

guardians and may, at the chair's discretion, allow a brief statement on behalf of the student by a parent or legal guardian;

13. The hearing shall be conducted with proper decorum. The hearing may be recessed by the chair if:

- a. Additional evidence or witnesses are needed; or
- b. It is apparent that a fair hearing cannot be held because of disturbances, illness, or similar causes; and

14. The University may, from time to time, make public the facts and decisions of cases that come before the committee. However, such reports shall not reveal the name of any student, professor, or course involved in a case that has been heard by the committee.

- E. The complete recommendations, including a statement of the charges, evidence, and judgment, shall be transmitted to the Dean of the College/School as soon as possible after the hearing at which the judgment was made. The Dean shall review the report and appropriateness of the recommended sanctions. The Dean may refer the matter to the committee for further consideration and/or elaboration, or may request the transcript or recording of the hearing and/or the evidence. However, the factual finding of the committee shall not be replaced by findings more damaging to the student unless the Dean has submitted new evidence for a rehearing. Similarly, the Dean shall not impose more severe sanctions than those recommended by the committee.
- F. The Dean of the College/School shall notify the student by certified letter of the judgment and penalty imposed and that such findings and sanctions are subject to final review by the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs after all appeals within the College/School have been exhausted. The letter shall also inform the student of the appeal's procedure,

7.5.3.9 Appeals

- A. Within two weeks of the receipt of the Dean's final response to appeals within the College, a student may appeal the judgment or the penalty to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. Appeals are to be in writing, setting forth the basis of the appeal and whether the student is appealing the judgment, the penalty, or both.
- B. The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs shall review the documentation or refer the appeal to the committee for clarification and comments.
- C. Normally, a rehearing will be ordered only if new evidence is presented. The procedure at a rehearing is the same as described above in Paragraph 7.5.3.8.1.
- D. After the hearing, a recommendation is made to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs who will act on the recommendations made by the committee, as described in Paragraph 7.5.3.8.1, subparagraph E. ("Recommendation"), above.
- E. Before making a decision, the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs may conduct a separate investigation if it is felt to be warranted.

7.5.3.10 Request for Reinstatement

Requests for reinstatement after suspension shall be made no sooner than eight weeks and no later than ten weeks before the proposed date of readmission. In the case of readmission, a student is normally placed on disciplinary probation during the first semester of the student's return and removed from probation at the end of the term. The student seeking reinstatement

shall inform the dean of the student's activities during the time of suspension, indicate what steps have been taken to satisfy any conditions imposed during the time of suspension, and state the student's future academic plans.

7.5.3.11 Reporting and Documenting Procedures

All evidence must be carefully documented in accordance with the guidelines set forth below:

- A. The person originating the charges shall present them in writing, accompanied by suitable exhibits, to the Dean of the College/School. That person shall be available to the Dean for pre-hearing conferences if necessary, and shall appear at or be available for, the Student Academic Conduct hearing whenever possible.
- B. Witnesses to the alleged infraction of the Student Academic Conduct Code may be requested to file a report on the incident and shall make themselves available for pre-hearing conferences and Student Academic Conduct hearings.
- C. The following are the guidelines for obtaining evidence of violations of the Student Academic Conduct Code in connection with:
 1. Examinations. If an irregularity occurs during an examination, the person who originally notes the irregularity should attempt to have such observations corroborated by others who are also in the room (e.g., proctors). The person(s) making the report shall provide specific information such as the time of the observation, type of irregularity observed, number of times it took place, exactly which sections of the examination were affected by the infraction, the name of each individual participating in the irregularity, and the extent of participation by each individual; and
 2. Papers and Reports. If the misconduct is inferred from the appearance and/or content of a paper or other assignment where the professor or proctor has had no chance to observe the actual process, specific reference should be made to each section that gives evidence of misconduct.

7.5.4 Decorum Policies

7.5.4.1 Attire

Students are expected to dress appropriately for the occasion. As per University policy, unacceptable dress for the University community includes the following: undershirts worn as outer clothing; sagging pants; visible undergarments; revealing clothing; bare midriffs; too tight or too short tops and/or bottoms; sleepwear; house shoes; active wear/workout clothing in classrooms (except for Kinesiology majors and PE activity); holes, tears, cuts in clothing; advertising for alcohol or tobacco; clothing with offensive language, pictures, or emblems; and/or hats, caps, do-rags, or combs in buildings. Students are expected to adhere to these guidelines and may not enter the cafeteria or classes dressed in an inappropriate manner.

Events such as the President's Opening Convocation, Matriculation Ceremony, and Charter Day are mandatory events for students. For such occasions, students should be dressed modestly, preferably in either business casual or business attire. While certain ceremonies may require specific attire (white shirt/blouse and black dress pants or skirt); students will be advised in advance of specific requirements. Students are strongly encouraged to invest in purchasing such items as they will be needed for some HT gatherings, business and internship interviews, etc. Students with questions regarding attire should consult the Decorum Guidelines located in this Handbook.

7.5.4.2 Civility

The University is an academic community where students have the privilege to study and learn from a variety of people with different experiences. The University demands respect for others and civility in your encounters both inside and outside the classroom.

In general, treat others as you would like to be treated – with respect. This respect applies to all members of our community including: students, faculty, staff, administrators, Resident Assistants, and library, food services, Campus Safety, and facilities staff as well as all other members of the University community. If you have concerns or a grievance, there is an appropriate procedure for filing a grievance once you have attempted to resolve the issue with the specific person or department first. The student grievance procedure is outlined in this Student Handbook.

Students are expected to pay particular attention to time, place, and manner when expressing a concern or speaking to any member of the community. In particular, students should demonstrate care in selecting the appropriate time to discuss a matter in the appropriate setting/surroundings and demonstrate respectful communication at all times.

Civility is not only an expectation, it is a requirement. Misconduct toward members of the University community is referenced in the *Code of Conduct and Community Standards (Code)* in this Student Handbook.

7.5.4.3 Unacceptable Public Practices

Although the campus is small and feels like home, it is important to remember that it is still an academic community and a place of business. Therefore, some behaviors are less than acceptable. Unacceptable public practices include, but are not limited to:

- The use of profanity;
- Combing and braiding hair in public places;
- Wearing hair rollers to class and administrative offices;
- Wearing provocative clothing; and
- Exposing one's underwear when pants sag too low.

Students working on-campus are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner. Work contacts provide valuable networking opportunities and you never know when you will encounter those contacts.

7.5.4.4 Conduct in the Classroom

At no time is it ever appropriate to use cell phones, pagers, two-way pagers, I-Pods, or any other similar device in class, meetings with faculty, staff, or administration, or some other teaching/learning session (including the President's Opening Convocation, Chapel, Charter Day, and other assemblies). All devices are to be turned off prior to class/meeting/session/workshop and only turned on AFTER those occasions. Failure to follow this policy is a violation of the Code and students may be subject to disciplinary action. For additional information regarding classroom expectations, please consult with your instructor and the course syllabus. Classroom conduct, including disruptive behavior, is described in this Handbook, Volume VII. Disruptive behavior in the classroom may be subject to the conduct process outlined in the Code.

7.5.4.5 Class Attendance

HT students should be prompt or early for class, having all cell phones off or silent, and having all supplies and work in hand. Students should be prepared to benefit from every minute of class without needing to borrow supplies or share texts. Students with difficulties seeing or hearing should sit in seats that will allow the best possible vantage point. Students with special

needs should inform the faculty member so that he/she can assist. Students with disabilities should contact the Coordinator of Disability Services in the Counseling and Consultation Center in the Sandra Joy Anderson Community Health and Wellness Center (512.505.3149).

7.5.4.6 *Instructor/Staff Offices and Office Hours*

Students should become familiar with the office hours of each professor. These office hours are given to students in class or may be posted on the office door and/or syllabus. Students who cannot meet with the professor during the designated office hours should request an appointment by either email or leaving a voice mail message. Most faculty members will accommodate students by providing extra appointments. Students should bring any work to be discussed. Do not rely on waiting outside a faculty member's door hoping to catch him or her. The faculty member may not be on-campus at that time of the day or may have other scheduled activities.

Wherever possible, it is expected that students schedule advance appointments with staff and administration so the individual may prepare in order to assist the student. Under no circumstances is it appropriate to go to a staff or faculty member's home without an invitation.

7.5.4.7 *Attending Chapel, Special Lectures and Events, and the President's Opening Convocation*

Events such as the President's Opening Convocation, Matriculation Ceremony, and Charter Day are mandatory events for students. For such occasions, students should be dressed *modestly*, preferably in either business casual or business attire. While certain ceremonies may require specific attire (white shirt/blouse and black dress pants or skirt); students will be advised in advance of specific requirements. Students with questions regarding attire should inquire with faculty, staff, or the Dean of Student Affairs.

HT students should arrive on time for all special events, including Chapel. Students should be prepared to remain for the duration of the event. Unavoidable late arrivals should be discreet, quiet, and as unobtrusive as possible. Prompt attendees should sit in the middle of rows, leaving end seats for later arrivals. In no event should a person walk in front of the lectern or stage; instead, please use outer aisles. In no event should a student leave during a guest speaker's lecture. If necessary, a student should leave during the applause following the lecture if there is an emergency.

7.5.4.8 *Profanity Free Campaign*

Huston-Tillotson University has a responsibility to not only provide a safe campus, but a community that is conducive to learning while respecting the rights of students, faculty, and staff. In public, students are expected to choose words that uplift and uphold the mission and values of the institution. It is the responsibility of everyone to monitor his or her own language in order to present a campus environment that is enjoyable for everyone. University officials reserve the right to remove individuals who use inappropriate language from public events and prohibit future programs by the individual or group. This profanity free expectation includes playing music that contains profanity and/or sexually explicit lyrics in public spaces.

7.5.4.9 *Off-Campus Decorum*

During an HT student's career, the student is likely to represent the University many times through community service, internships, student teaching, tournaments, and conference attendance. HT students represent the University at formal dinners such as the MASKED Ball, church services, and other occasions. Although you may be selected as the individual to attend a particular event, remember you represent the University at all times. Consequently, two things are important – how you look and what you say.

- *For community services events and other casual settings:* HT students should dress in appropriate casual clothing that is not revealing. See-through, clingy, or provocative clothing is not acceptable for work or in class;
- *For more formal events:* In general, formal dinners and award ceremonies at hotels call for after-five or business attire. Formal events, including the M.A.S.K.E.D. Ball, require a tuxedo for men and full length gowns for women. For after-five events, ask your host whether a long or short dress is most suitable; and
- *For church and other religious services:* Although each faith community differs, dresses “near the knee” length or a modest suit or shirt and dress slacks are the safest options least likely to offend people. In the event you are not familiar with the particular place of worship, please call ahead of time to gather additional information.

7.6 Student Activities and Organizations

7.6.1 General Rules for Student Organizations

Huston-Tillotson University encourages activities outside the classroom that enrich the academic program and help students develop full civic and social involvement. All student organizations and activities are under the auspices of the Division of Student Affairs. Student organizations may be officially recognized when formed for purposes that are consistent with the philosophy and goals that have been developed for the creation and existence of Huston-Tillotson University. The Dean of Student Affairs grants the Coordinator of Campus Life approval for recognition of all student organizations. In order to be recognized and to retain official recognition, student organizations must meet certain requirements. Student groups failing to comply with stated conditions shall not enjoy the privileges associated with the status of being officially recognized by the University, including using the University facilities for meetings and publicizing activities. *The policies below are not meant to be an exhaustive list of policies regarding student organizations and programming guidelines. Additional policies are available in the Office of Campus Life, FYE and on-line.*

7.6.1.1 Membership Requirements

All student organizations are subject to administrative approval. To participate in the activities of any organization, students must:

1. Be in good standing with the University;
2. Submit in writing any special membership criteria/requirements to the Office of Campus Life;
3. Adhere to any additional administrative requests of the University (i.e., community service hours); and
4. In some cases, student grade point average requirements may also be required for membership eligibility and leadership positions (e.g., SGA leadership, NPHC).

7.6.1.2 Excused Absences While Representing the University

Within a reasonable time span, the University will permit students officially representing the University to make up examinations, quizzes, and missed assignments without grade penalty. However, students are to submit all other special assignments on or before the due dates. It is the full responsibility of students to contact the instructor about missed coursework in advance. The University does not issue excuses for students’ absences from class.

7.6.1.3 Umbrella Organizations

7.6.1.3.1 Student Government Association (SGA)

The representative body for all full-time and part-time students is the Student Government Association (SGA). Information on the Student Government Association is available in the Student Government Office. SGA can be reached at 512.505.3038. Students serving as chair or co-chair on association committees shall be appointed by the Student Government Association President and must maintain a minimum 2.50 grade point average (no rounding) throughout their term. Each year, members of all classes organize and elect officers who coordinate special activities and participate in the SGA.

7.6.1.3.2 National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC)

The National Pan-Hellenic Council serves as the governing body of the nine national, African American Greek-lettered organizations. A Greek-lettered organization must be part of this national body. Each fraternity and sorority shall be represented on the NPHC as a part of its University recognition.

7.6.1.3.2.1 Membership Intake and Selection Processes

All Greek-lettered organizations and others who have selective membership processes of any kind are reminded that recognition by the University is a privilege. Further, all are subject to the standards below:

- Students must have at least 30 credit hours to pursue membership in an NPHC organization.
- Advanced placement credit hours will not count toward the 30 credit hours. If an individual is a transfer student, twelve credit hours must have been completed at HT.
- **Students are expected to have a minimum of a 2.50 session/semester and cumulative grade point average to be an active member of the organization.**
- An organization must have at least three active members to be recognized on-campus. All three students must be full-time in order to be active. University recognition is required to conduct programming, reserve space, advertise events, and represent the chapter.
- **Membership intake, selection, or any other membership processes are subject to final approval by the University regardless of the national organization's approval.** Such approval from the national body must be sent in writing to the Dean of Student Affairs at least one week prior to the beginning of **any** membership activities. **Failure to adhere to this policy may result in suspension of the chapter.**

Additional information and policies regarding student organizational policies may be found in the Campus Life Student Organizational Manual located on-line.

7.6.1.3.3 Non-Greek Association

This Association is the governing body for all social clubs. It enables members of these organizations to discuss issues and programs that will enhance student involvement and campus activities.

7.6.1.4 Academic Organizations

Campus academic organizations are: Alpha Kappa Mu National Honor Society; Beta Kappa Chi Scholastic Honor Society; Phi Beta Lambda Honor Society for business majors; and Sigma Tau Delta, the National English Honor Society. Included in this category are scholastic and departmental clubs, as well as honor societies. Organizations related to or associated with

academic or professional interests are open to all students. Specific policies and criteria should be obtained through the chairperson of the Department or the organizational advisor.

7.6.1.5 Student Publications

Through student publications, the University seeks to encourage development of students toward productive citizenship and to stimulate creative thoughts and innovative involvement in the life of the University. Student publications serve as an example to the University community of the importance of freedom and responsibility of the press in an educational environment servicing a free society. They shall be free of censorship. The editors are free to develop editorial policies in accordance with established canons of responsible journalism.

7.7 Student Complaint and Grievance Procedures

Student Complaint and Grievance procedures at Huston-Tillotson University are intended to provide a formal and consistent process for students to seek redress concerning actions of the University and/or by University faculty, administrators, and staff. Students considering filing a formal grievance should read the complete text of the Student Complaint and Grievance Procedure as outlined below.

Situations may arise in which a student believes that s/he has not received fair treatment by a representative of the University or the student has a complaint about the performance, action, or inaction of a member of the staff or faculty affecting the student. A student who wishes to have a complaint addressed by the University shall first use the following Complaint Procedure and then utilize the Grievance Procedure if the Complaint Procedure proves unsatisfactory. Students are encouraged to seek assistance from the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs Office, Department Chair, College or School Dean, their advisor, or another member of the faculty or staff. If the complaint concerns unlawful discrimination, the Director of Human Resources or Title IX Coordinator will investigate claims of harassment and serve as the University's Affirmative Action Officer. In the event that a student wishes to dispute a grade, the student should consult the Appeals of Grades policy found in this Bulletin.

7.7.1 What is a Grievance?

A grievance is a formal complaint by a student arising out of an alleged action of the University, including faculty, administrators, and/or staff of the University. Such action is alleged by the student to be unauthorized and/or unjustified and adversely affecting the status, rights or privileges of the student, including actions based on race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, age, handicap, or veteran status.

Students are reminded that the grievance procedure is not designed to replace open communication and understanding that are vital to the academic process. The student should, in most circumstances, attempt to first speak directly to the faculty, staff, or administrator of the University whom he or she feels has committed an unfair act against them before filing a grievance. If the student wishes to proceed with a grievance, the student may withdraw the grievance at any stage and the process will immediately terminate.

7.7.2 Complaint Procedure

A *written* complaint should be directed as soon as possible to the person or persons whose actions or inactions have given rise to the complaint. Every effort should be made to resolve the problem fairly and promptly at this level. This complaint should be initiated within thirty (30) calendar days of the date of the incident.

If the student is not able to resolve the complaint satisfactorily at this level, the student should meet with the employee's supervisor. This may be a department chair, program coordinator, or director. After ten (10) working days and if a satisfactory solution is not found, the complaint will be reviewed by the department or unit head which may be a Dean or Vice President. If the

complaint involves allegations of sexual harassment or unlawful discrimination, the Director of Human Resources or Title IX Coordinator shall be consulted.

7.7.3 Complaints Regarding Performance of a Faculty Member

If the complaint concerns a grade or the performance of a faculty member, the student should first confer with the course instructor. If the student does not gain resolution, the student should direct the complaint to the Department Chair. If the matter is not resolved, it shall be referred to the College or School Dean. If the complaint involves allegations of sexual harassment or unlawful discrimination, the Director of Human Resources or Title IX Coordinator should be consulted.

7.7.4 Grievance Procedures

7.7.4.1 Step 1

A student who believes that he/she has not received fair treatment, or who has a complaint about the performance, action, or inaction of a member of the faculty or staff, and believes he/she has not received appropriate redress through the complaint procedure within a reasonable period of time, must file a written statement of grievance (see: Statement of Grievance below) with the chair or the coordinator of the program in which the employee served at the time of the alleged action. Each grievance must be submitted in writing and only one subject matter should be covered in any one grievance. Formal grievance statements received by the chair, coordinator, or other University Representative designated by the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs *may be referred* to a department or program level committee that recommends action to the chair or coordinator. The chair, coordinator, the designee, or the committee will investigate the allegations and reach a conclusion regarding the student's contentions. The chair or coordinator has fifteen (15) working days to respond to the student after the conclusion of the investigation. If either the student or the person against whom the grievance was filed disagrees with the chair's or coordinator's findings and recommendations, that person may appeal under the procedures outlined in Step Two.

7.7.4.2 Step 2

If the student or person against whom the grievance was filed is not satisfied with the results of Step One, or if the grievance is against the chair of a department or coordinator of a program, the student must next transmit the written statement of grievance to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs or his/her designee. The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs or his/her designee will refer the grievance to a committee established at the University or senior administration level. Such a committee should consist of a cross-section of the University community and include faculty, staff, and student representatives.

7.7.4.3 Step 3

If a student is not satisfied with the results of Step Two, or if the grievance is against a senior administrator, the student may file a written statement of grievance with the University Conduct Council. The University Conduct Council consists of student, faculty, and staff representatives appointed at the beginning of the academic year. Student representatives are appointed by the Student Government Association President while faculty and staff representatives are appointed by the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. If the grievance involves the teaching responsibility of such an administrator, steps one and two cannot be bypassed. Alternative,

7.7.4.4 Step 4

If an individual (student, faculty, staff, or other interested party) or individuals wish to claim wrongdoing or deficiency on the part of the University, a complaint may be filed directly with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). The Commission's address is 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097, and their

telephone number is 404.679.4501. Alternatively, the website for the SACSCOC complaint process is <http://www.sacscoc.org/FAQTOC.asp>. Additionally, students may also file a complaint with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. The Board's address is 1200 E. Anderson Lane, Austin, Texas 78752 and the telephone number is 512.427.6101. For additional information regarding the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, please visit their website: <http://www.theccb.state.tx.us>. In addition, students who feel they have been discriminated against due to race, color, creed, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, age, disability or status as a disabled or Vietnam-era veteran have the right to contact the HT Title IX Coordinator or Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights (OCR) at 800.421.3481. The statute of limitations for filing a complaint with OCR is 180 days from the time the incident occurred.

7.7.5 Statement of Grievance

Basically, the statement of grievance is a clear, simple statement of fact according to the student's understanding of what happened. It shall provide enough information to give the committee a complete understanding of the situation from the student's perspective. The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs has staff to help students understand the details of the Student Complaint and Grievance Policy and should be called on for assistance. The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs' Office is located in Anthony and Louise Viaer – Alumni Hall, first floor. The telephone number is 512.505.6433.

7.7.6 Appeal of Grades

The grade represents an instructor's evaluation of a student's performance in a given course. This grade is not changed unless evidence exists of a clerical or computational error or of student cheating. A student who believes that an error has occurred should request a grade re-evaluation by completing an official Appeal of Grade form. A request for a grade re-evaluation must be submitted within the calendar year of the date on which the grade was officially issued. A student desiring to improve a course grade for reasons other than those listed above must officially re-register for and re-take the course.

Student grade appeals are handled according to the following procedure:

1. The student completes an Appeal of Grade form provided by the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. A reasonable justification for review of the grade must be included in the written appeal. Notification of the appeal is forwarded to the instructor for review and action.
2. The student arranges a conference with the instructor to obtain criteria for the assessment of the final grade that was assigned. If a student cannot schedule a meeting with the instructor, the student contacts the Department Chair, who will arrange a conference between the student and the instructor. Every possible effort should be made to resolve any disagreements at this point.
3. The student's grade may be changed at this step of the appeal procedure by written consent of the instructor if the findings warrant such modification. A Change of Grade form must be completed and forwarded to the Registrar's Office.
4. A student who is not satisfied by the outcome of the appeal to the Department Chair may request that the written appeal be forwarded to the Dean of the College or School.
5. If the Dean is unable to bring resolution to the appeal, the student may appeal to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.
6. The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs will make every effort to resolve the grade conflict issue within a 30-day period.

7.8 Intercollegiate Athletics

The University provides intercollegiate competition in a number of varsity sports: men's and women's basketball, baseball, women's volleyball, men's soccer, and men's and women's track and field/cross country. It also provides a full-time Athletic Trainer and student-trainers to care for student-athletes' athletic-related injuries and rehabilitation.

The Intercollegiate Athletic Program (IA) is under the guidance of the National Association for Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA), Region 6. The University participates as a member of the Red River Athletic Conference. Student-athletes are governed by the same recruitment, admission, financial aid, and continuing eligibility standards as all other students as noted in the Bulletin. In addition, student-athletes are also required to adhere to all NAIA policies regarding minimum GPA and completed credit hours each semester in order to participate in varsity athletics. For additional information regarding IA policies, please refer to the Intercollegiate Athletics Handbook.

7.8.1 Intramural Sports

The University encourages sound physical fitness for every student. A variety of intramural sports is offered each year to promote good sportsmanship, healthy competition, and the enjoyment of recreational activities. Additional fees may apply for students wishing to participate in Intramural activities.