

Modifications to the Student Disciplinary Process considering Social Distancing

General

All students at the University of Memphis are bound by the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities. The Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities defines what conduct is prohibited, the possible sanctions for those violations, and policies and procedures governing how the University will charge, investigate, and resolve any alleged violations of those policies.

To protect the safety of students and campus personnel from the novel coronavirus and COVID-19 outbreak, the University has followed the guidance of government and public health leaders to reduce density and in-person interactions on its campus.

Under these unprecedented circumstances, we are temporarily modifying certain procedures to our student conduct and investigations process that may not be contemplated in our Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities.

Purpose

The University is committed to providing all students with a fair and impartial investigation and adjudication of conduct violations. While some elements of the disciplinary process may benefit from the physical presence of accused students, reporting parties, witnesses, and campus personnel in resolving the matter, we have concluded that in most cases, the lack of physical presence does not impact the fundamental fairness of this process.

The University also recognizes that it is in the interest of involved parties and the institution to resolve open cases in a thorough and expeditious manner. Without these modifications, cases may need to be held over until future terms before they can be closed, which may impact your education or the ability of the University to refund fees once a new semester is undertaken.

How does this impact you?

Virtual Meetings

Any in-person meeting or hearing to which a student is eligible or required to attend will be conducted via the University's virtual meeting software (Skype for Business, BlueJeans, or Zoom) and may include an advisor permitted under the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities. Should the case require a hearing and/or appeal to resolve, the hearing and any appeal will be conducted via the University's virtual meeting software. At the parties' option, the Office of Student Accountability will make available rooms for the students to meet with their advisors and utilize the University's virtual meeting software. The availability of meeting rooms may be subject to change based on public health guidance or the closure of campus facilities.

Scheduling

The Office of Student Accountability will send meeting times for the student within their current course schedule. The Office of Student Accountability will work with all parties on challenges to participation involving access to technology to ensure, to the best of its ability, that all parties can, to the extent practicable, equitably participate in the process. Any requests for technological accommodations based on a disclosed disability must be conveyed to Disability Resources for Students (drs@memphis.edu) and Student Accountability (studentaccountability@memphis.edu) before these meetings, hearings, and appeals.

Advisors

Rules about the number and participation of advisors under the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities and other relevant policies remain in place. To ensure equity and observance of the rules, during any remote meeting or hearing held via the University's virtual meeting software, the parties will be asked to show that they are only being advised by the number of advisors allotted.

As they advise students, advisors may request a pause to the proceedings where they can mute participation, and communicate with their student advisee via a separate phone or communication device. Advisors may also communicate with their student advisees in writing (such as via text message or messaging service).

The Office of Student Accountability recognizes that inability of advisors and parties to be in the same room may present additional challenges, and will generally be flexible with reasonable requests for pauses in the proceedings by one or all parties. Unless the Director of Student Accountability determines that to do so would be prejudicial to any party or an abuse of the process, the Office of Student Accountability will endeavor to grant requests for pauses.

Evidence

If requested, the Office of Student Accountability will provide access to an electronic folder in OneDrive for reviewing documents, photographs, videos, and other evidence related to the individual and their role in the case. This information will also be screen-shared during the electronic meeting or hearing.

Students and their advisors may not copy or share information uploaded to this service. Violations of the rules governing transmission and review of documents through the storage account are separate conduct violations and may result in further disciplinary action and sanctions.

Any evidence in the student's personal possession that the student wishes to add to this account may be directly emailed to studentaccountability@memphis.edu or through our [evidence submission form](#) for upload and dissemination to the parties.

The campus will make available certain evidence pursuant to its policies and may be unable to make certain evidence available for review using such a system. Decisions of responsibility or non-responsibility will not be made upon evidence not available for all parties' review through this online submission system.

Sanctions

Where appropriate, sanctions will be modified to include sanctions that a student can complete at home, such as digital educational modules and virtual meetings. Students will not be required by the Office of Student Accountability to complete in-person community service that could put the student, the location of the service, or any other party at a health or safety risk. The Office of Student Accountability will, as a matter of course, modify any sanction upon reasonable request to either extend the time of completion of the sanction to a time in which the public health risks have passed.

What if I have objections to these modifications?

As indicated above, all relevant policies and procedures applicable to your case under the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities will remain in effect. This means that, under some circumstances, the University will not be able to adjudicate and complete your case until later terms when we anticipate that students and campus personnel will physically return to campus. Depending on your circumstances, you may be unable to register for classes, lift a transcript hold, or graduate without resolving your conduct case.

If you object to some or all of these modifications, you must send written notice to the Director of Student Accountability at studentaccountability@memphis.edu not later than 24 hours before your scheduled meeting or hearing.

What if I have questions?

Our staff remains available to answer any questions you have about the conduct process and this waiver. Please contact the Director of Student Accountability at studentaccountability@memphis.edu.