

## PROCEDURE

Effective Date: October 31, 2023

Approved By: Vice president, Enrollment & Student Services

Authority: [POL-U8610.02](#)

### **PRO-U8610.02A ADDRESSING VIOLATIONS OF STUDENT CLUB POLICIES, STANDARDS, AND PROCEDURES**

#### **I. INTRODUCTION**

This procedure facilitates the fair resolution of alleged violations of POL- U8610.02 or STN-U8610.02. Western Washington University is committed to timely and effective administration of this process, adhering to principles of due process.

For actions regarding individual student's behavior, see the [Student Conduct Code](#).

For actions regarding alleged discrimination, see the University's non-discrimination policy ([POL-U1600.02](#)) and related procedure.

#### **II. DEFINITIONS**

1. Complainant: Person (or group) filing the initial complaint.
2. Respondent: The student club alleged to have violated POL-U8610.02 or STN-U8610.02.
3. Preponderance of the Evidence: The standard of evidence used to determine whether the allegations occurred. Preponderance of evidence means it is more likely than not that the allegation(s) occurred.
4. Club Activities: An activity or action taken by one or more club member(s) acting on behalf of the club.
5. Club Manager: A staff member in a Campus Affiliate Department (see STN-U8610.02) whose responsibilities include providing advising and operational/administrative support for a recognized student club.
6. Organizational Governing Body – A regional, national or international association or body affiliated with any student club. Examples may include national headquarters of charitable organizations, national governing bodies of sports organizations, national honor societies, etc.
7. Advisor/Club Advisor: An individual designated by the Student Club or the Club Activities Office as the club's advisor. If there is no Student Club Advisor designated by the Student Club, the university may choose a designee.

#### **III. PURPOSE AND JURISDICTION**

The Club Activities Office and Office of Student Life are responsible for holding student clubs accountable to this policy and standard.

A Student Club facing an alleged violation under this procedure can choose to dissolve/surrender recognition during the adjudication process. However, this does not preclude the University from continuing the investigation and adjudication. Student Clubs that have lost University recognition may still be subject to this procedure.

Conduct subject to the procedure

This procedure applies to conduct by a student club in any of the following situations:

- 1) The conduct takes place at Western Washington University.
- 2) The conduct occurs on property owned, controlled, rented, leased, or used (on or off campus) by the club or any of its members for a club event.
- 3) The conduct occurs off campus between members of the university community and is alleged to have a significantly negative impact on the learning or work environment of one or more members of the University community or a University event.
- 4) The conduct occurs during an activity paid for by the student club or a club member paying on behalf of the student club.
- 5) The conduct is related to initiation or admission into, affiliation with, or as a condition for continued membership in the Student Club or is a violation of the Western Washington University Policy on Preventing and Responding to Hazing ([POL-U7100.04](#)).

The conduct described above includes actions that occur entirely or partially via electronic means, including online and via social media. Student Club members should be aware of the university's requirements regarding [Ethical Conduct with WWU Network and Computing Resources and Responsible Computing](#). Online conduct can subject a Student Club to allegations of violations of club standards, policies that govern clubs, or procedural violations as defined in POL-U8610.02.

Responsibility of individual students may be addressed separately

Students who are members of a Student Club are subject as individuals to the WWU Student Conduct Code and may be held individually responsible for behaviors also attributed to the Student Club. Individuals who are members of a Club may, through their actions, subject the Student Club to disciplinary action whether or not those individuals are also found responsible under the Student Conduct Code.

Anonymous complaints

Although anonymous complaints are permitted, doing so may limit the University ability to investigate and respond to a complaint. Those who are aware of misconduct are encouraged to report it as quickly as possible to the Club Activities Office.

**IV. COMPLAINT PROCEDURE**University communication with Club Leaders

The University's primary means of communication with Student Clubs is via email to the Club Leaders' WWU email addresses. Student Club Leaders are responsible for all communication delivered to their WWU email address. The University may also send copies of correspondence regarding complaints to the Student Club Advisor and/or any Organizational Governing Body of the Student Club, but is not required to do so.

**Action by: Complainant**

1. Filing a complaint: When an individual, or a club executive board acting on behalf of its club, believes that a student club has violated a policy, standard, or procedure governing student club actions, they may submit a written complaint to the Club Activities Office via email at [as.clubs@wwu.edu](mailto:as.clubs@wwu.edu). The

complaint should identify the club that allegedly committed the violation, the policy, standard, or procedure allegedly violated, the behavior that constitutes a violation, and a summary of the evidence indicating that the club is responsible for the violation.

**Action by: Club Manager**

2. Emails the complainant to confirm receipt of the complaint.
3. If the complaint alleges a violation of an applicable policy or standard that is administrative in nature, for example failing to annually update the club constitution and have the required number of officers on file with the Club Activities Office, the issue may be easily remedied and does not require investigation. Upon receiving such a complaint, the Club Activities Office or Campus Affiliate Department will work with the Club Leadership to remedy the administrative issue. If the Club's officers do not act in a timely manner to remedy the administrative issue, the Club Activities Office or Campus Affiliate Department may take action to suspend the club until the issue is properly addressed.
4. If the complaint alleges a violation that, if true, is not administrative in nature and easily remedied, the Club Manager forwards the violation to the Office of Student Life.
5. If the alleged violation is of a significant enough nature, the Club Manager may impose an interim directive that all club activities will be halted until after the initial conduct meeting with the Club Manager. The Club Manager will make this determination in consultation with the Executive Director for Student Life.

**Action by: Office of Student Life**

6. Contacts the complainant to communicate that the Office of Student Life is handling the complaint.
7. Contacts the Club Leaders to:
  - a. Inform them that OSL has received a complaint that the club violated applicable policy, standards, or procedure;
  - b. Inform them that the Club Leaders are required to meet with the Club Manager regarding the allegation and the administrative process for addressing it;
  - c. Schedule the initial conduct meeting with the Club Leaders, providing at least three business days of notice.
8. Conducts the meeting with Club Leaders to:
  - a. Review the process for addressing the complaint;
  - b. Answer questions from Club Leaders about the process;
  - c. Review the allegations with the Club Leaders and gather any additional relevant information.
9. The Office of Student life may continue an interim directive halting club activities or may impose other interim measures while the complaint is being investigated and decided.

Conduct meetings may be held in person or via Zoom, Teams, or telephone. The Office of Student Life makes the final determination regarding when and how the meeting takes place.

**Action by: Student Club Leaders**

10. Attend the meeting with the Office of Student Life to:
  - a. Review the complaint
  - b. Share information regarding the alleged incident(s).

Conduct meetings and decisions take place whether Club Leaders are present. If Club Leaders cannot attend the scheduled conduct meeting, it is the Club's responsibility to notify the Office of Student Life in advance and to request rescheduling.

### **Action by: Office of Student Life**

Following the meeting with Club Leaders, the Office of Student Life:

11. Determines whether the allegations in the complaint occurred, whether the Club is responsible for the violation, and any appropriate sanction(s) or actions for the Club.
12. Issues a decision letter. The complainant and Club Leaders are separately notified of the determination made by the Office of Student Life within seven business days of the Club's meeting with OSL.
13. Sanctions (if applicable): A Student Club that is found in violation of University policy, standards, or procedure may receive sanctions that require action before the student club violation review process can be concluded. This may include attending workshops or meetings, engaging in corrective action, and/or other activities that provide needed learning for the Club and remedy harm caused. Sanctions can also include temporary suspension of club recognition and dissolution of the club. At the discretion of the Office of Student Life, the complainant may not be notified of sanctions imposed.

### **Right to Appeal**

A club found in violation of policy, procedure, or standards may appeal the finding or sanctions imposed. Appeals must be made in writing to the Office of Student Life, [student.life@wwu.edu](mailto:student.life@wwu.edu), within seven business days after the club is notified of the finding. The appeal must clearly and concisely state the reason for the appeal.

Decisions on appeal will be made based only on the written record; no hearing is held. Unless it was unavailable at the time of the original decision, no new information may be introduced on appeal.

Grounds for appeal include:

- i. The presence of new information that was unavailable at the time of the original decision and that could substantively impact the original decision.
- ii. The original decision was not made following the proscribed procedure, causing a significant impact on the decision.
- iii. The decision did not properly consider the information presented.
- iv. The sanctions imposed are significantly disproportionate to the violation(s) committed.

The Executive Director of Student Life or their designee reviews the appeal. Where the sanction imposed is dissolution of the club, the appeal is reviewed by three individuals, including the Executive Director of Student Life or their designee, and two additional people appointed by the Executive Director.

No sanction will begin while an appeal is pending. However, interim measures may continue during this time.

The Office of Student Life separately notifies the Club Leaders and complainant via email of the decision made on appeal.

**V. INTERFERING WITH A COMPLAINT PROCESS PROHIBITED**

Interfering with a university complaint process, including the behaviors identified in WAC 526-21-150, is a violation of the Student Conduct Code. This includes making a false report or claim and retaliating against a complainant or witness.

A finding that there was no violation of student club policies, standards, or procedures cannot by itself be the basis for a charge of a false complaint.