

WAC 172-121-122 Full hearing procedures. (1) Scheduling and notification. Full hearings are used for allegations which, if substantiated by a preponderance of the evidence, could be a felony-level crime or could result in a sanction of suspension or expulsion. Following provision of the notice of allegations to the respondent, as set forth in WAC 172-121-110, the SRR office shall arrange for a prehearing conference unless the respondent has admitted responsibility under WAC 172-121-118.

(2) General provisions.

(a) Hearing authority: The CRO exercises control over hearing proceedings. All procedural questions are subject to the final decision of the CRO. The CRO chairs the disciplinary council.

(b) Closed hearings: All conduct review hearings will be closed. Admission of any person to a conduct review hearing shall be at the discretion of the CRO.

(c) Consolidation of hearings: In the event that one or more students are charged with the same misconduct arising from the same occurrence, the council may conduct separate hearings for each student or consolidate the hearings as practical, as long as consolidation does not impinge on the rights of any student.

(3) Appearance.

(a) Failure to appear: In cases where proper notice has been given but the respondent fails to attend a conduct review hearing, the council shall decide the case based on the information available, without the respondent's input. The council may not make an inference about the determination regarding responsibility based solely on a party's or witness's failure to appear at the hearing. However, nonappearance by a party may impact the evidence available for the council to make a decision.

(b) Appearance: The parties will be provided options for reasonable alternative arrangements if they do not wish to be present in the same room as the other student during the hearing. The parties may appear at the conduct review hearing in person via a method that allows the council to hear the parties and physically observe them while testifying, subject to the limits set forth below in (e) of this subsection. If a party does not appear at the hearing, the council will decide the case based on the information available. The council cannot draw an inference regarding responsibility based on the failure to appear or refusal to answer cross-examination or other questions.

(c) Advisors: The complainant and the respondent may be assisted by one advisor during conduct review hearings as described in WAC 172-121-105.

(d) Disruption of proceedings: Any person, including the respondent or advisor, who disrupts a hearing, may be excluded from the proceedings.

(e) Remote appearance. In the interest of fairness and expedience, the CRO may permit any person to appear by a method that allows the person to be seen and heard by the council.

(4) Standard of evidence. The council shall determine whether the respondent violated the student conduct code, as charged, based on a preponderance of the evidence. A preponderance means, based on the evidence admitted, whether it is more probable than not that the respondent violated the student conduct code.

(5) Prehearing conference. The SRR office or designee will arrange for a prehearing conference with the parties to advise them about the student conduct process. During the prehearing conference, the SRR office or designee will:

- (a) Review the written list of allegations;
- (b) Inform the respondent who is bringing the complaint against them;
- (c) Provide the respondent and, where applicable, complainant with a copy of the student conduct code and any other relevant EWU policies;
- (d) Explain the respondent's and, where applicable, complainant's rights and responsibilities under the student code;
- (e) Explain the conduct review procedures;
- (f) Explain possible penalties under the student conduct code;
- (g) Review the option for admitting responsibility under WAC 172-121-118;
- (h) Schedule a date for the full hearing; and
- (i) Address any preliminary matters or motions.

(6) Notice of hearing. Following the prehearing conference, the SRR director or designee shall schedule the hearing and serve the respondent and, where applicable, complainant with notice of the date, time, location, participants, and purpose of the hearing. At the discretion of the hearing officer, and where the rights of the parties will not be prejudiced thereby, all or part of any hearing may be conducted by telephone or other electronic means. Each party in the hearing must have an opportunity to participate effectively in, to hear, and if technically and economically feasible, to see the entire proceeding while it is taking place. The notices will include information about how to request accommodations or interpreters for any parties or witnesses. Any request for the presence of an emotional support animal or any other accommodation must be directed to disability support services and approved as a reasonable accommodation in advance of the hearing. A person may bring a certified therapy animal with a handler to a hearing. The notice of hearing must be served on the respondent and complainant at least seven business days prior to the hearing. The director may coordinate with the parties to facilitate scheduling, but is not required to do so.

(7) Evidence.

(a) Evidence: Pertinent records, exhibits and written statements may be accepted as information for consideration by the council in accordance with RCW 34.05.452. Council may review proposed exhibits prior to the hearing. Any investigation conducted by EWU will be admitted into evidence as long as the investigator testifies at the hearing. Evidence, including hearsay evidence, is admissible if in the judgment of the CRO it is the kind of evidence on which reasonably prudent persons are accustomed to rely in the conduct of their affairs. The CRO shall exclude evidence that is excludable on constitutional or statutory grounds or on the basis of evidentiary privilege recognized by Washington courts. The CRO may exclude irrelevant material. If not inconsistent with this section, the CRO shall refer to the Washington rules of evidence as guidelines for evidentiary rulings. Prior or subsequent conduct of the respondent may be considered in determining opportunity, intent, preparation, plan, identity, a pattern of conduct, credibility, or absence of mistake or lack of knowledge.

(b) The respondent has the right to view all material presented during the course of the hearing.

(c) All testimony of parties and witnesses shall be made under oath or affirmation. Any interpreter shall be proscribed the oath set forth in WAC 10-08-160.

(d) Documentary evidence may be received in the form of copies or excerpts, or by incorporation by reference.

(e) Official notice may be taken of (i) any easily verifiable facts such as dates or weather conditions, (ii) technical or scientific facts within EWU's specialized knowledge, such as enrollment status or class schedules, and (iii) codes or standards that have been adopted by an agency of the United States, of this state or of another state, or by a nationally recognized organization or association. Parties shall be notified either before or during hearing, or by reference in preliminary reports or otherwise, of the material so noticed and the sources thereof, including any staff memoranda and data, and they shall be afforded an opportunity to contest the facts and material so noticed. A party proposing that official notice be taken may be required to produce a copy of the material to be noticed.

(f) All rulings upon objections to the admissibility of evidence shall be made in accordance with the provisions of RCW 34.05.452.

(8) Discovery. Discovery is not permitted under the code, except for requests for documentary information from EWU. Either party may request EWU to produce relevant documents in EWU's possession as long as such request is submitted at least five business days prior to the hearing, absent extenuating circumstances. If the CRO determines the request is not relevant to the present allegation, the CRO may deny the request. EWU will provide the requested information prior to the hearing to the extent permitted by state and federal law.

(9) Subpoenas.

(a) Subpoenas may be issued by the presiding officer or an attorney consistent with RCW 34.05.446. However, for the protection of both parties, a party cannot subpoena the other party. A party may request an exemption from this rule by filing a written request with the presiding officer at least 10 days prior to the hearing. The presiding officer will provide a copy of the request to the other party and give them three days to respond. The presiding officer will then decide whether or not sufficient cause exists to grant an exemption to this rule and will inform the parties of the decision. Any subpoena issued must conform to EWU's subpoena form. Every subpoena shall identify the party causing issuance of the subpoena and shall state EWU's name and the title of the proceeding and shall direct the person to whom it is directed to attend and give testimony or produce designated books, documents, or things under their control.

A subpoena to a person to provide testimony at a hearing shall specify the time and place set for hearing.

(b) A subpoena may be served by any suitable person over 18 years of age, by exhibiting and reading it to the witness, or by giving them a copy thereof, or by leaving such copy at the place of their abode. When service is made by any other person than an officer authorized to serve process, proof of service shall be made by affidavit or declaration under penalty of perjury.

(c) The CRO, upon motion by a party or at their own discretion, may quash or modify the subpoena if it is unreasonable or oppressive. Subpoenas may not be used to threaten or intimidate parties or witnesses.

(10) Summary judgment. A motion for summary judgment may be granted and an order issued if the written record shows that there is no genuine issue as to any material fact and that the moving party is entitled to judgment as a matter of law.

(11) Witnesses.

(a) The complainant, respondent, and EWU's presenter may call witnesses at full hearings.

(b) The person who wishes to call a witness is responsible for ensuring that the witness is available and present at the time of the hearing. An attorney may subpoena a witness to appear at the hearing. Nonattorneys may request the CRO to subpoena witnesses in accordance with subsection (4) of this section. The CRO has the discretion to deny a request to issue a subpoena or to quash a subpoena issued by an attorney if the subpoena is unreasonable, oppressive, or does not conform to EWU's subpoena form.

(c) The CRO may exclude witnesses from the hearing room when they are not testifying. The CRO is not required to take the testimony of all witnesses called by the parties if such testimony may be irrelevant.

(d) All parties have the right to hear all testimony provided by witnesses during the hearing.

(e) The parties should inform the CRO of any possible need for an interpreter or any accommodation requests at least five business days prior to the hearing. The CRO will comply with WAC 10-08-150.

(12) Questioning:

(a) Through the CRO, the respondent's advisor, and EWU's presenter may ask questions of any witness, or party, including cross-examination questions. If the parties do not have an advisor, they may submit questions in writing to the CRO and the CRO may ask the questions. The CRO may also ask questions, but is not required to do so. The CRO may preclude any questions which they consider irrelevant.

(b) The council may ask their own questions of any witness or party called before them.

(13) Remote appearance. The CRO may accommodate concerns for personal safety, well-being, or fears of confrontation of any person appearing at the hearing by providing separate facilities, or by permitting participation by video conferencing, or other means that allows the council and parties to see and hear the party answering questions, as determined appropriate, subject to subsection (3)(b) of this section.

(14) Deliberations and sanctions. Following the hearing, the council will determine in closed session whether, by a preponderance of the evidence, the respondent violated the student conduct code based on the evidence presented at the hearing. If a student fails to appear, the council shall make a decision based on the information available. The council shall make its decisions based on a majority vote. If the council determines the respondent violated the student conduct code, the CRO shall then decide what sanctions and remedies shall be imposed. The CRO may review the respondent's previous disciplinary history for purposes of determining the appropriate sanction. In addition to sanctions under this code, if the student is also an employee of EWU, the CRO's decision may be forwarded to the student's supervisor to determine whether any employment actions outside of this code should be taken in accordance with EWU policy.

The council shall issue a decision including their findings, conclusions, and rationale. The decision shall address credibility issues if credibility or witness demeanor was a substantial factor in the council's decision. Credibility determinations may not be based on a person's status as a complainant, respondent, or witness. The findings shall be based exclusively on the evidence provided at the hearing. If the council finds the respondent violated the code, the CRO shall add the decision regarding sanctions and remedies to the council's decision. Such decisions should be issued within 10 business days from the date of the hearing. The written decision shall also:

(a) Be correctly captioned identifying EWU and the name of the proceeding;

(b) Designate all parties and representatives participating in the proceeding;

(c) Identify the allegations at issue;

(d) A description of the procedural steps taken, including notifications to the parties, interviews with the parties and witnesses, site visits, methods used to gather other evidence, and hearings held;

(e) Contain appropriate numbered findings of fact meeting the requirements in RCW 34.05.461;

(f) Contain appropriately numbered conclusions regarding the application of EWU policies and this code to the facts;

(g) A statement of, and rationale for, the result as to each allegation, including a determination regarding responsibility and any disciplinary sanctions imposed;

(h) Contain a statement describing rights to appeal and the procedures for appealing.

(15) Finality. The council's and CRO's decision becomes final at either the conclusion or the appeal process under this code, if an appeal is filed, or if an appeal is not filed, the date on which an appeal would no longer be timely.

(16) Notification to the respondent. The CRO shall serve the respondent with a copy of the decision and notice of the right to appeal.

(17) Notification to the complainant. Where applicable and to the extent permitted by law, simultaneous with notification of the decision to the respondent, the complainant shall be provided with written notice of:

(a) The university's determination as to whether misconduct occurred;

(b) The complainant's right to appeal, if any;

(c) Any change to the results that occurs prior to the time that such results become final and when such results become final (20 U.S.C. 1092(f));

(d) Information regarding the discipline of the respondent will not be released unless:

(i) The information contained in the record directly relates to the complainant, such as a no contact order with the complainant; or

(ii) Any remedies provided to the complainant.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 28B.35.120(12). WSR 24-22-047, s 172-121-122, filed 10/28/24, effective 11/28/24; WSR 23-11-109, § 172-121-122, filed 5/19/23, effective 6/19/23; WSR 23-01-027, § 172-121-122, filed 12/9/22, effective 1/9/23; WSR 22-01-090, § 172-121-122, filed 12/12/21, effective 1/12/22; WSR 21-01-102, § 172-121-122, filed 12/11/20, effective 1/11/21; WSR 20-19-046, § 172-121-122, filed 9/10/20, effective 10/11/20; WSR 20-01-032, § 172-121-122, filed 12/6/19, effective 1/6/20. Statutory Authority: RCW 28B.35.120(12) and 42.56.070. WSR 19-01-047, § 172-121-122, filed 12/13/18, effective 1/13/19. Statutory Authority: RCW 28B.35.120(12). WSR 17-17-031, § 172-121-122, filed 8/9/17, effective 9/9/17.]