

Chancellor's Memorandum

CM-56 – Student Rights, Roles, and Responsibilities

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Monitoring Unit: Academic Affairs

I. PURPOSE

LSU Health Sciences Center at New Orleans (LSUHSC-NO) is dedicated to providing an environment of respect, dignity, inclusivity, and support for all members of its student community, and to ensuring honesty, fairness, and respect for students' physical, educational, and emotional well-being. Likewise, as integral members of the LSUHSC-NO community, students have certain rights, roles, and responsibilities to themselves, the institution, their peers, faculty, staff, and patients.

This policy describes the rights, roles, and responsibilities of LSUHSC-NO students. It also defines the processes and procedures for both student complaints and disciplinary proceedings, including those required for compliance with the "*Louisiana Student Due Process and Protection Act*" (La. R.S. 17:3394), to sustain a professional, ethical, and equitable learning community at LSUHSC-NO.

II. DEFINITIONS

- 1. Complaint** – an informal verbal or formal written concern expressed by a student regarding an alleged problem, grievance, violation of a policy or an individual's rights including but not limited to concerns of bias or discrimination, concerns about student services (student health, financial aid, registrar, bursar, parking and other HSC wide services), concerns with a school process, or concerns involving other students, faculty or staff.
- 2. Academic Infraction** - Any action, omission, or failure to act by a student that relates to an academic task for which a student will be evaluated by the LSUHSC-NO faculty and/or an affiliate, or relates to the professional conduct standards of the school, department, profession, and/or field in which the student is studying, including but not limited to improper or inappropriate use of social media in a professional setting.
- 3. Non-Academic Infraction** - Any action, omission, or failure to act by a student that does not relate to an academic task or a professional conduct standard and also is unlawful or inappropriate, which may include but is not limited to violations of federal, state, and local law, improper use of social media for bullying, stalking, threatening, doxing, or otherwise, or disrespectful treatment of individuals, groups, institutions, organizations, or property.

III. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Students shall conduct themselves appropriately, lawfully, and with the highest standards of personal, academic, professional, and ethical behavior, always demonstrating the integrity and honesty required in the health sciences professions.
2. Students shall treat faculty, staff, peers, clients, patients, and all others with dignity and respect, and shall abide by the LSUHSC-NO Code of Conduct as well as any applicable code of conduct of their respective professional discipline. Ignorance of a professional standard is not a defense for unprofessional behavior.
3. Students shall comply with all LSUHSC-NO and individual School codes of conduct, professional standards, policies, procedures, rules, regulations and other applicable information published on institutional and school websites, which may be updated from time to time.
4. Students who fail to adhere to these responsibilities, whether on or off campus, may be subject to disciplinary action, with the disciplinary pathway determined by whether their alleged infraction is academic or non-academic in nature.

IV. STUDENT ROLE IN INSTITUTIONAL DECISION MAKING

1. Students shall be free, individually and collectively, to express their views on issues of institutional policy and on matters of general interest to the student body.
2. Students are entitled to participate in matters related to policy formulation through avenues including but not limited to:
 - a. Formal recommendations to LSUHSC-NO administration by the Student Government Associations and other recognized units of student self-government; or
 - b. Student membership on standing and ad hoc committees; or
 - c. Special ad hoc student committees appointed by LSUHSC-NO administration for advice and assistance on specific issues or policies; or
 - d. Student petitions; or
 - e. Student discussion of proposed policies in committees, in student organizations, in student-sponsored forums, or in student publications; or
 - f. Informal advice and counsel to administrators by officers of recognized units of student self-government and officers of recognized student organizations, and advice and counsel to administrators by individual students.

V. STUDENT RIGHTS

1. Students have all rights as guaranteed by the United States Constitution and appropriate federal, state and local laws.
2. Students have the right to a fair and impartial hearing if accused of Academic or Non-Academic Infractions, as further outlined below.

3. Students have the right to be treated with respect and integrity. Mistreatment and abuse of students by faculty, residents, staff, or fellow students is contrary to the educational objectives of LSUHSC-NO and will not be tolerated. Mistreatment and abuse include, but are not limited to, berating, belittling, or humiliation; physical punishment or threats; intimidation; sexual harassment; harassment or discrimination based on race, gender, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, age, religion, or disability; assigning a grade for reasons other than the student's performance; assigning tasks for punishment or non-educational purposes; requiring the performance of personal services; or failing to give students credit for work they have done.
4. Students have the right to make Complaints according to guidelines and procedures defined below.

VI. GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR ADDRESSING STUDENT COMPLAINTS

1. Students may register Complaints informally/verbally through their department, school, student affairs office, assistant/associate dean(s), dean, vice chancellor, or chancellor, or formally through the LSUHSC-NO online incident reporting system, which may be anonymous at the student's discretion.
2. School-specific policies for handling Complaints should include mechanisms for resolution through the applicable Assistant/Associate Dean for Academic /Student Affairs of the school, or referral to the appropriate institutional entity responsible for investigating Complaints that allege violation of certain rights.
3. If the Assistant/Associate Dean of Academic/Student Affairs of their school determines the Complaint is an Academic Infraction, the investigation will be conducted in accord with that School's applicable handbooks, policies, guidelines, and professional standards. If the Assistant/Associate Dean of Academic/Student Affairs of their school determines the Complaint is a Non-Academic Infraction, it should be reported immediately to the Dean and the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (VCAA) for evaluation and further investigation pursuant to the Student Discipline Committee (SDC) procedures set forth in Section VIII below.
4. If a student chooses to submit a formal Complaint, whether anonymous or not, they must do so through the online incident reporting system and must provide information required by the online incident report. Submitting a formal Complaint will prompt an investigation according to guidance established by the applicable policy or handbook including due process. All formal Complaints shall be managed and tracked through the online incident reporting system.
5. The VCAA will maintain a record of all formal Complaints, including investigation status and final resolution.

VII. GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR INVESTIGATING ACADEMIC INFRACTIONS

1. Academic performance, professional performance, violation of academic standards, and violation of professional standards or code of conduct shall remain in the jurisdiction of each School.
2. All alleged Academic Infractions will be investigated in accord with the appropriate School's applicable handbooks, policies, guidelines, and professional standards, which shall be published, shall ensure due process, and shall define a process for appeals.

VIII. GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR INVESTIGATING NON-ACADEMIC INFRACTIONS

1. LSUHSC-NO shall have and maintain a university-wide Student Discipline Committee (SDC), in compliance with the requirements of the *Louisiana Student Due Process and Protection Act* (La. R.S. 17:3394; Act 464 of the 2022 Louisiana Regular Legislative Session), which shall have exclusive jurisdiction over all LSUHSC-NO students and student organizations in the investigation of all allegations of Non-Academic Infractions.
2. An alleged Non-Academic Infraction received by or referred to the VCAA will be assigned a responsible party to investigate the matter which may be either (a) an applicable school committee, (b) an institutional office, such as Human Resources Management, Title IX, or Disability Services, or other applicable office, or (c) the SDC. The accused student or student organization shall have five (5) business days from the date of the VCAA's written notice to appeal the responsible party assigned to investigate. After consideration of any such appeal, the VCAA will select the final responsible investigating party and will notify, in writing, the complainant, the accused, if one, and the responsible investigating party to begin their work.
3. The responsible investigating party will meet in an effort to resolve the matter within ten (10) business days of the VCAA's authorization to begin, and will take reasonable steps to reach a resolution of the matter within twenty (20) business days. All investigations of Complaints referred by the VCAA will, to the extent possible, be expeditiously resolved, and the responsible investigating party will provide status updates to the VCAA at least every thirty (30) business days if necessary.
4. The SDC shall be comprised of faculty and student representatives appointed by the Dean of each school and confirmed by the VCAA, with the LSUHSC-NO Chief Counsel as an *ex officio* member. The SDC shall have the sole authority to establish its rules of procedure for the investigation of allegations of Non-Academic Infractions, including but not limited to its processes for investigations and appeals, the definition of permissible sanctions correlated to the severity of the Non-Academic Infraction, the size and composition of the SDC and any subcommittee thereof established for initial hearing or appeal panels, the term of appointment, and the process for voluntary or involuntary removal of SDC members.
5. The SDC shall ensure that its processes, rules, and procedures are not arbitrary or capricious but rather are consistent with all tenets of due process set forth by federal, state, and local law, and shall publish as well as transmit its rules of procedure to each Dean for dissemination to the students and student organizations. The SDC shall use the standard of "preponderance of evidence," that an infraction was more likely than not to have occurred, in determining responsibility for Non-Academic Infractions.
6. In accord with the *Louisiana Student Due Process and Protection Act*, a student or student organization alleged to have committed a Non-Academic Infraction has the right to be represented at all times, at their own expense, by an attorney or non-attorney advocate who may fully participate during the investigatory process.
7. Subsequent to an investigation and hearing, the SDC shall determine, by the preponderance of evidence, if the accused student or student organization is responsible for committing a Non-Academic Infraction and shall, if applicable, determine appropriate disciplinary sanctions.

8. Pursuant to the SDC rules of procedure, a student or student organization found responsible for committing a Non-Academic Infraction and issued a disciplinary sanction may appeal that decision to the SDC. The recommendation of the SDC appeals panel, which shall be comprised of a subset of the SDC different from the subset of the SDC who heard the initial matter, shall be final and unappealable.

9. The SDC shall transmit the final determination and sanctions in writing to the VCAA, the student or student organization, and to the applicable Dean or VCAA, who shall be responsible for enforcing the final sanctions, if any.

10. To the extent that any School's student disciplinary policies and procedures should conflict with anything herein, this CM-56 policy shall take precedence.

IX. GUIDELINES FOR DISCIPLINARY SANCTIONS

1. LSUHSC-NO strives to ensure equity and consistency in all disciplinary matters and affirms that while outcomes in similar disciplinary matters may vary, effective sanctioning must be based upon the application of consistent factors within a predictable range such that they are not arbitrary or capricious.

2. Sanctions are intended to re-establish order and safety in the LSUHSC-NO community, repair harm to those impacted by the infraction, provide an opportunity for the student to reflect upon the impact of their actions, and, if possible, restore the student or student organization to good standing.

3. The SDC shall define a range of sanctions guidelines for minor and major Non-Academic Infractions, including possible aggravating or mitigating factors, and shall publish as well as transmit these sanctions guidelines to each Dean for dissemination to the students.