

Student Rights & Conduct 2024-2025

This document describes the policies and procedures governing student rights and conduct at Southwestern Illinois College, Community College District #522 (SWIC). It also describes the process students follow to file a grievance concerning academic, administrative or equal opportunity complaints. More detailed information concerning the policies, procedures and programs of the college may be obtained from the SWIC Catalog and Student Handbook.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Southwestern Illinois College (SWIC) students have the same rights as those accorded all citizens of the United States and the state of Illinois, including the right to free, open and responsible discussion and inquiry, and the right to a quality education in a program of study under competent instructors.

SWIC is obligated to its residents and the state to provide an environment which is conducive to the academic and personal development of its students. This obligation requires SWIC to conduct its affairs in an orderly, uninterrupted manner. It is an expectation for SWIC students, staff, employees and visitors to uphold the decorum of the college environment at all times.

Student conduct on campus and at all college-sponsored activities is governed by the rules of the community. Violations of federal, state and local laws at any college-sponsored activity, on or off campus, will be considered a violation of the Student Code of Conduct and violators will be subject to disciplinary action.

Violations include, but are not limited to:

- violation of Board policy;
- acts/behaviors that interfere with the purposes and processes of the college community or that deny the rights of any member of the college community, to include the right to have a learning environment and any college-sponsored activities free from disruption;
- causing or threatening to cause harm to an individual either directly or indirectly by action or verbal behavior;
- academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism and forgery; failure or refusal to follow clinical practice standards; and soliciting, aiding, abetting, concealing or attempting such acts. Plagiarism is defined as the use or close imitation of the language, thoughts or work of another to include copying, quoting, paraphrasing and using another's creation, images or illustrations to represent them as your own work without proper acknowledgment of the source. Plagiarism includes the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to produce content and/or research, when an assignment does not explicitly call or allow for it without proper attribution, citation, or authorization;
- improper, unauthorized or personal use of college computer laboratories, equipment, internet services or software; the modifying or copying of college software; and the use of illegal or unauthorized software to include Title 17, United States Code, the Digital Millennium Copyright Act of 1998, and the Copyright Term Extension Act;
- trespass is defined as entering any area that is obviously forbidden, or remaining in a forbidden area after receiving notice; presenting false documents or falsely representing identity; and interfering with lawful use or enjoyment of any area including but not limited to accessing restricted/limited access areas, bypassing control systems through improper means or system compromise;
- sexual misconduct refers to a wide range of behaviors committed without consent or against a person's will. Sexual misconduct may vary in severity and consist of behaviors including, but not limited to: sexual or gender-based harassment or sexual violence by verbal, nonverbal or physical means, stalking or any form of retaliation;
- stalking, bullying, intimidation or other means of harassment by verbal, written, physical or electronic means; using social media to communicate an indirect threat or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment or interfering with educational or work performance;
- discrimination based the person's race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, gender identity, gender expression, gender transition, transgender status, gender nonconformity, or sexual orientation), national origin, age, disability or genetic information or veteran status;
- nuisance activities such as the use of loud, abusive or otherwise improper language; loitering; improper assembling; creating any hazard and/or safety concern to people or things; blocking access ways; improper disposal of rubbish; and lewd or obscene conduct as defined by law;
- disrespect to authority;
- possession, consumption and/or being under the influence of alcoholic beverages, except at Foundation-sponsored events and off-campus activities where such possession and consumption meet requirements of state law and where the location of the activity does not prohibit such beverages;
- sale, use, possession, distribution and/or being under the influence of marijuana to include medical marijuana or any other illicit or synthetic substance, including any controlled substance prescribed or not prescribed by a licensed physician;
- illegal gambling;
- loss, theft or damage of college property or property of members of the college community, including failure to return college supplies, equipment, software and library material and misuse of the MetroLink Ridership Program;
- failure to meet financial obligations relative to college transactions, issuing of fraudulent checks or committing deceptive practices such as counterfeiting, fraud or false impersonation;
- the sale, transfer, possession, use or discharge of explosives, fireworks, ammunition, firearms, dangerous chemicals, hazardous substances or other weapons (to include simulated devices) except as specially permitted by law and college officials;
- failure to give information or giving false or misleading information in response to requests from college officials to include failure to identify, non-compliance and interference with reasonable verbal or written instructions;
- misuse of camera phones, to include but not limited to, electronic capture devices or unauthorized videotaping in an area where the expectation of privacy exists; to photograph copyrighted materials; or to compromise academic work or tests;
- disorderly conduct defined as knowingly acting in an unreasonable manner so as to alarm or disturb another and to provoke a breach of the peace; failure to follow verbal/written directions/sanctions per discipline meetings or direction of SWIC officials.
- A student against whom (the respondent) an order of protection has been issued by a court may be subject to removal from classes to assure compliance with the order.

STUDENT COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

Student grievances may involve academic matters, administrative matters or discrimination. When a student has a complaint involving academic matters, to include grading concerns, they should first consult with the instructor to whom the concern applies. Every attempt should be made to resolve the concern on an informal basis. If no resolution is reached, the student should then proceed through the following chain of command: Department Chairperson/Coordinator Department or Division's Dean, Chief Academic Officer.

When a student has a complaint involving administrative matters, the student should attempt to resolve the complaint on an informal basis by consulting with the responsible administrator. If no resolution is reached, the student should then proceed through the following chain of command: Department Associate Director or Director Chief Student Services Officer

All complaints that involves student to student should be reported to the Chief Student Services Officer. Complaints can be submitted to studentaffairs@swic.edu.

Grade appeals are considered a special category of student grievance. A student who wishes to appeal a grade must contact his or her instructor within 30 calendar days after the start of the regular semester (fall, spring or summer) following the recording of the disputed grade. If the student is not satisfied with the instructor's response, then the student must contact the relevant department chair/coordinator in writing within the following 10 school days. If the instructor is unavailable due to a planned absence, winter, or summer break, then the student must submit their grade appeal to the relevant department chair/coordinator or dean within the 30-day time period with the understanding that resolution will be pursued when the instructor returns to campus. The 30-day time limit may be waived by the Chief Academic Officer (CAO) when extraordinary circumstances are applicable. In any event, this grade appeal procedure is not to be used for a review of the judgment of an instructor in assessing the quality of a student's work.

Grievances involving discrimination based the student's race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, gender identity, gender expression, gender transition, transgender status, gender nonconformity, or sexual orientation), national origin, age, disability or genetic information or veteran status; should be made to the Title IX Coordinator, who will manage the grievance. Specific college processes exist and conform with state and federal statutes governing such cases.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

A student who is accused of violating the Student Code of Conduct will be referred to the Chief Student Services Officer or designee, who will determine whether the student is responsible of committing the violation. If the student is found responsible using the weight of the evidence, the Chief Student Services Officer will impose the appropriate sanction(s). The student will be notified in writing of the decision within 15 school days after the completion of any necessary investigation, unless circumstances require additional time for consideration.

If the student disagrees with the action taken, the student may request an appeal before the Hearing Board Committee. The request must be received within ten school days from the date the sanction notification was provided. The request for a hearing must be in writing and submitted to studentaffairs@swic.edu.

The student will receive a notice of a hearing date within 15 school days from the date of requested submission. The hearing date will be scheduled to take place within 45 school days from the date of the written sanction. Each approved appeal will be heard by a panel which will include a combination of students, faculty, administrators, and/or staff. All of whom are approved by the College President.

The written decision of the Hearing Committee will be communicated to the student and CSSO or designee. The Hearing Committee is the final authority on the matter.

These procedures are intended to serve as general guidelines and substantial compliance with them will be considered to meet the requirements of the process. Procedures can be altered, in extenuating situations when necessary, at the discretion of the Chief Student Services Officer.

- The complainant and the respondent student will each have the opportunity to attend a hearing, if approved by the Hearing Board Committee Chair, before a properly trained hearing board that protects the safety of all parties and promotes accountability if a hearing is granted the following will apply:
- The complainant and the respondent will have timely notice for meetings at which time both will have an equal opportunity to present any relevant information;
- The institution will allow for timely access to the complainant, the respondent and appropriate officials to any information that will be used after the fact-finding investigation but during formal and informal disciplinary meetings and hearings;
- The institutional disciplinary procedures will not be conducted by officials who have a conflict of interest or bias for or against the complainant or the respondent;
- The institution provides the same opportunities to have others present during an institutional disciplinary proceeding. The complainant and the respondent will have the opportunity to be advised by a personal advisor of their choice, at their expense, at any stage of the process and to be accompanied by that advisor at any meeting or proceeding; However, the institution may establish restrictions regarding the extent which the advisor may participate in the proceedings, as long as the restrictions apply equally to both parties;
- Decision is based on the weight of evidence standard, i.e. "more likely than not to have occurred" standard;
- The complainant and the respondent will be notified simultaneously in writing of the results of any disciplinary proceeding, as well as any changes to those results or disciplinary actions prior to the time that such results become final; and
- All decisions made by the Hearing Board Committee are final.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Sanctions for academic dishonesty or for behavior disruptive to the educational process may be imposed by faculty members in their instructional role. Sanctions for academic dishonesty include a failing grade on an individual assignment, examination or course. Serious matters of academic dishonesty or disruptive behavior may cause the student to be withdrawn from the instructor's course or a program of study. A student found to have violated the Academic Dishonesty Clause within the Student Code of Conduct policy may be denied access to certain courses or programs, including the loss of internship privileges, needed to complete a program of study. Sanctions may vary depending upon the program of study due to other regulations that the program may be governed under.

SANCTIONS OF STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

The Chief Student Services Officer or designee may impose the following sanctions upon students found to have violated the Student Code of Conduct:

- Disciplinary Reprimand: An oral conference that is documented or a written reprimand; both noting the seriousness of the violation of the Student Code of Conduct.
- Probation: A status for a specific period of time which places the student on notice that further misconduct may result in more serious penalty.
- Social Probation: Probationary status that also restricts the student from specified activities, equipment or facilities.
- No Contact Order: May be issued to prohibit making contact with (staying away from) the victim/complainant, to include no physical or nonphysical contact whether direct or indirect (including but not limited to, telephone calls, text messages, mail, email, faxes, written notes or through other electronic means [social media], or through third parties who may know or may not know about the restriction).
- Suspension: Involuntary separation from the college for a stated period of time or until stated conditions are met. Days on suspension are unexcused absences from class.
- Expulsion: Permanent removal from SWIC.
- Assessment for Restitution: Payment for restoration of property or to resolve financial obligations to the college. Failure to pay assessed amounts will prevent the student from obtaining records and registering for classes.
- Separations or Restrictions: A student may be separated or restricted from enrollments on a temporary basis pending the completion of proceedings relevant to the Student Code of Conduct. Students will be so notified.

TO REPORT INCIDENTS

Students who feel threatened or intimidated, who are harmed or who observe violations of the Student Code of Conduct may report the incident as appropriate:

- Please non-emergency concerns: Studentaffairs@swic.edu or call 618-641-5120
- For immediate matters: Contact Public Safety office or campus administrative office.
 - Belleville Campus - 618-235-2700, ext. 5555
 - Sam Wolf Granite City Campus - 618-931-0600, ext. 7372
 - Red Bud Campus - 618-282-6682, ext. 8888
- In general: To an administrator, faculty member or staff member for assistance and referral.
- For discrimination and sexual harassment/misconduct (including sexual violence): Sexual assault (sexual violence) is a violation of federal, state and local law, and SWIC policy. Therefore, criminal sanctions by the criminal justice system and administrative sanctions by the college may be imposed. Guidelines for proceedings are available in the office of the Title IX Coordinator. You can contact the Title IX Coordinator by calling 618-235-2700, ext. 5120, sending an email to TitleIX@swic.edu or visiting the Office of the Chief Student Services Officer, Information Sciences Building Room 1050, 2500 Carlyle Avenue, Belleville, IL 62221. The institution's sexual harassment policy and formal complaint form for discrimination can be found in Board policies and can be obtained in hard copy from the Office of Human Resources at the at the Belleville Campus, Main Complex, Room 1246, 2500 Carlyle Avenue, Belleville, IL 62221.

2500 Carlyle Ave. • Belleville, IL 62221
618-235-2700, ext. 5120 • swic.edu
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