



Center for
Student Success
and Intervention

2026 STUDENT GROUP ACCOUNTABILITY

Student Group Accountability Policy

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Student Group Compliance with University Policy

Student groups are recognized and supported by the University through student governing boards and administrative departments; for example, recognized student groups are eligible to receive funds and can hold programs and events on campus using University spaces, and with the support of faculty, alumni, and staff.

Core Expectations

This new policy establishes a proactive, educational framework to address student group behavior, emphasizing accountability, reflection and prevention. A foundational component of the policy is the University's commitment to equity and inclusion in student group membership. Membership in a recognized student group must be open to all students interested in supporting the group's mission, regardless of race, color, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, immigration status, age, disability, marital status, military status, or any other legally protected classes, or perceived membership in such a class, and regardless of personal characteristics or beliefs, such as political views.

To the extent that student groups impose eligibility or membership requirements, those requirements must be closely connected to the group's mission and must be consistent with Columbia's Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment policies. Columbia's Office of Institutional Equity (OIE) may review reports regarding exclusion from recognized student groups based on a protected class. Questions regarding permissible membership restrictions may be directed to the Student Group Accountability Review Board at 212-854-6872 or groupconduct@columbia.edu. Such questions will be referred to OIE for consideration as needed.

The University seeks to give student groups and its leaders as much autonomy and responsibility as possible to create dynamic living and learning environments for all. In turn, student groups and their leaders have an important responsibility to create and support an inclusive, positive student life experience and learning environment consistent with the University's mission, as reflected in its policies. Considering this relationship, it is necessary to have guidelines and policies by which groups, and individual students acting on their behalf whether as leaders or members, must conduct their activities. All recognized student groups are governed by University and school policies, including those outlined on the [University policy website](#). If a student is found responsible for a violation through an applicable University adjudicatory process and the outcome results in a Disciplinary Probation status or a higher-level sanction, the student is not in good disciplinary standing with the University. Accordingly, the student is ineligible to serve in a leadership position within any recognized student group for the duration of that status.

In addition to University and school policies, student groups are required to adhere to policies and procedures established by the student councils/governing boards that recognize student groups

through the individual recognition process at their respective schools or department. Student group violations of council/board-specific expectations, rather than University- or school-specific policies, are managed by the student council/governing board, in consultation with its advisor(s) and/or Dean of Students, and not by the Student Group Accountability Review Board (SGARB) as outlined below.

Policies specific to each school were established in alignment with their respective governance structures. When a formalized policy exists, whether outlined in bylaws, constitutions, handbooks, guidebooks, or other official documents, SGARB may resolve related issues following its established procedures. This includes, but is not limited to, policies published online or shared through various formats by the school or its affiliated entities.

The University is mindful that students are serving in a voluntary capacity, and we appreciate their contributions to campus life. The University recognizes that this is an opportunity for the student groups to better understand University policies, understand why these policies are important, and to work with student group leadership to develop systems to improve actions moving forward.

Other Conduct Considerations

In instances where a student has potentially violated University policy in their capacity as a student group leader or member, the student may face individual disciplinary action in addition to any separate consequences that the student group may face. At the University level, individual student(s) may be referred to the [Center for Student Success and Intervention \(CSSI\)](#) for potential violations of [Standards and Discipline](#) and other University policies. Individuals may also be referred to the Rules Administrator for potential violations of the [Rules of University Conduct](#).

In addition, individual student(s) or student groups may be referred to the [Office of Institutional Equity](#) (Division of Title IX and/or Division of Anti-Discrimination and Discriminatory Harassment) for conduct that may implicate Columbia's [Anti-Discrimination and Discriminatory Harassment Policy and Procedures for Students](#), or [Columbia's Gender-Based Misconduct and Interim Title IX Policies and Procedures for Students](#).

Student Group vs. Individual Behavior

Student groups can be held accountable for the individual actions of their members when this behavior is reasonably connected to the group.

It is not necessarily the number of members involved in an activity that is crucial to a determination that the group is responsible. The inquiry is whether the activity is related to a student group rather than a private activity by persons who happen to be active and/or recognized members of the same student group. A number of factors may be considered when determining a group's responsibility for the individual actions of its members, including but not limited to the following:

1. Whether a member of a group violated the law or university policy and other members present failed to indicate their disapproval, or by their continued presence without objection implicitly condoned the behavior.
2. Whether the act(s) grew out of or were directly related to the group's activities or an environment (either physical or in-person or online) created by the group.
3. Whether the act(s) were those of guests of a group, or by persons authorized or permitted to represent themselves as connected with the group.
4. Whether a group either intentionally or unintentionally created power dynamics and hazing occurred.
5. Whether the group or its leaders officially sanctioned or implicitly encouraged the activity even though they did not "officially" sanction it.
6. Whether a substantial number of the group's members or leaders were aware, in advance, that the activity might take place.
7. Whether the group's members or leaders were aware of the misconduct after the fact and did not take steps to correct the problem(s) that occurred.
8. Whether the group failed to document and/or utilize accountability mechanisms to address member behavior when it was not aligned with group standards and/or University policy.
9. Whether there have been previous similar incidents with members of the group.
10. If the group claims this is an isolated incident by renegade members, whether other members of the group also engaged in "isolated" incidents themselves, such that a pattern emerges from otherwise seemingly isolated incidents.

If one or more of the factors listed above is present, there may be a basis for finding the group responsible for the behavior of its members through the SGARB process.

Event Co-Sponsoring Responsibility

Furthermore, all co-sponsoring recognized student groups are responsible for ensuring the event complies with University, school, and governing board policies. Co-sponsorship does not reduce or shift responsibility away from any involved group. This means group accountability extends across Co-Sponsors, who are accountable for misconduct connected to an event. Factors considered include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Whether the event grew out of the group's activities;
2. Whether the group sanctioned, encouraged, or helped organize the event;
3. Whether leaders or members were aware of potential risks and failed to act;

4. Whether the group failed to intervene or correct issues after the fact; and
5. Overall, more than one group can be found responsible for the same incident.

In order to ensure that student group behavior aligns with University and school policies, student leaders are expected to:

- Know, and seek to understand, the relevant University and school's policies, as applicable, and expectations, communicating all relevant information to group members and other key stakeholders.
- Establish healthy norms for the group congruent with the policies of the University and the schools.
- Document and utilize accountability mechanisms to ensure healthy norms and uphold University and school policies and relevant laws.

Definitions

- **Advisors:** Columbia University members who provide guidance through the potential violation review process, including:
 - **SGARB Advisor:** A University advisor through Student Group Conduct that guides the SGARB chairs through the process to ensure consistency of process and past precedent.
 - **Student Group Advisor:** Any member of the Columbia community that the student group chooses to advise them through the review process. Advisors may not be legal counsel (though advisors may be lawyers, they cannot serve as counsel to the recognized student group as part of the SGARB process). Advisors work directly with the student group leaders but may not speak on, submit letters, or otherwise directly advocate on behalf of the recognized student group during the investigative process and SGARB panel. Advisors cannot be any individual with sanctioning or appellate review authority as part of the SGARB process.
- **Associate Directors:** Student Group Conduct Staff Members individually designated by CSSI to conduct investigations of recognized student groups regarding potential violations of University policy.
- **Conflict of Interest:** When an individual's personal interests, close friendships, financial, or social factors, could compromise an individual's judgment, decisions, or actions as part of the SGARB review process.
- **Event:** Any activity (including all internal or other meetings, social events, rehearsals, programs, etc.), regardless of the location (on or off University property, in-person or online), that is coordinated by a recognized student group or its representatives to bring people together.
- **Quorum:** For SGARB panels, two students and two faculty or staff members.
- **Recognized Student Group (RSG):** A group, composed mainly of, and directed by, students which has filed all required registration forms with and completed all requirements

outlined by the appropriate University recognition body within the school(s) or University Senate and has been confirmed by that body as meeting all eligibility criteria for recognition. RSGs also include recognized student councils, boards, or equivalent.

- **Recognized Student Group's Leader(s):** One or more students registered at Columbia or Columbia-affiliated institutions who are selected by the recognized student group as their primary leader/contact through the recognition and/or election process.
- **Review Board:** Three students and three staff or faculty members from the appointed faculty, staff, and students who are trained to be review board members. A review board may hear a case and make a recommendation as long as it has a quorum. Review board members are primarily selected by appropriate shared governance bodies and school administration. The pool of review board members is composed of:
 - Up to 30 faculty or academic staff representatives – up to 10 representing the undergraduate schools, up to 10 representing Morningside/Manhattanville graduate/professional schools, and up to 10 representing CUIMC graduate/professional schools.
 - Up to 30 student leader representatives – up to 10 representing the undergraduate schools, up to 10 representing Morningside/Manhattanville graduate/professional schools, and up to 10 representing CUIMC graduate/professional schools. Students will be appointed in consultation with the student council/board advisors and/or Deans of Students.
- **Student Leader:** any Columbia student who is a President, Vice President or holds any other executive position or, through their role, exerts significant influence over the decisions, affairs and actions of a recognized student group. When involved in an SGARB process, the recognized student group must identify which three (3) student leaders will represent the organization during the process and share their contact information. One of these representatives must be the President of the recognized student group.
- **Sanction:** Any action affecting the status of a Recognized Student Group (RSG), as an RSG, that is imposed in response to the group's violation of University and/or school policy. The term includes, but is not limited to, a letter of warning, loss of space reservation abilities, loss of funding, travel restrictions, student group probation, student group suspension, student group derecognition, recommendation for charter revocation, and education and training.
- **SGARB Panel:** Scheduled meeting of the review board and the student group who may have violated a University policy.
- **Student:** Any person who is registered for study at the University for the academic period in which the potential policy violation occurred, or between academic periods for continuing students.
- **Witness:** Anyone with knowledge of the incident that the Associate Director or a recognized student group's leader(s) bring(s) to a review panel.

Student Group Accountability Review Board

In the interest of promoting transparency, peer-based leadership, community citizenship, and accountability, Columbia, in partnership with the seventeen schools and central departments, has established the Student Group Accountability Review Board (SGARB).

Student Group Accountability Review Board (SGARB) Purpose

The SGARB is meant to be an educational peer-review process to support recognized student groups (RSG) in correcting student group conduct that is in violation of University and/or school policies. Except for those policies exclusively administered by another University office (e.g., the Office of Institutional Equity), the SGARB's role is to review any potential violation of University and/or school policy by a recognized student group, determine the recognized student group's responsibility, based on a preponderance of the evidence if it is more likely than not a violation occurred, and, where a recognized student group is found responsible, recommend appropriate sanction(s) given the facts and based on past precedent.

Student Group Accountability Review Board (SGARB) Panel Composition

- The Student Group Accountability Review Board (SGARB) is a Columbia review panel made up of 6 voting members, with a quorum of 4 voting committee members (2 students and 2 professionals). Membership generally consists of Columbia students, staff, and/or faculty representatives from the following entities:
- 3 Columbia Student Representatives (Voting Members): These may include student representatives from the Student Affairs Committee, the school's student council(s)/board(s) representatives, and/or individuals nominated by their schools' Deans of Students based upon their leadership roles at Columbia.
 - Undergraduate - representation from CCSC, ESC, GSSC, ABC, SGB, IGC, CSGB and/or relevant central department student councils/boards.
 - Graduate - representation from the school and/or relevant central department student councils/boards.
- 3 Professional Representatives (Voting Members): Student Affairs staff and/or faculty (ideally with experience working with student groups). Schools will nominate staff and faculty based on their roles and understanding of student groups.
- SGARB Advisor (Non-Voting Professional Member): This person serves as an advisor to the SGARB, specifically the Co-Chairs (noted below), throughout the review process.
- CSSI reserves the right to disband and re-panel when necessary to ensure consistent and continuous application of policy and process.

Student Membership

Student membership priority will be given to members of recognized student councils/boards. Candidates will be selected in consultation with each school's Dean(s) of Students and/or their designee(s) for school-based groups and senior administrators from central departments who work with central student councils/boards as well as members from Fraternity and Sorority Life (FSL). All student members must meet the following minimal standards:

- Registered Columbia University student;
- Possess a minimum 3.0 grade point average at the time of application;
- Is in good disciplinary standing;
- Is an initiated member of a recognized student council/board or recognized student organization that is in good standing; and
- Maintains regular attendance when convened for SGARB panels.

Members of a student group that is not recognized by the University or not in good standing with the University are ineligible.

Candidates who plan on studying abroad or taking an absence from the University during the appointed term are ineligible.

Professional Employees Membership

Professional employee membership priority will be given to staff and faculty who serve or have served as an advisor to a student group in a formal capacity. Candidates will be selected in consultation with each school's Dean(s) of Students and/or their designee(s) for school-based groups and senior administrators from central units who work with central student councils/boards. All professional members must meet the following minimal standards:

- Be a current Columbia University employee;
- Be in good standing with the University; and
- Maintain regular attendance when convened for the SGARB panel.

Candidates who plan on taking, or take, a sabbatical or another form of absence from the University during the appointed term are ineligible.

Board Member Service and Standards of Conduct

Appointment to the Student Group Accountability Board is an honor and of great importance to the student group community and the University. All board members are expected to meet basic requirements for continued membership. Board members must adhere to the following expectations:

- Maintain confidentiality regarding all information associated with cases presented to the board including but not limited to evidence shared, conversations, incident reports, and outcomes;

- Attend all review board meetings;
- Attend all required trainings;
- Review the evidence, list of review meeting attendees, and incident report prior to the SGARB panel;
- Bring at least one question to the SGARB panel;
- Communicate in a timely manner with the Co-Chairs and SGARB Advisor regarding any conflicts;
- Maintain impartiality in all dealings of the SGARB. This includes disclosing any conflicts of interest and excusing oneself when such conflicts exist; and
- Conduct oneself in an ethical manner consistent with University expectations.

Failure to meet these minimum expectations may result in one or all of the following:

- Meeting with the Co-Chairs and/or SGARB Advisor to discuss deficiencies;
- Written warning;
- Probation with corrective action required; and
- Removal from the SGARB

Student board members who are found to be in violation of the confidentiality agreement may face additional individual conduct through the Dean's Discipline process.

CSSI has the authority to remove any person from the SGARB and will do so in consultation with the appropriate administrator from the school/central department representing the member. CSSI's decision is final.

Student and Professional SGARB Membership Pools

SGARB membership pools: Columbia students and professionals selected for SGARB will be trained and serve in a membership pool. Should SGARB be convened, the priority is to have Board membership that is representative of the recognized student group's school and campus, where relevant and possible.

Board Membership Terms: SGARB professional members traditionally serve up to two academic years in the membership pool. At the end of their two-year term, the professional members may seek another two-year term upon request to Student Group Conduct through emailing groupconduct@columbia. After four academic years, any SGARB professional members must renew their interest with Student Group Conduct annually for a one-year term.. Student members serve a one-year term in the membership pool that can be renewed for one additional academic year. There is an understanding there will need to be some flexibility with terms due to the various leadership transition cycles across the University. All SGARB membership renewals are at the discretion of Student Group Conduct.

Convening the SGARB: Each time a membership pool is utilized to create a SGARB, Student Group Conduct in partnership with the Dean of Students (for schools), AVP Student Affairs (for IGB), or appropriate central administrative oversight (central councils/boards) will consider the recognition body of the recognized student group going through the process, including if it is an undergraduate, graduate, or mixed recognized student group, when convening the Board membership. There can be no more than one member who represents any individual student group on any given Board.

Co-Chairs: The Board will select 2 co-chairs (one student and one student affairs professional) internally for each review when convened as the first matter of business. The co-chairs will partner together and with the SGARB advisor to lead the review process.

Advisors

Student Group Advisor: Student groups may invite their assigned Student Group Advisor to join them throughout the SGARB process, including meeting with the Associate Director and at the SGARB review panel. Student Group Advisors fulfill the role of an Advisor through upholding the educational hallmarks of the SGARB process. If the student group requests someone to advise them other than their assigned Student Group Advisor in the SGARB process, the student group must submit a request to Student Group Conduct and the proposed Advisor must be a member of the Columbia community. As an educational process and not a legal process, advisors may not be legal counsel (though advisors may be lawyers, they cannot serve as counsel to the recognized student group as part of the SGARB process). Student group leaders may consult with their advisor during the process. However, advisors may not speak on, submit letters on, or otherwise advocate on behalf of the recognized student group. It is important that the student leader(s) speak on behalf of their group as part of the educational process and peer review.

If a recognized student group does not have an advisor and would like support through the process, they can request a University-assigned advisor from a pool of advisors who are well versed with the process.

SGARB Advisor: The SGARB Co-Chairs will also have a University advisor to support them through the process to ensure consistency of process and past precedent.

Training

Mandatory training will be provided annually for all involved in the recognized student group accountability process, including:

- Associate Directors;
- SGARB membership pool members;
- Student group advisors;

- Student group leaders (often presidents/chairs);
- Student councils/boards leaders; and
- Student Affairs Committee leaders.

Training topics will be selected based on the individual's role in the SGARB process. Training will include, but is not restricted to, the following topics:

- Investigative processes best practices;
- Development of a student organization findings report and review process (of such reports);
- Engaging witnesses through best practices;
- Measuring evidence based on the preponderance of evidence it is more likely than not a violation occurred framework;
- Determining accountability through the deliberation process;
- Sanctioning - relevant precedent and setting precedent model;
- Drafting recommendations for outcome - findings of responsibility and recommended sanctions; and
- Bias training

How to File a Concern

Any member of the Columbia community may file a concern regarding a recognized student group by completing an [online form](#).

In emergency situations, if there is a suspected crime in progress, or imminent or serious threats to the safety of anyone, community members are to immediately contact 911 or the Columbia Department of Public Safety:

- Morningside:
 - Main (212) 854-2797
 - Emergency (212) 854-5555
- Manhattanville:
 - Main (212) 853-3301
 - Emergency (212) 853-3333
- CUIMC:
 - Main (212) 305-8100
 - Emergency (212) 305-7979

Reported incidents will be reviewed in a timely manner by Student Group Conduct to determine the most appropriate response and course of action. Please note that this online reporting form is a mechanism to report student group activity that is believed to be in violation of University policy or

of other concern, but it is not a replacement for any other University reporting systems such as antidiscrimination policies (including Title IX and Title VI) and Standards and Discipline reporting. Therefore, if a member of the University community is obligated to report potential prohibited conduct through some other channel, using this online form is not a substitute for making a mandatory report.

Examples of Potential Policy Violations Cases

Examples of cases that would be reviewed by the Student Accountability and Group Conduct team include, but are not limited, to:

- [Alcohol Guidelines for Undergraduate Student Events](#)
- [Alcohol Policy for Graduate Student, Faculty and Staff Events](#)
- [Alcohol Statement of Policy](#)
- [Amplified Sound / Noise Control Policy](#)
- [Bank Account Policy](#)
- [Barbeque Event Policy](#)
- [Card Access](#)
- [Cash and Check Handling Policy](#)
- [Columbia University Non-Retaliation Policy](#)
- [Columbia University Policy on Alcohol and Drugs](#)
- [Commercial Filming, News, Documentaries, and Student Filming Policy](#)
- [Copyright Information for Network Users Policy](#)
- [Electronic Signature Policy](#)
- [Email Usage Policy](#)
- [Event Insurance Requirements](#)
- [Film Screening Policy](#)
- [Food Policy](#)
- School Fundraising Policies
- [International Travel Planning Policy](#)
- [Information Technology \(CUIT\) Policies](#)
- [Internet Domain Name Policy](#)
- [Non-Instructional Classroom Use Policy](#)
- [Outdoor Space Policy](#)
- [Partisan Political Campaign Activities on Campus or at Campus Facilities](#)
- [Policy for a Vigil on Campus](#)
- [University Press Policies](#)
- [Recording Policy](#)
- [Standards and Discipline](#)

- [Student Email Communication Policy](#)
- [Student Group Event Policy and Procedure](#)
- [Undergraduate International Travel Policy or the Student Domestic Travel Policy as A Recognized Group](#)
- [University Event Policy](#)
- [Website Accessibility Policy](#)

Potential policy violations can occur in person, electronically, and online, including with the use of social media. Please note that if members of a student group are concerned that another member of their group may have violated University policy as an individual, they are encouraged to [report the concern](#). They can also contact their Dean of Students, University Life (if an IGB recognized group), or appropriate central administrative oversight (central councils/boards) to discuss the concern(s).

Participation in a student group may not be limited by other members of the student group based on their perception that a University policy has been violated.

In the case of an urgent matter or emergency, interim measures, as outlined below, should be considered.

Interim Measures

Interim measures may be issued by CSSI, in consultation with the Dean of Students (for schools), AVP Student Affairs (for IGB), or appropriate central administrative oversight (central councils/boards) pending consideration of concerns through these procedures. These interim actions will only be taken if it is determined that the recognized student group's behavior may make its presence on campus a danger to the normal operations of the institution, the safety of themselves, others, or to the property of the University or others.

Interim measures may include, but are not limited to, interim suspension of recognition, interim status, loss of access to funds, and restriction of recognized student group privileges.

Should it be discovered during the investigation that an individual student's behavior may make their presence on campus a danger to the normal operations of the institution, the safety of themselves, others, or to the property of the University or others, CSSI or OIE may place restrictions on a student's participation in recognized student group activities prior to the conclusion of the SGARB process through interim measures pursuant to the Standards and Discipline process and/or the Anti-Discrimination and Discriminatory Harassment Policy and Procedures for Students.

Interim measures are typically in place until the Student Group Accountability Review Process has ended, unless new information becomes available to invalidate the original concern. Student groups

issued any interim measures may request a prompt and reasonable review of the need for and terms of any interim measure that directly affects them as a group and may submit evidence in support of their request. Requests for review of the interim measure shall be submitted in writing through the [Group Conduct Submission Form](#). After review by CSSI staff, any request will be directed to the appropriate person such as the Associate Vice President for CSSI and the Dean of Students of the student group's respective school or another approved administrator, for consideration and determination to remove, preserve, or extend an interim measure, if applicable.

Student Group Accountability Review Process

Administrative Resolution

Student Group Conduct will review all reports, in consultation with the appropriate school or central department. If the report does not result in a violation of University or school policy, but a possible student council/board policy, the report will be referred to the appropriate Dean of Students (schools), Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs (IGB), or appropriate central administrative oversight (central councils/boards).

In cases where the University or school policy violation is a first offense and is considered not to be a serious policy violation, the school/University recognized student group advisor or Dean of Students, as applicable, may resolve the matter through an administrative resolution with the student group leaders. Student Group Conduct will forward the report to the Student Group Advisor for review and subsequent educational administrative resolution with the student leaders. After the administrative resolution, Student Group Advisors should document a detailed summary of the alleged policy violation(s), areas of improvement, and future prevention expectations discussed with the student leaders. The summary should also document the conversation with the student leaders to ensure transparent communication, sharing the time, date, and location of the resolution to Student Group Conduct. Any future policy violations by the group may result in the Informal Resolution or SGARB process.

Informal Resolution

In cases where the student group repeated a minor violation of University or school policy, or engaged in a reported offense that does not rise to the level of the SGARB process, then the matter is typically resolved through an Informal Resolution. An Informal Resolution is a facilitated discussion whereby the school/University recognized student group advisor, in collaboration with Student Group Conduct staff, engages in a reflective conversation with the student group leaders regarding the report. An Informal Resolution may include education, training, and a letter of policy reminder or Disciplinary Warning (to be filed in Maxient). All informal resolutions are recorded, and student group leaders are required to attend. Failure to attend will result in a referral to the appropriate individual's student conduct office for noncompliance. After the completion of the

Informal Resolution, any additional policy violation would be referred to the SGARB process, considering the group's prior history and opportunities to correct behavior.

Move to SGARB Process

Engaging in the Investigative Process

If the report is deemed to be a potential violation of University and/or school policy after initial review by Student Group Conduct and is not administratively or informally resolved, a Student Group Conduct staff member (an Associate Director) will be designated to review the report. The Associate Director will investigate and determine if the violation reaches the threshold of a policy violation. If it does, charges will be determined and a notice letter will be sent to the student leader(s) (often the president/chair/equivalent position) of the relevant recognized student group to inform them of the potential violation.

All investigative meetings will be recorded by Student Group Conduct so that a recording of the meeting can be added to the recognized student group's case file. The recognized student group leader may request to review the individual recording of their meeting through the file review process. The student is permitted to schedule an appointment to review the summary of the meeting, type or take handwritten notes from their file, and/or attach their own written addendum to the meeting summary. Appointment requests to review case file contents should be made at least one business day in advance via the online file review form. Please note that meeting recordings can only be reviewed in-person.

Student group leaders are required to attend all investigative meetings. Failure to attend may result in referrals to the individual's student conduct office for noncompliance.

The student group leader(s) will be notified in writing a minimum of twelve (12) business days prior to the scheduled SGARB panel. The Associate Director will explain the student group accountability process to the student group leader(s) in question, and the student leader(s) may read all statements, reports, or other information relevant to the report. The potential violation(s) will be discussed, and the student group leader(s) will be given ample opportunity to present their own account of the incident in question throughout the process. The Associate Director will create a report that provides all the information collected during the investigative process and compile a file for the student group to examine during the file review process.

Preparing for a SGARB Panel

In preparing for a SGARB Panel, the culmination of the formal process, student leaders are required to participate as witnesses and represent the Recognized Student Group in the panel. As a result, witnesses are given certain rights such as the ability to review all documents collected during the investigative process, choose and identify their representatives to Student Group Conduct.

File Review with Student Group Conduct: The student group's president, chair, or equivalent position is encouraged to meet with Student Group Conduct either in person or via Zoom to review the report(s) in the case file. The file will include the incident report (IR), investigative report, and any other supporting documentation relevant to the case. This is the group's only access to the file prior to the SGARB panel. In the interest of privacy, copies of the file will not be distributed nor circulated outside of the SGARB review process and appropriate administrative offices. The student representatives will only be able to take handwritten notes during this file review. Appointment requests to review case file contents should be made at least ten (10) business days in advance via the online [file review form](#).

Choose and Report Representatives: No more than three student group leaders (including the president) will be allowed in the SGARB panel. All must be Columbia University, Barnard College, or Teachers College students and leaders of the student group. Justification for the presence of people other than the recognized student group president, chair, or equivalent position must be provided to Student Group Conduct seven (7) business days prior to the SGARB panel. Failure to abide by this timeline may result in a denial of additional people at the SGARB panel. Extenuating circumstances must be given if the organization fails to meet the deadlines.

Prepare a Statement: The recognized student group is expected to prepare an opening statement to be read at the SGARB panel which summarizes the events described in the IR after performing their own internal review of what occurred. This statement should include any plans for improvement and their ideas for how to make sure similar incidents do not occur in the future, if applicable. Groups are encouraged to provide the opening statement in writing via email to Student Group Conduct no later than five (5) business days in advance of the SGARB panel if the student group wishes for the statement to be provided to the SGARB.

Any written statement and any applicable evidence, not disclosed and submitted during the investigative process, must be submitted no less than 24 business hours prior to the SGARB panel. Students are also encouraged to meet with an Advisor should they need additional support while going through the process.

The content of a written statement should outline the student group's perspective on the incident as a whole. Statements submitted for the SGARB panel process should be no longer than five single-spaced typewritten pages, using size 12 Times New Roman font and 1-inch margins. Attachments must be included in the document or attached to the submitted form. Google Drive links will not be reviewed. If relevant additional attachments or information are provided, the material under consideration must be directly cross-referenced in the five-page statement. While submitting a written statement prior to the panel allows the Board Members time to review it before the panel, this is not required. Alternatively, a student group can read an unsubmitted written statement at the SGARB panel.

Use of AI: All written submissions must be meaningfully authored, reviewed, and adopted by the submitting individual and must reflect that individual's own knowledge, perspective, and good faith participation in the process. The use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools in connection with any matter related to a student's involvement with processes outlined in the Student Group Accountability Policy is subject to the requirements of confidentiality, integrity, accuracy, and good faith participation that govern all aspects of the processes. AI-assisted preparation does not alter this responsibility. The use of generative AI in educational sanctions, which is intended to be reflective in nature, is expressly prohibited.

Student Group Conduct may take appropriate steps to address concerns relating to the use of AI or external tools, including but not limited to, disregarding affected materials or requesting clarification regarding authorship. Nothing in this section shall be construed to abridge disability-related reasonable accommodations approved by the Office of Disability Services.

Notice: When Student Group Conduct begins an investigation for a potential SGARB panel, every Recognized Student Group, has a right to adequate notice which will be sent via University e-mail and will include information related to the scope and purpose of the investigative process. Dates and times for investigative meetings are scheduled by Student Group Conduct in consultation with the student leaders' academic schedule to avoid conflict. The student leaders are also informed of the next steps in the process and their ability to review the relevant documentation prior to any SGARB panel.

Preparation: Student leaders are permitted to utilize their assigned student group advisor during each stage of the investigative process, including the SGARB panel. This includes, and is not limited to, preparing before the investigative meeting, coordinating scheduling with Student Group Conduct and asking questions about the formal SGARB process. The student group advisor may also assist student leaders with writing a written statement to be read at the beginning of the SGARB panel. Student leaders may also request a file review prior to the SGARB panel to review the Investigative Report and all appendices and other documents included for the SGARB members for review.

Privacy: Student groups and leaders going through the SGARB process are afforded privacy, in accordance with University practices and legal requirements.

The SGARB Review Panel

Overview

Following the investigation process, Student Group Conduct will partner with the relevant school/central department to convene the SGARB. The SGARB will convene a review panel to meet the following goals:

- Create a space for discussion between SGARB, Student Group Conduct, and the responding recognized student group leadership.
- Address questions to the Student Group Conduct Associate Director for any points of clarification needed regarding their investigative report.
- Allow the student group to provide a statement regarding the report and the potential violations.
- Allow the panel to ask any additional questions needed to make their determination (both for the student group and the Student Group Conduct Associate Director).

The SGARB will review all evidence provided through the review panel process and will determine whether the recognized student group is responsible for each potential violation of University and/or school policy. If the recognized student group is found in violation, the SGARB will determine the appropriate sanction(s) given the facts and based on past precedent. SGARB co-chairs will provide an outcome letter to Student Group Conduct to be updated in the Maxient file. Student Group Conduct will inform the recognized student group of the SGARB panel's outcome through Maxient, copying the co-chairs of SGARB and the school's Dean of Students (for schools), AVP Student Affairs (for IGB), or appropriate central administrative oversight (central councils/boards). A recognized student group will be deemed to have violated University policy if SGARB concludes that the evidence presented supports the charges against the recognized student group and based on the preponderance of evidence it is more likely than not a violation occurred. A simple majority is needed of at least 4 voting committee members (2 students and 2 professionals), who constitute the SGARB's quorum. If there is a tie vote, the co-chairs of the committee will make the final decision based on evidence presented. If the co-chairs are unable to assist in a resolution a new panel may ultimately need to be convened.

What to Expect During the SGARB Panel

SGARB review panels are closed to all except those directly involved. SGARB panelists are expected to maintain confidentiality and respect the privacy of all individuals and groups involved. This confidentiality requirement will apply only as applicable and all members are required to comply with all applicable laws governing confidentiality and privacy.

The Co-Chairs are responsible for maintaining a respectful, orderly, and fair panel. They may enforce procedural rules, issue warnings, pause or adjourn the panel, and remove any participant whose behavior disrupts the process or compromises the integrity of the panel.

The panel will be recorded by Student Group Conduct so that a recording of the panel can be added to the recognized student group's case file. The recognized student group may request to review the recording of their panel through the file review process. Please note that panel recordings can only be reviewed in-person.

SGARB will hear the potential violations of University/school policy and all the information collected during the investigative process. It is the responsibility of SGARB to consider impartially, all relevant testimony and evidence, determine the facts, and, if a violation is found, determine appropriate sanctions.

SGARB panelists may ask questions of any parties present.

As the SGARB is not a legal process, attorneys serving as legal counsel are not permitted at the panel.

SGARB supports a self-governed student community and, as such, is a student-centered process. Alumni/ae and/or advisors have no role in the SGARB panel, except to provide advice to the student group student leadership in a quiet manner. Advisors may not actively represent or speak for the student group. At the request of the student group's leadership, the advisor may be present during the SGARB panel. Attendance of the advisor must be arranged with Student Group Conduct a minimum of seven (7) business days in advance.

If a recognized student group fails to appear at a SGARB panel after being given proper notice, a minimum of twelve (12) business days in advance of the scheduled SGARB panel, the recognized student group will be given one opportunity to reschedule. If the group does not reschedule within ten (10) business days of the original SGARB panel or misses the second SGARB panel, the evidence in support of the potential violations may be considered and the case reviewed and decided in the group's absence.

The outcome of the SGARB review process may be shared within the University with other faculty, staff, students, or administrators, where such disclosures serve a legitimate educational purpose.

The outcome of the SGARB review process may be shared with the group's chapter/alumni advisor and/or national headquarters staff (when applicable), as determined by Student Group Conduct in consultation with the appropriate school/central administrator.

The agenda for a typical SGARB panel includes:

- Introductions

- Explanation of procedures
- Reading of the potential violations
- Statements and questioning
- Closing statements
- Adjournment (all parties excused)
- Deliberation in closed session of SGARB

Deliberation

After the closing statements, all present except the members of the SGARB and the SGARB Advisor will leave the room.

Based on the facts presented, the SGARB will deliberate on the recognized student group's responsibility (responsible or not responsible) and, if applicable, the recommended sanctions to be imposed. The board's rationale for all decisions must be submitted in writing to Student Group Conduct no later than two (2) business days after the SGARB panel.

Should the SGARB not come to an agreement per these policies and procedures, the Co-Chairs will consult with the SGARB Advisor on next steps, which will include consultation with the Dean of Students (for schools) or appropriate central administrative oversight for central councils/boards to provide support to SGARB to come to an appropriate determination based on the facts presented.

If the SGARB finds the recognized student group not responsible for violating University policy, it will share its rationale and, when appropriate, a written opinion.

In the event that the student group is found responsible, the SGARB members recommend sanctions at that time, unless additional time is needed to be scheduled for continued deliberation.

The SGARB uses the following criteria for determining sanctions:

- The University policy(ies) violated
- The severity of the policy violation
- The recognized student group's previous conduct and overall public relations over the previous five-year period. (Records and correspondence related to this history are coordinated by Co-Chairs and the SGARB Advisor. Depending on the level of severity of the potential violation, the complete disciplinary history of the student group may be considered.)
- The individual or group's compliance with the SGARB procedures and reflections throughout the process.

After the SGARB Review

The SGARB's findings and, if applicable, recommended sanction(s) are transmitted to CSSI.

In cases where the decision of SGARB falls outside of these procedures, including falling outside of past precedent of similar cases, CSSI, in consultation with the school/central department, may send the case back to SGARB for further consideration. The purpose of SGARB is to ensure a fair, transparent, and consistent process with each review.

Ideally, the student group involved is notified of the decision within ten (10) business days after CSSI reviews the decision. CSSI may require additional time to issue the outcome beyond the 10-business day deadline if necessary. Any delay will be communicated to the student leaders via e-mail. In addition, the appropriate governing council(s)/board(s) is notified of the final decision of the case subsequent to the organization's notification.

If it is determined that the violation is the result of an individual's action versus the organization's actions, the board may recommend that the responsible individual be referred to CSSI/Dean's Discipline for an individual review process.

In the event that additional University and/or school policy violations are discovered during the SGARB panel, the recognized student group may be held accountable for those violations. If any potential violations involving other groups not included in the SGARB process are discovered during the review process, the Co-Chairs of SGARB will file a report with that information to CSSI or the appropriate University office (e.g., OIE) no later than one (1) business day after the SGARB panel.

Student groups may appeal SGARB's finding of responsibility and/or sanction, but it is important to note that a disagreement with the finding or sanction(s) is not a ground for appeal. There are three grounds for appeal (see pages 18-19).

Possible Outcomes/Consequences for a Recognized Student Group

The following information provides information on possible sanction outcomes pending an SGARB panel and finding of violation. If SGARB panel members find the student group responsible for violating a university policy, then they will propose a range of sanctions: a minimum sanction and a maximum sanction. CSSI will review the proposed outcomes and determine which sanction to apply. An organization's conduct history is a factor in determining appropriate sanctions for subsequent violations. Additionally, status sanctions (Disciplinary Warning through Derecognition) will progress in seriousness for subsequent violations. Though each case is considered uniquely, certain violations may result in minimum sanctioning due to the severity of the actual or potential harm. For example, if a student group is found responsible for hazing, the lowest status sanction they should expect to receive is Conditional Disciplinary Probation. Additionally, specific factors will escalate an outcome. These include, but are not limited to, forced alcohol or illegal substance consumption, repeated disruptions, hospitalizations resulting from the activity, physical altercations, and/or threats of violence.

Please note that interim measures may also be issued by CSSI or OIE, in consultation with the Dean of Students (for schools), AVP Student Affairs (for IGB), or appropriate central administrative oversight (central councils/boards) prior to the start of the SGARB process, if deemed necessary. Please see the Interim Measures section (see page 11) for detailed information.

If a recognized student group is found responsible for violating a University and/or school policy, the recognized student group will be informed of the consequence(s) with a letter from the SGARB, copying the Dean of Students (for schools), AVP Student Affairs (for IGB), or appropriate central administrative oversight (central councils/boards). Sanctions may include, but are not limited to:

Disciplinary Warning: An official warning that an RSG has been found in violation of University policy and any future misconduct by the RSG may result in a more serious disciplinary response from the University.

Educational Sanctions: In conjunction with any other sanction listed in this section, an RSG may be assigned educational requirements. These types of sanctions are intended to provide the RSG with opportunities to repair the harm of their actions and to engage in experiences that will help the RSG to reflect on the behavior and assist in avoiding future violations of University policy. Educational Sanctions may include, but are not limited to, workshops, training, performance improvement plans, community service, and restitution or restorative acts. If the RSG has any outstanding (overdue) Educational Sanctions at the end of their Probation or Suspension, the Probation or Suspension status will remain in effect until such time that all requirements are met and approved by CSSI.

Deduction of funds from the Recognized Student Group's budgetary allocation: Funds may be removed from a recognized student group account as a means to address financial impacts of a recognized student group's behavior (for example, destruction of property).

Freezing of the Student Group's ability to access its budgetary allocation or to reserve space: A period of time during which a recognized student group is unable to reserve University space for student group activities or a recognized student group is unable to utilize their groups funds due to student group accounts being frozen through the appropriate governing body. The RSG remains registered and has access to all other RSG privileges and benefits upon the condition that it complies with University and school policies.

Travel restrictions: A period of time during which a recognized student group is unable to travel as an RSG. The RSG remains registered and has access to all other RSG privileges and benefits upon the condition that it complies with University policies.

Temporary or permanent removal of student leaders from serving in leadership positions in the recognized student group: The prohibition and/or removal of one or more officers from a recognized student group due to their specific role in the policy violation. Removal may be

temporary or permanent, based on the severity of the violation(s). This is an outcome distinct from the general policy that prohibits students not in good standing with the University from serving in any leadership capacity in a recognized student group.

Social probation: This sanction is applied as a result of a breach of specific event and/or risk management guidelines. Social probation is effective immediately and remains through the date specified by SGARB. During the term of the social probation, should the recognized student group violate any additional policies, action will be taken appropriate to the level of the new violation, and may include no less than one full semester of social suspension.

Social suspension: Social suspension is effective immediately and remains in effect through the date specified by the SGARB. During the term of the social suspension, the recognized student group will hold no social functions of any nature.

Conditional Disciplinary Probation of the Recognized Student Group:

This is a period of time during which a recognized student group remains in good standing, and has access to RSG privileges and benefits on the condition that it complies with University policies. Additional restrictive conditions may be imposed as part of the disciplinary probation period and will vary depending on the severity of the policy violation (for example, travel restrictions, loss of funding, loss of space, etc.). Violation of Conditional Disciplinary Probations requirements (e.g., violating policy or imposed sanctions) shall be grounds for further sanctions up to and including Derecognition. All assigned Educational Sanctions must be completed prior to the conclusion of the Conditional Disciplinary Probation period; otherwise, the probation will remain in effect until the Educational Sanctions have been completed and approved by CSSI.

Disciplinary Probation of the Recognized Student Group: A period of time during which a recognized student group is permitted to remain registered and have access to RSG privileges and benefits upon the condition that it complies with University policies. Additional restrictive conditions may be imposed as part of the disciplinary probation period and will vary depending on the severity of the policy violation (for example, travel restrictions, loss of funding, loss of space, etc.). Violation of disciplinary probation requirements (e.g., violating policy or imposed sanctions) shall be grounds for further sanctions up to and including Derecognition. All assigned Educational Sanctions must be completed prior to the conclusion of the disciplinary probation period; otherwise, the probation will remain in effect until the Educational Sanctions have been completed and approved by CSSI.

Disciplinary Suspension of the Recognized Student Group: A temporary loss of an RSG's University privileges and benefits for a specified period of time. The purpose of disciplinary suspension is to provide a focused opportunity for an RSG to address issues that led to its violation(s) while limiting the day-to-day organizational activities of the group. The terms of disciplinary suspension will include, but are not limited to, ceasing all organizational activity. This includes not co-sponsoring

activities or coordinating with other student groups; not hosting or assisting with any official or unofficial activities including business meetings, new member activities, intake/recruitment, philanthropic and/or community service events, alumni events, educational programming, and/or social events. In addition, the RSG may not use the Columbia University name in any advertisements or statements, including on-campus, off-campus, or on social media. The Dean of Students (schools) or the appropriate administrative oversight (central councils/boards) may work with the Associate Vice President for CSSI or the Executive Director of Community Standards and Accountability to allow additional organizational activity that would assist in the RSG's development in the spirit of the SGARB outcomes and assist them in getting in good standing. Additional violations of University policies while under disciplinary suspension may lead to Student Group Derecognition. Notices of disciplinary suspension will be sent to campus service providers (e.g., reservations offices, funding providers). All assigned Educational Sanctions must be completed by the RSG prior to the conclusion of disciplinary suspension; otherwise, the disciplinary suspension will remain in effect until the Educational Sanctions have been completed and approved by CSSI. The RSG will typically have a minimum of one year of disciplinary probation following its disciplinary suspension.

De-recognition of the recognized student group: The revocation of a recognized student group's status and privileges. De-recognized groups are required to cease operations and disband as a recognized student group. De-recognized groups lose all University privileges.

Recommendation for charter revocation: An official request to a recognized student group's national or international office that the local chapter's charter be revoked.

One of the key goals of this educational process is for the recognized student group to better understand and adhere to University and/or school policies. This is separate and apart from student council/board specific student group policies.

Appeal Process

Student groups may appeal SGARB's finding of responsibility and/or sanction based on the three grounds for appeal below, but it is important to note that a disagreement with the finding or sanction(s) is not a ground for appeal. There are three grounds for appeal:

- **Procedural error:** An appeal based on procedural error must identify with specificity each alleged error(s) within the investigative and/or review panel process and the ways in which the specified error(s) substantially affected the decision and/or sanction to the detriment of the recognized student group.
- **New information:** An appeal based on new information must explain why this information was not available or not provided to the Associate Director at the time of the SGARB review panel or in a timely manner, and how this information would substantially alter the decision rendered by the SGARB. Additionally, if a recognized student group declined to participate

or withdrew from the process, the appeal administrator will not consider information that the recognized student group could have provided if they had fully participated in the process.

- **Inappropriate sanction:** An appeal based on the imposed sanction must explain why a sanction is inappropriate based on the weight of the information provided during the investigation, review panel, and/or sanction phases of the SGARB process.

The purpose of an appeal is not to initiate a review of substantive issues of fact or to allow for a second, new determination of whether a violation of the University policy has occurred. An appeal of a decision should be directed to Student Group Conduct within five (5) business days of the date the recognized student group received the decision letter. Student Group Conduct will forward the appeal to the appropriate administrator for review. The appeal administrator will be selected based on the recognized student group requesting the appeal and will be either the correlating Dean of Students (for schools), Senior Associate Vice President of Student Life (for IGB), or appropriate central administrative oversight (central councils/boards) and/or appropriate designees.

Student Council/Governing Board Policies and Procedures Alleged Violations

A student council/board may hold student groups accountable to their own policies and procedures, those not falling within University and/or school policy. Alleged violations of student council/board specific policy violations do not fall within SGARB's purview. Examples of cases that may be reviewed by established student council/board review processes include, but are not limited, to:

- Student council/board specific financial policy violations (those that do not also violate University policies), such as intentionally overspending funds, not submitting paperwork in a timely manner that results in late/no payment to an artist/speaker/performer, not spending allocation in accordance with a governing board's spending guidelines, etc.
- Programming in ways that do not align with the governing board's constitution or the constitution of the recognized student group.
- Maintaining group membership in a manner that does not align with the membership requirements set forth by the governing board.
- Failing to meet governing board requirements, such as attendance at town halls, completion of allocation packets, etc.



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800 Watson Hall
612 West 115th Street, 8th Floor
New York, NY 10025



Phone: 212-854-6872
Email: groupconduct@columbia.edu
Website: cssi.columbia.edu