

The Musings of a Conduct Officer

[Student Conduct: An Introduction](#)[The Conduct Conversation](#)

Recent Posts

[Decision Making: From a Dream to Reality](#)
[The Little Book of Restorative Justice](#)
[Protected: Student Advocacy & the Message](#)
[Better Alcohol EDU Needed BASICS](#)
[Part 2: Advances because of Title IX](#)
[Part 1: What is Title IX?](#)
[Values and Ethics](#)
[The Code of Conduct](#)
[The Conduct Conversation](#)
[Student Conduct: More Than Meets the Eye](#)
[Student Conduct: An Introduction](#)

Student Conduct: More Than Meets the Eye

By smo17 On January 13, 2015 · [Add Comment](#)

I have only just recently started my internship with the Office of Student Conduct, and David gave me my first task. David tasked me with going around and talking with the various employees around the office to get a feel for what they do on a daily basis. Having had this opportunity has shown me several things:

- 1) The Office of Student Conduct staff here at Penn State are very dedicated, passionate and empathetic people who really do care about their jobs and the roles their jobs play in the daily lives of our students.
- 2) The Office of Student Conduct has a lot of irons in the fire and deals with many different policies, procedures and protocols on campus. I did not even know all of the services that the office offers, however through talking with staff members, I have outlined some of those services below:

Student Conduct:

-The Office of Student Conduct manages student conduct for all Penn State students with a few exceptions. When students accept their admittance to the University, they pledge to uphold the Code of Conduct. The code of conduct is a list of rules that Penn State believes students should abide by. These rules or ethical standards

come from Penn State's values. The code of conduct is far reaching in that as a member of the Penn State community, the code of conduct helps govern how our students should act as representatives of The Pennsylvania State University and therefore the rules can be enforced both on and off campus. Whether a student is in Florida on Spring Break, studying abroad in Europe or hanging out downtown in State College, the Code of Conduct is an enforceable code of ethical behavior for the Penn State student community. When the Office of Student Conduct learns of an alleged violation of the Code of Conduct, the goal of the Office is to bring students in to discuss the situation, give the student the opportunity to voice their opinion on the situation, recommend sanctions for any alleged violations and then give the student the opportunity to make a decision on whether or not the student is responsible for that alleged violation. *Currently all students are held to the Code of Conduct throughout the entire Penn State System and all the commonwealth campuses whether they are undergraduate or graduate students with the exception of the Penn State law and medical students. Penn State Law students and Medical students are held to their own code of conduct which is enforced by those two departments.

Administrative Directives:

– Administrative directives are University issued documents that limit contact between students. In a situation, a student can request to have an administrative directive drawn up by the Office of Student Conduct limiting contact or “no” contact between certain students. Sometimes these directives can be for a certain period of time or can stretch the entire time a student is enrolled at Penn State. Directives state that Student X will have no contact with Student Y directly or indirectly. The directives even include social media contact through any social media platform.

Mediation Services:

– The Office offers mediation services where parties can come and meet with a member of the Office of Student Conduct staff as a third party objective facilitator of the conversation. Mediation services can be offered for off campus roommate disputes, disputes between neighbors, disputes between students and a faculty or staff member, disputes between friends or even in clubs or organizations. Two members of the Office of Student Conduct have actually gone through

mediation training to handle such mediations.

Academic Integrity:

– When it comes to academic integrity violations, most colleges have a specific policy and procedure laid out to deal with that in the individual college. However the Office of Student Conduct works with the various colleges to examine their policies as well as advises the colleges on best practices for handling academic integrity violations. If the college deems it, the situation can also be handled by student conduct as opposed by the individual college.

Fraternity and Sorority Life:

– The office also has a connection with Fraternity and Sorority Life and has worked collaboratively with that department to create a guidebook governing Fraternity and Sorority Life protocols around student conduct. Student Conduct also gives lots of presentations around policies and procedures and hazing to these organizations as well.

Student Clubs and Organizations:

– The Office also works closely with student activities to have policies and procedures in place to govern conduct for student organizations as well. By making sure that clubs and organizations know campus policies and procedures as well as understand the mediation services that are available to them if an issue does arise in that club or organization.

General Outreach:

– Since the Office of Student Conduct is ultimately responsible for the Code of Conduct and disseminating that information to students on campus, the office does a lot of outreach to students to inform them of the code and what the code states. By giving presentations to New Student Orientation and in first year seminars, the office connects with students to encourage them to take responsibility for “Knowing the Code.”

Victim Services:

– The safety and well-being of the victim in any situation is at the forefront of concern for the Office of Student Conduct. The Office of Student Conduct acts as a conduit to ensure that victims are receiving the resources and support that they need to be successful on campus.

The conduct process at Penn State is very victim-centered in that the process seeks to empower the victim of a situation to have a voice in the situation and how the situation is ultimately addressed or handled within outlined parameters of the University.

Pre-Admission and Re-Enrollment:

– The Office also handles all requests for re-enrollment to Penn State University. So if a student has left Penn State or had to be separated from the University, the office will work with that student on deciding if the student should be re-admitted to campus. The office will advise students on what they could/should do and what steps are necessary to come back to Penn State (for instance: show proof of counseling for anger management if the student had to separate from Penn State because of violence). The office also looks at all applicants who apply to Penn State for Pre-Admission. One of the questions on the application is have you ever been convicted of a crime? The Office of Student Conduct will work with the person seeking admission into Penn State to figure out what the best course of action is to overcome those obstacles to be admitted into Penn State. While talking with the staff member who oversees this process, it was a pretty interesting conversation because a lot of people that do apply and answer yes to that question can sometimes feel desperation in not being given a second chance or given consideration based upon past actions.

However it is great to hear about the passion and excitement from the students when they are given a second chance and are admitted to Penn State. After all, Student Development is about challenging and supporting students and giving them the opportunity to learn from their actions and then move past them.

The office also serves as a major conduit for students and resources on campus. It only makes sense that working with students and meeting with students in situations that may violate the code of conduct anything can emerge from those conversations and it is important for all staff members in the office to be aware of the resources that exist on campus for students and refer those students to those resources if the need arises.

SHARE →

Tweet

Like 0

Leave a Reply

You must be [logged in](#) to post a comment.