

Student Rights and Judicial Hearing Guidelines

The Worcester State University Judicial System has been set up with fairness and consistency as its ideals. It is the philosophy of this system that the discipline process is one of education, rather than one based on punitive means. The purpose of a judicial hearing is to help students to learn the value of their rights and to realize the importance of their responsibility as student citizens of the campus community. For this reason, students coming before a hearing officer or board will be found “responsible” or “not responsible”, rather than “guilty” or “not guilty”.

As a student appearing before a hearing officer or board you have the following rights:

- ❖ To remain silent during the hearing
- ❖ To hear all testimony presented
- ❖ To question the person(s) reporting the violation(s)
- ❖ To bring witness(es) on your behalf. Please note that admission of any witness(es) or advisor is at the discretion of the judicial officer and/or Judicial Administrator
- ❖ To appeal the decision to the Judicial Administrator in writing within five (5) calendar days of the date of the decision letter. The appeal process is outlined on pages 28-29 of the Code of Conduct.

The following will occur during the hearing:

- ❖ The complainant, accused student(s), and witnesses (if any) will have the opportunity to tell their accounts of what took place.
- ❖ The complainant, the accused and the judicial officer or body shall have the privilege of presenting witnesses, subject to the right of questioning by anyone present (except an advisor).
- ❖ Following the question/answer period, the hearing officer or board may ask for a brief recess to consider what other questions may be asked. At this point, the accused students and witnesses will be asked to wait outside the hearing.
- ❖ Accused students will be given the opportunity to reconsider how they have pleaded to the charges against them.
- ❖ Closing statements will be made by the accused student(s), and complainant. The hearing officer or board will retire to make decisions about responsibility and sanctions if appropriate.

After the hearing:

- ❖ Accused student(s) will receive a *Student Result of a Judicial Hearing* letter outlining the decision and sanction(s) within a few days of the hearing.
- ❖ Student(s) have a right to appeal a decision made by a hearing officer or board. A request will be denied if does not meet the one of the criteria listed on page 28-29 of the Code of Conduct.
- ❖ Parents/guardians may be notified if a student is under the age of 21 and has been found responsible for violating the University’s Alcohol or Drug policies. In addition, the sanctions of removal from housing, suspension or expulsion from the University may be accompanied by parental notification.

If you have any further questions, please contact Jillian Anderson, Coordinator of Judicial Affairs at (508) 929-8648 or stop by her office Student Center room 326 (third floor).