

Initial Conference Discussion Suggestions

This is a general outline, you don't have to follow this word for word....

1. Explain why you are meeting with the student.

The purpose of the initial conference. is to review the charges, incident reports and procedures. Then, the student is asked if

-- he/she accepts responsibility or not; and

-- what type of hearing she/he wants (if applicable).

NOTE: you can jot notes on the copy of the initial conference letter in the file, regarding the student's responses. Or use a separate sheet of paper.

2. Information to review with the student:

Summarize the incident reports and other information:

NOTE: Be sure to redact SS# and any other FERPA protected information if you expect that the student will look at any documents. In general we do not release copies of the written evidence. We permit the student to review in our office.

Explain the charges and range of sanction - including parental notification, if applicable. Explain typical special conditions if applicable (e.g., alcohol cases)

Explain the types of hearings (as applicable)

1. Student's Decision:

a. Administrative hearing with person conducting initial conference

b. Administrative hearing with someone else (conflict of interest)

c. University Judiciary Committee (if the charge includes a possible sanction of Suspension or Expulsion) or Academic Integrity Committee if applicable.

2. Hearing Officer Decision or Required by Policy:

a. Administrative hearing with someone else (conflict of interest)

b. If sexual misconduct/harassment, Administrative Panel with two administrators

Explain they can bring evidence, witnesses and “advisor” to a hearing

- a. No character witnesses – not necessary
- b. The “advisor” must be a registered student, staff or faculty

3. Discussion and Procedural Follow Up:

Ask them to explain what happened from their point of view.

Ask them how they want to proceed procedurally (if they say they are responsible, note that the option is limited to an administrative hearing to determine sanctions, rather than a judicial hearing committee.)

If there will be a hearing in the future, ask them for the names of the witnesses they wish to have present; discuss what testimony the student will expect these witnesses to provide (sometimes witnesses can be weeded out if they are duplicative or character testimony) and, if you expect to call witnesses tell the student who the witnesses will be (or inform at a later date).