Student Conduct
OFFICE OF STUDENT LIFE

Partnership Process for Student Organizations

What is the Partnership Process?

- The Partnership Process is an alternative resolution option for organizations, essentially a courtesy to the organizations who are honest and cooperative. The Partnership Process allows organizations to accept responsibility for their actions and to redirect negative behavior, while working collaboratively with Student Conduct in creating a mutually beneficial plan for sanctioning and improvement.
- In short, this model empowers the student organization to self-govern, self-investigate, and self-disclose hazing behavior and work collaboratively with the university on appropriate outcomes.

Is the Partnership Process used in all organizational cases? What if we don't want to go through this?

- The Partnership Process is not used in all instances of misconduct. Student Conduct will decide whether it is appropriate for the organization to use the Partnership Process or must proceed through the formal disciplinary process (which may include organizational-wide interviews and other investigatory methods).
- Certain incidents are not appropriate for the Partnership Process, such as violence, sexual assault, and any other offenses Student Conduct deems inappropriate. In addition, Student Conduct may stop the Partnership Process at any time when health or safety may be at risk or when the organization fails to cooperate with the Partnership Process in good faith.
- As the organization, you will be made aware at the outset whether this process is available to your organization or not.

Where did OSU come up with this?

- The Partnership Process is modeled after similar restorative disciplinary models at Louisiana State University, University of Texas at Austin, and Tulane University. Those institutions and their students have found this model highly successful. Those institutions also have similar student organization communities to Ohio State. Student Conduct adapted a similar model in 2012.

Why should we do this partnering anyways?

- By partnering with the university, your organization is able to self-investigate. You are able to tell Student Conduct which individuals may be behaving inappropriately (perhaps there are just a few individuals acting inappropriately instead of the entire organization). You know your members better than we do, and you can hold your members accountable even better. We are not asking you to do our job for us. We are allowing you to self-govern.
- Partnering with the university by providing us honest information may also avoid an organizational-wide investigation by Student Conduct. By proving forthright information through the Partnership Process, Student Conduct is willing to cooperatively discuss a sanction and improvement plan for your organization.

Who can I bring with me during this process?

- Per the Code of Student Conduct, you may bring one advisor (parent, attorney, etc) with you during the process.
- We might ask that you bring your entire leadership to a meeting with Student Conduct, such as your president, vice president, etc.
- We may also involve organizational advisor/advocates and/or university staff that may be appropriate for developing sanctions.

How can the partnership process end?

- Obstructing the process, being uncooperative, harassment, retaliation, and/or not acting in good faith by students, advisors, and/or oversight offices at any point in the partnership process will lead immediately to the formal disciplinary process.
- Otherwise, the process may end naturally with a collaborative sanctioning approach between the university and the student organization.

<u>STEPS OF THE PARTNERSHIP PROCESS (See Addendum for Flowchart)</u>

1. **Incident Report Received:** Student Conduct is made aware of credible evidence indicating hazing behavior may have occurred.

2. **Notice:** Notice is sent to organization's president or designee by Student Conduct.

3. **Preliminary Conference:** Within three business days from when notice is sent to the organization, a Preliminary Conference is held with organizational leadership. At this preliminary meeting, the formal disciplinary process and the Partnership Process are explained in full. **The organization selects a resolution method at this meeting.** If no method is selected, the formal disciplinary process will be used.

4. **Second Meeting:** If the Partnership Process is selected, within three business days of the preliminary conference, the organizational leadership will meet with Student Conduct for a second meeting.
    - **At the second meeting, the self-report is due to Student Conduct.** The self-report will be discussed and clarified as needed. If the self-report does not align with the incident report or if any false or misleading information is provided, the organization immediately moves to the formal disciplinary process.
    - At the conclusion of the meeting, the organization is charged and accepts responsibility.
    - Student Conduct explains next steps, specifically self-created sanctions by the organization. Student Conduct will provide the organization with the sanction checklist.
    - Obstructing the process, being uncooperative, harassment, retaliation, and/or not acting in good faith at any point in the partnership process will lead immediately to the formal disciplinary process.

5. **Third Meeting:** Within five business days of the second meeting with Student Conduct, organizational leadership will have a third (and potentially final) meeting with Student Conduct.
    - **At this meeting, organizational leadership will present their self-created sanctions and discuss a plan for improvement with Student Conduct.**
    - If the organization does not propose reasonable sanctions in line with sanction expectations, Student Conduct may, at its discretion, choose to provide three additional business days for edits and improvement.
    - Obstructing the process, being uncooperative, harassment, retaliation, and/or not acting in good faith at any point in the partnership process will lead immediately to the formal disciplinary process.

- Because the organization has accepted responsibility for their charges, the organization has the right to appeal under the Code of Student Conduct, solely on the basis that the sanctions are grossly disproportionate to the violation(s).

- If the organization misses any deadlines or fails to comply with its self-created sanctions, the organization may be charged with "Failure to Comply" and will proceed to the formal disciplinary process.

ORGANIZATIONAL SANCTIONING

Once the organization has accepted responsibility and moves onto the sanctioning phase of the Partnership Process, Student Conduct encourages the use of the "Sanction Checklist." Student Conduct also encourages involving advisors and/or advocates to assist in developing appropriate sanctions.

SANCTION CHECKLIST: The guiding checklist of factors ensures the organization and its students understand the rationale behind sanction(s). Key questions are provided to help in defining each factor and to assist organizations in developing their sanctions. While a sanction from each category is not required, the areas help students in thinking about self-created sanctions.

- <u>Disciplinary Sanction</u>: a formal reprimand, probation, suspension, or dismissal must be given to the organization

  ADDITIONAL sanctions from the following areas (all areas should be considered and included if possible)

- <u>Restorative Sanction:</u> How are you addressing the victims you have identified? How are the organization and its members going to repair the harm done? How are you refocusing on your mission and purpose? How are you going to take responsibility for your actions?

- <u>Deterrence Sanction</u>: What specific actions are you going to take to prevent victims from being re-harmed or future individuals from becoming victims? How are you going to eliminate this process, event, tradition, or incident from you organization? How will you deter this behavior in the future? How do you ensure victims are not becoming perpetrators? Are there certain factors or characteristics, whether environmental or membership-related, that need to be re-thought moving forward? How do you change the culture of your organization and the culture at OSU?

- <u>Educational Sanction</u>: How are you learning from what occurred? What reflection have you done? How are you educating your members and others in the community to learn from what occurred?

- <u>Ethical Sanction</u>: Identify your individual values and the organization's values. How do these align or not align with one other? Why did this incident occur, and how did it or did it not align with your values? How do other people view your organization based on this incident? What specific steps or actions will you take to be in line with your values? If this incident was published in a newspaper, how would you feel? How would you explain this incident and your actions to your family?

- <u>Individual Sanctions:</u> Are there individuals within the organization that were the driving force behind the behavior? Are there individuals or leaders who could have done something about this behavior but chose not to (known as bystanders)? How are you addressing these individuals? How are you assisting in their learning? If remaining within your organization, how are you ensuring these individual do not become re-offenders?

- <u>Prior Organizational Case History, including "FYI" cases</u>: Looking at the prior history of your organization's behavior, what outcomes are needed to prevent future behavior, remedy the harm, educate the members, and instill integrity in your members? Should sanctions be elevated given consistent past, similar behavior?

POSSIBLE SANCTIONS: It is relevant to be aware of what sanctions could be instituted under the Code of Student Conduct. Under the Code of Student Conduct, organizational sanctions may include, but are not limited to:

- Formal reprimand, disciplinary probation, suspension, or dismissal
- Loss of privileges or university restrictions
- No contact orders
- Reflection papers /writing assignments
- Integrity seminars
- Community service
- Restitution
- Visits/meetings with police
- Drug or alcohol awareness programs (BASICS, CASICS, CHOICES).
- Advisor and/or oversight group notification
- Educational sanctions, including but not limited to, speaking at conferences, meetings with advisor or staff, monthly check-ins with Student Conduct, educational programming or workshops focused on hazing, risk management, sexual violence awareness, bystander behavior or other relevant topics
- Creation of new orientation, new member, and/or member development guidelines
- Other sanctions as the hearing body deems appropriate
- Additional sanctions from oversight groups

Student Conduct Partnership Process Flowchart

Incident Report received.

Notice sent to organization.

Preliminary Conference held with organization within three business days of notice being sent.

The two resolution options are discussed. Organization selects a resolution method at this meeting.

Second Meeting within three business days of Preliminary Meeting:
Self-report is due to Student Conduct.
Organization is charged and accepts responsibility.
Org is provided sanction checklist for next meeting.

If the self-report does not align with the incident report or if any false or misleading information is provided, the organization immediately moves to the formal disciplinary process.

Third Meeting within 5 business days of Second Meeting:
Organization presents self-created sanctions and discusses plan for improvement with Student Conduct. If organization does not propose reasonable sanctions in line with sanction expectations, three additional business days may be provided for edits and improvement.

Obstructing the process, being uncooperative, harassment, retaliation, and/or not acting in good faith at any point in the partnership process will lead immediately to the formal disciplinary process.

Partnership Process concludes.