

SUGGESTED REVISIONS – March 2024

Unprofessional Behavior, Disruptive Behavior, and Lack of Academic Progress

This policy concerns three academic issues: unprofessional behavior according to the expectations of an academic discipline, disruptive behavior, and lack of academic progress. Violations of non-academic behavioral standards are to be considered under the Code of Student Conduct and, if necessary, referred to the Dean of Students.

Unprofessional Behavior. Violations of conduct relative to expected standards of professional behavior within an academic discipline will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the University. Violations are to be reported to the dean of the school/college in which the student is enrolled, who will be responsible for investigating all allegations and recommending appropriate disciplinary actions.

While the above applies to all students, graduate students at TCU occupy a unique position in the student body. They are more mature individuals with a defined perspective for the future and a high degree of both motivation and ability. In some instances, they are both seeking advanced knowledge and transmitting knowledge through their assignments as teaching or research assistants. While preparing for the professional models characteristic of their chosen discipline, they also serve as models to others in the graduate student role. All of this brings a special obligation to evidence a level of conduct that is compatible with the University's goals to offer programs of excellence and to enrich both the community and humankind.

Disruptive Behavior. Disruptive behavior is prohibited. Disruptive behavior includes but is not limited to conduct that substantially interferes with or obstructs the teaching or learning process. Civil expression of disagreement with the course instructor, during times when the instructor permits discussion, is not itself disruptive behavior and is not prohibited.

When any student, acting individually or in concert with others, obstructs or disrupts, or attempts to obstruct or disrupt any teaching, research, administrative, disciplinary, or public service activity, or any other activity authorized to be discharged on behalf of the University or held on the University's premises, the student may be asked to stop the disruptive behavior by an instructor or staff of the University. If the student continues, an instructor/staff member is authorized to tell the student to leave the area or classroom and, if the student will not leave, to call campus police.

The instructor/staff may immediately call campus police, without prior request to the student, if presented with an unsafe situation, threatening behavior, violence, or in other appropriate circumstances. Further, the instructor/staff may take action to withdraw the student from the class or educational experience.

Lack of Academic Progress. When a student is not making acceptable academic progress according to the standards of the academic unit, including not attending class, this may result in consequences including withdrawal from classes, denial of enrollment, program dismissal, suspension, expulsion, or other appropriate action.

1. Withdrawal of Student from Class or Other Educational Experience

When a student disrupts a class or other educational experience, acts in a threatening manner, is not making acceptable academic progress, or if the student's behavior or lack of preparation is detrimental to the educational experience of others or could create an unsafe

condition, or if the student is compromising the learning environment, the instructor may take action to withdraw the student from the class or educational experience. This policy does not prevent the instructor from taking lesser disciplinary or academic actions that are not addressed in this policy.

To do this, the instructor shall provide the student written notice of intent to withdraw the student from the class or educational experience, with an explanation of the instructor's reason(s), and with a copy to the instructor's department chair (or, when there is no department chair, to the associate dean of the instructor's college or school). The notice should schedule a meeting with the student and the department chair (or, when there is no department chair, with the associate dean or dean of the instructor's college or school) to occur within five (5) academic days of the notice. The instructor may bar the student from the class or educational experience pending the result of the meeting, and the written notice should advise the student if there is such a bar. At the meeting, the student may have one advisor. Following the meeting, the instructor shall decide whether to withdraw the student from the class or educational experience. If a student is withdrawn after the last day to drop, their grade will be recommended by the instructor to the dean of the instructor's college or school as either a "Q" or an "F." Before the last day to drop, the course may be dropped without notation. The student may appeal these decisions within ten (10) academic days in writing to the academic dean of the college or school offering the course or their designee. During the student's appeal, the student remains withdrawn from and is barred from attending the class. The dean's decision may be appealed in writing to the Academic Appeals Committee within five (5) academic days of the dean's decision. The Academic Appeals Committee will follow the appeals procedures in the Academic Appeals Committee Policy, which may be obtained in full from the chair of the committee or the Provost's office.

2. Denying Enrollment, Suspension, Expulsion, and Other Appropriate Action

When a student disrupts a class or other educational experience, acts in a threatening manner, is not making acceptable academic progress, or if the student's behavior or lack of preparation is detrimental to the educational experience of others or could create an unsafe condition, or if the student is compromising the learning environment, or if the student has acted contrary to the professional or ethical standards of the University, a department thereof, or a particular field, an academic dean, or the dean's designee, may additionally:

- A. deny class enrollment to the student; or
- B. suspend or expel the student from the University or dismiss the student from one or more of its programs;
- C. take other appropriate action.

The student affected by such a decision by an academic dean, or the dean's designee, may appeal in writing to the Academic Appeals Committee within ten (10) academic days of the dean's decision. The Academic Appeals Committee will follow the appeals procedures in the Academic Appeals Committee Policy, which may be obtained in full from the chair of the committee or the Provost's office. The decision of the academic dean (or designee) remains in place during the pendency of the appeal.

A student so suspended, dismissed, or expelled shall have a grade of "Q" or "F" recorded for each course in progress as determined appropriate by the academic dean. Unless the action under this policy will render the student ineligible to enroll in the University, the transcript will not record suspension or expulsion.

3. Non-students and Non-enrolled Students

Non-students and students not enrolled in class may be permanently removed by an instructor of the class, without formal review. Non-students who disrupt University activities may be removed from campus and banned from returning.

4. Notes and definitions

- For the purposes of this policy, an “academic day” is defined to be any day on which classes meet during a regular long Fall or Spring semester or during summer academic sessions.
- If a student does not receive a reply acknowledging receipt of an appeal letter within five (5) academic days, they may contact the next administrator to request the next stage of appeal.
- For the purposes of this policy, “academic dean” refers either to the dean of a college or their designee, most typically an associated dean of that same college designated by the dean to handle the relevant academic matters.
- “Department chair” refers to the academic administrator responsible for the unit providing the class or educational experience from which the student was withdrawn. In some units this may be a program director or other academic administrator. The office of the academic dean of the college or school offering the course can provide the appropriate administrator if necessary.
- Study abroad students are subject to the rules, regulations, and academic policies of the host university/program. This policy may not be used to appeal a sanction levied by a study abroad program.
- Although some disruptive behavior may be due to a mental or physical disorder, as it relates to violence or disruptive or threatening behavior, students with such disorders will be held to the same standards as others.
- Nothing in this policy limits a person, including but not limited to an instructor, academic dean, associate dean, or department chair from referring a matter to the Office of the Dean of Students or pursuing disciplinary action against a student or person through a complaint filed in the Office of the Dean of Students.
- This policy is not intended to limit any authorized University employee, staff member, official, vice chancellor, chancellor, members of the Board of Trustees, or a member of the Office of Dean of Students, from appropriately addressing behaviors covered by the policy.