The hearing panel's decision may include one of the following recommendations:

- Exoneration
- Written warning
- Disciplinary Probation: conditional continued enrollment
- Disciplinary Suspension: specified period of time
- Expulsion (see section IV)
- Any other recommendation(s) that the committee members deem necessary for a successful resolution.

N. FINAL ACTION

Upon receiving the findings and recommendations of the hearing panel the Administrator shall render a decision within three (3) working days and will transmit in writing to the student, the Grievance and Order hearing panel and other appropriate administrative officers by US mail and either Certified or FedEx mail.

III. APPEAL TO THE SUPERINTENDENT/ PRESIDENT

From the date the student is notified of the Administrator's decision, any request for an appeal to the Superintendent/President must be received postmarked or hand delivered in three (3) working days. Any appeal shall be made in writing and delivered to the Office of the Superintendent/ President. If the student is suspended, they can deliver the letter of appeal in writing to the Campus Police, who will hand deliver the letter to the Office of Superintendent/President.

The Superintendent/President may do the following:

- Concur with the hearing panel findings and recommendations and the Administrator decision.
- Reduce and/or Reverse the sanctions of the hearing panel and Administrator.
- Increase the sanctions of the hearing panel and Administrator.

The letter rendering the Superintendent/President's decision shall be mailed to the student by US Mail and either certified or FedEx mail.

The Superintendent/President's action shall be final and binding on all parties, with the exception of expulsion (see section IV).

IV. EXPULSION

According to Education Code 76030: A student may be expelled "for good cause when other means of correction fail to bring about proper conduct or when the presence of the student causes a continuing danger to the physical safety of the student or others."

In the case of expulsion, the Superintendent/President's recommendation (see section III) must be forwarded to the Governing Board.

The student will be notified of the intent to expel in writing by US Mail and either certified or FedEx mail. A written request addressed to the Superintendent/President must be received from the student within the 48 hours of the receipt of the written notice of intent to expel; otherwise the matter will be reviewed in closed session.

The Governing Board must consider the expulsion in closed session unless the student requests to have the matter heard in open session. Students may not request a public hearing if any discussion might be in conflict with the right to privacy of any student other than the student requesting the public meeting.

- The final action of the governing board shall be reported in a public meeting in accordance with student privacy rights and the result of that action shall be a public record of the College District.
- The duration of the expulsion may be indefinite.
- The expulsion shall be noted in the student's disciplinary file.
- Re-admittance after expulsion requires action by the Governing Board.

V. MAINTENANCE OF STUDENT RECORDS

The facts of any disciplinary action and the reasons therefore, shall be documented in the student's disciplinary record, subject to access, review, and comment by the student as authorized by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (10 USC Section 2332g) and Education Code Section 76200 et seq. All access to, or release of such records to members of the public shall also be in accordance with State and Federal law. The student's disciplinary record will be maintained in the office of the Dean of Student Services for three years for a minor offense of written reprimand or less, and for ten years for disciplinary probation and suspension. The condition for an expulsion will be stated in the student's disciplinary record.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

- A. **ADMINISTRATOR** - The Dean of Student Services or Designee.
- B. **PRESIDENT** - The Superintendent/President of the District or Designee.
- C. **CAMPUS POLICE** - Southwestern College District College Police.
- D. **DAY** - When the college is in regular session and regular classes are held.
- E. **REPORT OF STUDENT MISCONDUCT**
- **Complainant:** Person filing a Report of Student Misconduct.
 - **Defendant:** Person being charged.
- F. **COLLEGE** - Southwestern Community College District.
- G. **VERBAL WARNING** - Oral notice to the student that continuation or repetition of misconduct may be cause for further disciplinary action.
- H. **WRITTEN REPRIMAND** - An admonishment by the Dean of Student Services and continuation of conduct may result in further disciplinary action and may be considered in the event of future violations.
- I. **DISCIPLINARY PROBATION** - Specific period of conditional participation in campus and academic affairs, which may involve any or all of the following:
- Ineligibility for all student organization offices.
 - Removal from any student organization office held.
 - Revocation of the privilege of participating in District College and/or student-sponsored activities.
- Any misconduct during the probation period will be cause for suspension or other disciplinary action.*
- J. **SUSPENSION** - Denial of all campus privileges for a specified period of time. Exclusion include from classes, athletics, and co-curricular activities
- K. **EXPULSION** - The removal of a student from any and all classes of the College District; permanent termination of the student status.

Standard of Student Conduct Procedures No. 5500 incorporates the recommended guidelines from CCLC 5520 Procedure

Student Rights and Grievances

References: Education Code, Section 76224(a);

Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972;

Title 5, Section 51023.7

Note: Complaints under Section 504 and/or Americans with Disabilities Act are made to the Section 504 Coordinator in Office of Student Services. Complaints of sexual harassment and other forms of unlawful discrimination are made to the Human Resources Compliance Coordinator in the Office of the Vice President for Human Resources.

The student is encouraged to pursue academic studies and other college-sponsored activities that will promote intellectual growth and personal development. In pursuing these ends, the student should be free of unfair and improper action by any member of the academic community. A grievance may be initiated by a student when he/she believes he/she has been subject to an unjust action or denial of rights as stipulated in college regulations and in the state education and administrative codes. Such action may be instituted by the student against another student, faculty, administrator or other staff member. A grievance must be initiated no later than the end of the term during which the incident occurred. Where a student believes an injustice has taken place, the student may seek resolution through the following procedures.

I. STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Grievances may include, but are not limited to;

- Harassment/Intimidation
- Discriminatory actions
- Arbitrary action or imposition of sanctions by a college representative

Grade and grading disputes are addressed within this administrative procedure. Students should refer to the “Student Grade Dispute Procedure – Section II” found in this procedure.

The procedure does not apply to:

- Student Disciplinary records covered by Procedure No. 5500 - Standards of Student Conduct
- Police citations; complaints about citations must be directed to the Campus Police or San Diego County Superior Court in the same way as any traffic violation.
- Appeals for residency determination. Residency appeals are filed with Admissions and Records.
- Evaluation of professional competence, qualifications or job performance of any College District employee.

A grievance exists when such an error of offense has resulted in an injury or harm that may be corrected through this grievance procedure. As noted, there may be other procedures applicable to various other alleged injuries or harms, and this grievance procedure may not be the sole or exclusive remedy, and it may not be necessary to exhaust this process before presenting allegations to other College District or government agencies.

The Superintendent/President shall appoint the Dean of Student Services or his/her designee to assist students in seeking resolution.

Informal meetings and discussion between persons directly involved in the grievance are essential at the outset of a dispute and should be encouraged at all stages. An equitable solution should be sought to avoid persons involved in the case becoming polarized, which could render a solution more difficult to achieve.

At no time shall any persons directly or indirectly involved in the case use the facts, the information which has been discussed, or the character of the informal discussion for the purpose of strengthening the case for or against persons directly involved in the dispute for any other purpose other than the settlement of the grievance.

The determination of whether the Report of Student Grievance presents sufficient grounds for review shall be based on the following:

- The grievant must be a student, which include applicants and former students.
- The grievant is personally and directly affected by the alleged grievance.
- The grievance was filed in a timely manner.
- The grievance is not frivolous, clearly without foundation, or filed for the purpose of harassment.

The Report of Student Grievance must include the following:

- A clear and concise statement of the grievance
- Name(s) of the individuals against who the grievance is being filed.
- Identify the resolution, corrective action or remedy being sought.
- Summary of actions already taken to attempt to resolve the issue.

The Report of Student Grievance must be filed whether or not the student has already initiated efforts at informal resolution, if the student wishes the grievance to become official.

PRELIMINARY ACTION PROCEDURE

1. The student who believes an injustice has occurred shall attempt to resolve the grievance by informal consultation with the student, staff, faculty or administrator concerned.
2. If this proves to be less than satisfactory, the student will inform the School/Center Dean or Supervisor of the area.

FORMAL GRIEVANCE

3. If the student still believes that the issue has not been resolved satisfactorily through the informal resolution process, the student shall submit a completed "Report of Grievance" to the Dean of Student Services. In cases in which the College District Police Department has been involved or in which the situation has become an issue of safety, the preliminary actions need not be adhered to.
4. The Dean of Student Services shall confer with the student for the purpose of reviewing the grievance and attempting to resolve the matter.
5. The Dean of Student Services or designee may also obtain information relating to the grievance from other parties involved.

The Dean of Student Services will notify each party of the following actions being considered:

- Dismissal of the grievance for lack of merit.
- Agreement among parties to work towards an equitable solution.
- Remand of the case to a formal hearing. (See Guidelines for Due Process in this procedure)
- Charges are filed against the student for misconduct. (See Procedure No. 5500 - Standards of Student Conduct)

From the date the student is notified of the Administrator's decision, any request for a hearing to the Grievance and Order Committee must be received postmarked or hand delivered in three (3) working days. Appeals shall be made in writing and delivered to the office of the Dean of Student Services.

The Dean of Student Services shall arrange a review of the case by formal hearing to consider the disposition. Please see Guidelines for Due Process in this procedure.

II. STUDENT GRADE DISPUTE PROCEDURES

If a student feels that an instructor has given him/her a grade based on prejudiced or capricious action in the evaluation of the student's academic performance, the student must be able to substantiate the claim by showing evidence of a mistake, fraud, bad faith, and/or incompetence.

California Education Code Section 76224 states:

When grades are given for any course of instruction taught in a community college district, the grade given to each student shall be the grade determined by the instructor of the course, and the determination of the student's grade by the instructor, in the absence of mistake, fraud, bad faith or incompetence, shall be final.

Students should note the following definitions which are taken from Black's Law Dictionary:

- **Mistake** - some unintentional act, omission, or error by the instructor,
- **Fraud** - an intentional perversion of the truth for the purpose of inducing another to part with something valuable or to surrender a legal right;
- **Bad Faith** - synonymous with fraud neglect, or refusal to fulfill some duty or contractual obligation, not prompted by an honest mistake as to one's rights or duties;
- **Incompetence** - lack of ability, legal qualification, or fitness to discharge a required duty.

If the student feels that an instructor has given a grade based on a mistake, fraud, bad faith, or incompetence, and the student has evidence to substantiate the claim, these steps must be followed:

1. The student must contact his/her instructor to discuss, clarify, and attempt to resolve the grade dispute in person, via electronic mail, or in writing within 30 working days of the time the official grade report was posted on WebAdvisor or on the official transcript. Grades are posted within one week after the end of a semester or term. If the concern is not resolved satisfactorily, then:
2. The student must discuss the matter with the School/Center Dean or Designee in person, via electronic mail or in writing within 10 working days. The School/Center Dean or Designee will try to resolve the dispute and will respond to the student in writing.
3. If the concern is still unresolved the student must within 10 working days after receiving written response from the School/Center Dean or designee, discuss the matter with the Vice President for Academic Affairs or designee in person, via electronic mail or in writing. The Vice President for Academic Affairs, in consultation with the Academic Senate President, will render a final decision in writing within 15 working days.
4. The decision made by the Vice President for Academic Affairs or designee, in consultation with the Academic Senate President, will be final. There will be no requests granted for a due process hearing.

GUIDELINES FOR DUE PROCESS

Procedural due process is the method established to resolve faculty, staff, and student conduct issues in a clear, fair, and orderly manner. These procedures apply to actions which interfere with or exert a harmful effect upon the function of the College District. Due process is intended to achieve an equitable solution that will resolve the issue with due regard for the rights of the accused, the protection of the student body, and the interest of the College District. Any action taken by a student under this due process procedure shall preclude any further action.

The implementation of procedural due process on campus will consist of the following due process procedures, and will take place within a reasonable length of time.

I. PRELIMINARY ACTION PROCEDURE

A. SUBMITTING OF OFFICIAL FORMS

The Dean of Student Services shall receive any charge of alleged student grievance. Charges may be made by a student against another student, faculty, staff or administrator. The complainant shall file a Report of Student Grievance form with the Dean of Student Services hereafter called "Administrator".

B. NOTIFICATION OF CHARGES

Students, faculty, staff or administrators charged with a Student Grievance shall be notified that they are required to schedule an appointment with the Administrator to discuss such alleged violations. The notice will be mailed to the student's address on file in the College District's Admissions Center by US Mail and either Certified or FedEx mail. Staff, faculty and/or administrators will be contacted by College District email.

A student who does not report to the Office of Student Services to address a student grievance report will have an administrative hold placed on his/her records, in addition to possibly being dropped from his/her classes.

C. PRELIMINARY MEETING

The meeting with the Administrator shall consist of the following:

4. A copy of the Procedure No. 5530 - Student Rights and Grievance - is given to the student.
5. The administrator and the student review the alleged student grievance.
6. The administrator informs the student, staff, faculty and/or administrator of the process which will be followed.

D. ADMINISTRATOR ACTIONS

The Administrator will obtain information relating to the charge from the student and other persons.

The Administrator will notify each party regarding any of the following actions:

- Dismiss the grievance for lack of merit.
- Work towards an equitable solution.
- Remand the case to a formal hearing. (See Guidelines for Due Process in this procedure)
- Charge the student with misconduct. (See Procedure No. 5500 - Standards of Student Conduct)

A letter notifying the parties of the Administrator's decision shall be sent by US Mail and either certified or FedEx mail, specifying the mailing date of such letter. Staff, faculty and/or administrators will be contacted by College District email. The Administrator is deemed to have notified the student, faculty, staff and/or administrator of his or her decision on the date.

E. APPEAL TO GRIEVANCE AND ORDER COMMITTEE

From the date the parties are notified of the Administrator's decision, any request for a hearing to the Student Grievance and Order Committee must be received postmarked or hand delivered in three (3) working days. Any appeal shall be made in writing and delivered to the Office of the Dean of Student Services.

The Administrator will convene the Grievance and Order Committee to conduct the hearing when school is in session, including the summer session.

II. HEARING PROCEDURE

A. FORMAL HEARING PROCESS

The Formal Hearing Process is the College District's administrative due process to resolve student grievances that are not resolved by informal actions. Parties are allowed to present testimony and witnesses to support their positions.

B. THE HEARING PANEL

There shall be a standing Grievance and Order Committee which the members are appointed to a Grievance and Order hearing panel, as needed. The Grievance and Order Committee shall be comprised of at least one member from each of the following groups:

5. Two students and two alternates (enrolled in 6 or more units) who shall be appointed by the ASO president and;
6. Two full-time faculty and two alternates who shall be appointed by the Academic Senate and;
7. Two full-time classified personnel and two alternates except those designated as management, who shall be appointed by the Classified Senate and/or Classified Union and;
8. Two full-time management personnel and two alternate (who shall be appointed by the Superintendent/President) with the exception of the Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Student Services.

C. SCOPE OF THE STUDENT GRIEVANCE AND ORDER HEARING

The Grievance and Order hearing panel shall limit the scope of its appeal hearing to the following:

1. Determine if the evidence supports the findings of the Administrator.
2. Determine if the action levied by the Administrator is within range of student grievance actions delineated in Procedures 5530 Student Rights and Grievances.
3. Make recommendations to the Dean of Student Services or designee.

D. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CHAIRPERSON

The Chairperson shall preside over the hearing and make rulings as to its conduct. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated and will result in exclusion of the person(s) from the proceedings.

E. RIGHT TO REPRESENTATION

This is an internal due process hearing conducted by Southwestern College. Parties are allowed to present testimony and witnesses to support their positions. However, parties are not allowed to be represented by legal counsel at any time during the hearing process.

F. FORMAL HEARING ORDER OF PROCEEDINGS**1. Opening**

The Chair shall call the hearing to order, introduce the participants, explain the hearing is being recorded and proceedings are confidential, and announce the purpose of the hearing, e.g., “The Committee meets to hear an appeal of grievance against (person’s name) and/or to submit its findings to the Administrator”.

2. Evidence for hearing

Any and all evidence will be entered for the record.

3. Challenge of a Committee member

Refer to Section J – Right to Challenge Committee Composition - in this procedure.

4. Request for Open Hearing

Refer to Section area K - Open and Closed hearing in this procedure. All hearings are closed, unless otherwise requested.

5. Identification of witnesses

Witnesses are to identify themselves and state for the record, the reason for their presence.

6. Swearing in of both parties

Swear in both the complainant and defendant by the Administrative Secretary

7. Opening Statements

Both parties will make opening statements.

Person who filed charges will make first opening statement

Each party will be given five minutes.

8. Questioning Protocol

Grievance and Order hearing panel members may ask questions of both parties.

Parties may submit questions to the chair.

The Chair will pose questions to appropriate party.

Rebuttal two minutes each.

9. Calling Witnesses

Witnesses are sworn in by the Administrative Secretary

Witnesses are questioned by committee members

Parties may submit questions to Grievance and Order hearing chair

10. Closing Statements

Both parties will make closing statements.

Person who filed charges will make first closing statement.

Each party will be given five minutes.

G. BURDEN OF PROOF AND OF PRODUCING EVIDENCE

The person seeking appeal has the burden of proving that the evidence filed in the Report of Student Grievance did not support the Administrator's findings. The student filing the grievance may present evidence in support of his or her position, and then the other person may present evidence to refute such evidence.

H. ARGUMENTS

Arguments will be presented first by the student filing the Report of Student Grievance. The student shall be afforded an opportunity to make or waive an opening statement. After the opening statements, the student filing the Report of Student Grievance shall have the first opportunity to present witnesses and other relevant evidence. Then the other person shall have the opportunity to present witnesses and other relevant evidence.

I. EVIDENCE

- Irrelevant and unduly repetitious evidence shall be excluded.
- All evidence will be submitted 24 hours (one working day) prior to hearing.

J. RIGHT TO CHALLENGE COMMITTEE COMPOSITION

The person charged in the Report of Student Grievance may challenge any member of the Grievance and Order hearing panel for cause. Grounds for cause shall be limited to any personal involvement in the situation, any statement made on the matters at issue, or any other act or statement indicating that person could not act in a neutral manner. Validity of any such challenges shall be determined by the Chair of the hearing panel. Five (5) panel members will be the minimum number to conduct a hearing.

K. OPEN/CLOSED HEARINGS

1. Hearings shall be confidential and closed to the general public, and witnesses shall be present only when testifying unless the student requests an open hearing. Both the student filing the Report of Student Grievance and the other party shall be entitled to call witnesses. Any questions directed to the witnesses shall be in writing and given to the chair.
2. Members of the hearing panel may ask questions to either party upon recognition by the Chairperson. Either side may recall a witness, who again may be questioned by the hearing panel.
3. A brief caucus may be called by the Chairperson or any member, with all other person's excused except for the Grievance and Order hearing panel.
4. The hearing shall be recorded. The recording may be used by the Superintendent/ President, in case of an appeal.

L. ABSENCE OF THE COMPLAINANT AND/OR THE DEFENDANT

It is imperative that all parties are present during the hearing process. Disruptive behavior will result in removal of the person(s), and the hearing will continue in their absence. If the student(s) and/or the College District staff person(s) who are involved in the Report of Student Grievance do not appear, or leaves the hearing before its conclusion, the hearing shall proceed without the absent parties, and the hearing panel shall reach a decision based on the evidence presented.

M. CONCLUSION

The opportunity to make or waive a closing argument will be made first by the student filing the Report of Student Grievance. The hearing panel shall recess to deliberate in closed session with all of the members. The Administrator and if appropriate the appointed college legal counsel, may be present to advise. The hearing panel shall reach its decision based upon the record of the hearing and shall not consider matters outside of that record.

Within one working day of the hearing, the Chairperson shall deliver to the administrator a written decision arrived at by majority vote of the hearing panel. The hearing panel's decision may include one of the following recommendations:

- Exoneration
- Written warning
- Any other recommendation(s) that the committee members deem necessary for a successful resolution.

N. FINAL ACTION

Upon receiving the findings and recommendations of the hearing panel, the Administrator shall render a decision within three (3) working days and transmit in writing to the person the Grievance and Order hearing panel and other appropriate administrative officers by US mail and either Certified or FedEx mail. Staff, faculty and/or administrators may be contacted by College District email.

**III. APPEAL TO THE SUPERINTENDENT/
PRESIDENT**

From the date the person is notified of the Administrator's decision, any request for an appeal to the Superintendent/President must be received postmarked or hand delivered in three (3) working days. Any appeal shall be made in writing and delivered to the Office of the Superintendent/ President.

The Superintendent/President may do the following:

- Concur with the hearing panel's findings and recommendations and the Administrator decision.
- Revise the recommendation and/or actions of the hearing panel and Administrator.

The letter rendering the Superintendent/President's decision shall be mailed to the student by US Mail and either certified or FedEx mail.

IV. GLOSSARY OF TERMS

- A. **ADMINISTRATOR** - The Dean of Student Services or Designee.
- B. **PRESIDENT** - The Superintendent/President of the District or Designee.
- C. **CAMPUS POLICE** - Southwestern College District College Police.
- D. **DAY** - When the college is in regular session and regular classes are held.
- E. **REPORT OF STUDENT GRIEVANCE**
 - **Complainant** - Student filing a Report of Student Grievance.
 - **Defendant** - Staff, faculty and/or administrator being charged
- F. **COLLEGE / COLLEGE DISTRICT** - Southwestern Community College District.

Disruptive Behavior

Guidelines for Addressing Disruptive Student Behavior

WHAT IS DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR?

Disruptive behavior includes behavior, which interferes with the legitimate instructional, administrative, or service functions of the college. However, should the behavior threaten the personal safety of a student, faculty, or staff person, or be displayed with such emotional intensity that it engenders fear or concern in others, at that point such behavior is classified as a CRISIS and will necessitate a call to the College Police Dispatch office at 482-6380 (or x6380 from campus only).

In identifying disruptive behavior, one should not be confused with the student's right to express their differing opinions, a right fundamental to his/her academic freedom.

Assessing disruptive behavior can be a highly subjective process. Each person will have his/her own level of tolerance and special strategies for handling these disruptions. One must take into consideration the severity of an occurrence/ disruption as well as the number of times that student has been disciplined for the same or similar behavior.

In identifying disruptive behavior in the classroom, the instructor must take into consideration the impact the disruption(s) has/have on students as well as on him/her. An instructor's tolerance level may be greater than that of his/her students. An instructor has to be sensitive to both non-verbal and verbal cues exhibited by a student(s).

The instructor has the right to exercise appropriate disciplinary action and may place the student on probation or temporary exclusion with respect to actions in a classroom effective for the remainder of the class period and the following class session.

The administrator has the right to exercise appropriate disciplinary action in temporary exclusion with respect to actions in a college office.

ACADEMIC FREEDOM POLICY

Southwestern Community College District recognizes that academic freedom is essential in maintaining the academic integrity of the institution and in protecting the rights of both the faculty and the students in the learning process. Each individual is obliged by scholarly ethics and academic freedom to speak openly. So too are others obliged to listen with courtesy and to respond with respect and decency to any statement made with conviction and sincerity. Responding with cordiality and respect does not deny the academic freedom of any party, but rather ensures the free and open exchange of all opinions. It is consistent with these ideals that no one may be compelled to adopt the opinions of others offered in dissension, yet all must honor the right of dissenters to bear true faith in their expressions.

Each faculty member has the right and the responsibility to introduce materials and controversial topics into classroom discussion and to provide opportunity for the expression of diverse points of view. The subject matter must be relevant to the discussion.

Members of the faculty are also private citizens and are not only entitled to express their own opinions in public but are encouraged to do so. When they speak or write as citizens, they must be free from institutional censorship and discipline, but their special position in the community imposes special obligations. Hence, as scholars they should at all times be accurate, should exercise appropriate restraint, should show respect for the opinions of others, and should make every effort to indicate that they are not speaking for the institution.

The District recognizes the right of the faculty to privacy of communication in accordance with the First Amendment. When executing their duties in an appropriate manner, faculty must be able to communicate with their colleagues without restraint. The District further recognizes that censorship and fear of reprisal do not promote scholarly interaction.

The District honors the freedom of expression guaranteed by the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States of America and does not restrict the contents of any form of faculty expression.

(Parts of this policy are adapted from the American Association of University Professors 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure, which has been reaffirmed annually thereafter)

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

Southwestern Community College District recognizes that academic integrity is essential in promoting a student success and maintaining rigor in instructional programs. It is a quintessential part of any substantive educational experience. Honesty and integrity in one's academic life establish life-long patterns of behavior that is fundamental to quality of character and good citizenship. Personal integrity must be developed in each individual and as such should be encouraged in every aspect of a student's experience at Southwestern College.

Southwestern College is a community of scholars and learners, committed to the principles of honesty, trustworthiness, fairness, and respect for the academy. Students share with faculty and staff the responsibility for promoting a climate of integrity. As members of this community, students are expected to adhere to these fundamental values at all times in their academic endeavors.

Violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, lying, stealing, submitting others' work as one's own, or permitting anyone else to do the same. The faculty should make their students aware of specific expectations related to academic integrity in every class and should define academic integrity within the context of the course. The faculty is encouraged to provide pertinent examples of plagiarism, cheating and other violations.

It is necessary that all faculty members require their students to conduct themselves with integrity and honor, and when violations of academic integrity occur, faculty members must address the violations quickly, judiciously, and fairly. They should document all incidents including any informal sanctions with their School Dean. It is the prerogative of the faculty member whether to pursue formal sanctions related to violations of academic integrity. Formal sanctions shall be addressed through appropriate Student Conduct Standards and Discipline procedures (District Policy/Procedure 5500).

Until such a time as a Southwestern College Honor Code is implemented, the final arbiter of formal sanctions of academic integrity shall be a Grievance and Order hearing chaired by a tenured professor.

(Parts of this policy are adapted from the Duke University "Community Standard" and from Prof. Bill Taylor, Oakton Community College, Des Plaines, Illinois, with permission.)

ALCHOLIC BEVERAGES

Any person who possesses, consumes, sells, gives or delivers to any other person any alcoholic beverage in or on any public schoolhouse or any of the grounds thereof is guilty of a misdemeanor. This section does not, however, make it unlawful for any person to acquire, possess or use any alcoholic beverage in or on any public schoolhouse or any grounds thereof if the alcoholic beverage is acquired, possesses or used in connection with a course of instruction given at the school and such person has been authorized to acquire, possess or use it by the governing body or any other administrative head of the school.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Southwestern Community College District recognizes that harassment on the basis of sex is a violation of both Federal and State employment discrimination laws as well as district Policy. The District is committed to providing all employees, applicants for employment, students and other persons in a business, service or professional relationship with the District with an environment free from sexual harassment, and will not tolerate such conduct on the part of any District employee or student.

Any employee, applicant for employment, student or any other person in a business, service or professional relationship with the District with a complaint of sexual harassment should implement these complaint procedures as soon as possible. No complainant will suffer reprisals for reporting any incidents of sexual harassment or making any complaints.

Sexual harassment in unacceptable conduct, is unlawful, and will not be tolerated by the Southwestern Community College District. The District will promptly and thoroughly investigate any complaints of sexual harassment, and will take expeditious action to resolve such complaints, in accordance with these policies.

Sexual Harassment – Sexual harassment consist of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature made by someone from or in the work or college setting. Sexual harassment may be considered to occur under any of the following conditions:

- Submissions to the conduct is explicitly or implicitly made a term or condition of an individual's employment or progress or a student's progress at the college.
- Submission to, or rejection of, the conduct by the individual is used as the basis of employment or academic decisions affecting the individual.
- The conduct has the purpose or effect of having a negative impact upon the individual's work or academic performance, or of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work or academic environment.
- Submission to, or rejection of, the conduct by the individual is used as the basis for any decision affecting the individual regarding benefits and services, honors, programs or activities available at or through Southwestern Community College District.

Forms of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Deliberate verbal comments, gestures, or physical contacts of sexual nature or demeaning to one's gender which are unwelcome and/or interfere with work productivity or academic progress.
- Generalized sexist statements and behavior not necessarily designed to elicit sexual cooperation, but to convey insulting, degrading and/or sexist attitudes.
- Sexual behavior by any employee which has the effect of controlling, influencing or otherwise affecting the job, salary, project, performance evaluation, opportunity for employment, or career of an employee, or applicant for employment, or affecting the academic performance or opportunity for admission of any student or applying student.
- Unwelcome sexual, suggestive or obscene letters, notes or other written/ printed material, derogatory comments, slurs and/or jokes.

Complainant – An individual who brings either a formal or informal complaint of alleged sexual harassment.

Respondent – A person against whom a claim of sexual harassment has been made.

Informal Complaint – An oral sexual harassment complaint brought by a complainant or a District employee on behalf of a complainant.

Formal Complaint – A written complaint of sexual harassment submitted by a complainant.

Superintendent/President – Where this policy specifies the performance of functions by the Superintendent/President, the Superintendent/President may designate another administrator to perform such functions.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

- Any questions regarding this policy should be directed to the Affirmative Action Officer.
- Although this policy anticipates that the Affirmative Action Officer is responsible for investigating all complaints of sexual harassment, nothing in this policy is intended to prohibit the Superintendent/President's appointment of a different District administrator as investigator where appropriate. Where it is determined an administrator other than the Affirmative Action Officer will investigate a sexual harassment complaint, that appointed administrator shall do so in accordance with these policies.
- All allegations of sexual harassment should be brought to the District's attention at the earliest possible time. Time schedules provided in this policy are to ensure prompt consideration of complaints. Allegations of sexual harassment shall be investigated in accordance with this policy.
- The District recognizes that confidentiality is important to all parties involved in a sexual harassment investigation. To the extent practical, the confidentiality of the complainant, respondent and witness (es) will be protected. Employee(s) and/or student(s) interviewed in accordance with these policies are directed to assist in maintaining such confidentiality.
- The District will not tolerate retaliation against any student or employee for initiation, pursuit or assistance with a complaint of sexual harassment. Any individual who retaliates against any District employee and/or student in violation of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action.
- Any individual who is determined to have falsely initiated, or participated in, a sexual harassment investigation may be subject to disciplinary action.

- The District shall not undertake any disciplinary action involving any respondent or complainant until a final decision has been rendered, except as herein provided. Any individual subject to potential discipline shall have an opportunity to review all materials and provide a response. If, in the opinion of the Superintendent/President, immediate action is necessary, reasonable efforts to first inform the respondent and allow him/her an opportunity under the circumstances to respond to the allegations will be provided. For the purposes of this policy, placement of an employee on paid administrative leave shall not be considered disciplinary action.
- The complainant and the respondent may be assisted by a representative of hi/her choice at any stage of these proceedings.
- Nothing contained in this policy is intended to discourage informal resolution of complaints. However, prior to any informal resolution of a sexual harassment complaint, the supervisor or administrator shall contact the Affirmative Action Officer to ensure the informal resolution is consistent with the intent of these policies.

Southwestern College Emergency Notification System

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Southwestern College Emergency Notification system, Blackboard Connect?

The Southwestern College Emergency Notification system is a way for the college to send voice, email, and text messages to you during an emergency or provide you with other time-sensitive and critical information. The College utilizes a service called Blackboard Connect

How does the Blackboard Connect system obtain student and staff contact information?

If you are a student or an employee, the phone and email information in WebAdvisor is used to populate the Blackboard Connect database. To ensure the accuracy of the contact information, it is important that the information in WebAdvisor is up to date. Blackboard Connect provides an encrypted, online process to securely import Southwestern College's existing data into the College account in a secure and reliable manner.

How do I update my contact information if it is not correct?

Students can update their contact information in WebAdvisor by logging in and clicking on the Update your Email/Telephone Number/Address/Major under the User Account information section. Southwestern College faculty and staff can click on the Contact Information Change button under the Staff User Account section to update your telephone information (home, emergency and cell) and your email address(es).

Does Blackboard Connect share the school's information with anyone?

No. Blackboard Connect does not sell, lease, share, or rent personally identifiable information (names, addresses, phone numbers, etc.) to any companies or persons outside of Blackboard Connect or their service providers.

How does the Blackboard Connect for Higher Education notification service work?

The Blackboard Connect service combines the power of the Internet with the pervasiveness of the telephone. This service helps the College reach out to students and staff via:

- Voice messages to home phones and cell phones
- Text messages to cell phones, PDAs and other text-based devices
- Written messages to e-mail accounts
- Messages to TTY/TDD receiving devices for the hearing impaired

What is multi-modal communication? Are text messages alone sufficient?

With the Blackboard Connect service, campus officials can reach the campus community members in their own voice on landlines, cell phones, via e-mail, text messages on cell phones, PDAs/other text-receiving devices, and TTY/TDD receiving devices for the hearing impaired.

During a time-sensitive situation, multi-modal communication is critical as it is a more comprehensive way to reach people in the environment they may be in at the moment an issue arises. Communication is sent simultaneously to all available contact points for each person.

What will the text message look like on my phone?

The emergency text message will display on your cell phone as SWCEMERGENCY or SWCSAFETY (depending upon the circumstance). The emergency phone number will display as 619-216-6733, if you would like to store it in your phone contacts.

Am I required to receive emergency and safety texts on my phone?

We are required to inform you that you may opt out of receiving emergency messages via text message. However, in light of such high-profile college campus emergencies such as Santa Monica Community College, Virginia Tech and closing of the campus during the wildfires, we strongly recommend that you NOT opt out of these emergency text alerts.

How has the Blackboard Connect system been used?

The Blackboard Connect system has been used to communicate vital information when a critical situation has taken place. It is also used to issue alerts to campus members as outlined in the Clery Act. Eventually, Southwestern College will use the service for more routine communication, including communicating during the registration process and to alert students to important financial aid and/or payment deadlines.

How can the Blackboard Connect service reach thousands in minutes?

The company's mass notification engine supports the Blackboard Connect system. Blackboard Connect maintains access to tens of thousands of phone lines originating from multiple locations throughout the United States to ensure that its communications are delivered quickly and efficiently. Moreover, Blackboard Connect employs sophisticated call throttling logic to identify the proper schematics needed to deliver calls based upon whatever congestion the local telecommunications providers are experiencing at the moment calls are being attempted.

TO REQUEST A COPY OF THIS BROCHURE IN ALTERNATE MEDIA, CONTACT
DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES, 619-482-6512, TTY 619-482-6470.

SOUTHWESTERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE SEEKS TO FOSTER AND ENGAGE DIVERSITY
AS INTEGRAL TO OUR LEARNING COMMUNITY AND IN EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE.
DIVERSITY IS VALUED AS AN ESSENTIAL CORNERSTONE TO CIVILITY, DIGNITY,
FAIRNESS, RESPECT, AND TRUST.

SOUTHWESTERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT (SWC) DOES NOT DISCRIMINATE
IN ADMISSION, EMPLOYMENT, OR ACCESS TO ANY SWC PROGRAMS. FOR QUESTIONS
ABOUT THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973, SECTION 504, PLEASE CONTACT MIA
McCLELLAN, DEAN OF STUDENT SERVICES, AT 619-482-6369; FOR TITLE IX
INQUIRIES CONTACT TERRY DAVIS, DEAN OF HEALTH, EXERCISE SCIENCE AND
ATHLETICS, AT 619-482-6551.

SOUTHWESTERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT NO DISCRIMINA EN LA ADMISIÓN,
EL EMPLEO Y EL ACCESO A TODOS LOS PROGRAMAS Y ACTIVIDADES DEL COLEGIO.
PREGUNTAS SOBRE LA LEY DE REHABILITACIÓN DE 1973, LA SECCIÓN 504
Y LAS QUEJAS ESTUDIANTILES DEBEN SER DIRIGIDAS A MIA

McCLELLAN, DECANO DE SERVICIOS ESTUDIANTILES AL

619-482-6369. CONSULTAS SOBRE TÍTULO IX

DEBEN SER DIRIGIDAS A TERRY DAVIS,

DECANO DE SALUD, EJERCICIO Y

DEPORTES AL 619-482-6551.



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