

WAC 132M-126-080 Student conduct committee hearings—Presentations of evidence.

(1) Upon the failure of any party to attend or participate in a hearing, the student conduct committee may either:

- (a) Proceed with the hearing and issuance of its decision; or
- (b) Serve a decision of default in accordance with RCW 34.05.440.

(2) The hearing will ordinarily be closed to the public. However, if all parties agree on the record that some or all of the proceedings be open, the chair shall determine any extent to which the hearing will be open. If any person disrupts the proceedings, the chair may exclude that person from the hearing room.

(3) The chair shall cause the hearing to be recorded by a method they select, in accordance with RCW 34.05.449. That recording, or a copy, shall be made available to any party upon request. The chair shall assure maintenance of the record of the proceeding that is required by RCW 34.05.476, which shall also be available upon request for inspection and copying by any party. Other recording shall also be permitted in accordance with WAC 10-08-190.

(4) The chair shall preside at the hearing and decide procedural questions that arise during the hearing, except as overridden by a majority vote of the committee.

(5) The student conduct officer (unless represented by an assistant attorney general) shall present the college's case.

(6) All testimony shall be given under oath or affirmation. Evidence shall be admitted or excluded in accordance with RCW 34.05.452.

(7) In cases involving allegations of sex discrimination, the complainant and respondent may not directly question one another or other witnesses. In such circumstances, the chair will determine whether questions will be submitted to the chair, who will then ask questions of the parties and witnesses, or allow questions to be asked directly of any party or witnesses by a party's attorney or advisor. The committee chair may revise this process if, in the chair's determination, the questioning by any party, attorney, or advisor, becomes contentious or harassing.

(a) Before any question being posed to a party or witness, the chair must determine whether the question is relevant and not otherwise impermissible; and must explain any decision to exclude a question that is deemed not relevant or is otherwise impermissible. The chair will retain copies of any written questions provided by any party for the record.

(b) The chair must not permit questions that are unclear or harassing; but shall give the party an opportunity to clarify or revise such a question.

(c) The chair shall exclude, and the committee shall not consider legally privileged information unless the individual holding the privilege has waived the privilege. Privileged information includes, but is not limited to, information protected by the following:

- (i) Spousal/domestic partner privilege;
- (ii) Attorney-client communications and attorney work product privilege;
- (iii) Clergy privileges;
- (iv) Medical or mental health providers and counselor privileges;
- (v) Sexual assault and domestic violence advocate privileges; and
- (vi) Other legal privileges set forth in RCW 5.60.060 or federal law.

(d) The chair shall exclude and the committee shall not consider questions or evidence that relate to the complainant's sexual inter-

ests or prior sexual conduct, unless such question or evidence is offered to prove someone other than the respondent committed the alleged conduct, or is evidence of specific instances of prior sexual conduct with the respondent that is offered to prove consent to the alleged sex-based harassment. The fact of prior consensual sexual conduct between the complainant and respondent does not by itself demonstrate or imply the complainant's consent to the alleged sex-based harassment or preclude a determination that sex-based harassment occurred.

(8) Except in cases involving allegations of sex-based harassment, the chair has the discretion to determine whether a respondent may directly question any witnesses and, if not, to determine whether questions must be submitted to the chair to be asked of witnesses or to allow questions to be asked by an attorney or advisor for the respondent.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 34.05 RCW, RCW 28B.50.140(13), and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. § 1681 et seq. WSR 25-01-083, s 132M-126-080, filed 12/13/24, effective 1/13/25. Statutory Authority: RCW 28B.50.140. WSR 21-01-145, § 132M-126-080, filed 12/17/20, effective 1/17/21.]