

Roles and Responsibilities of Panel Conference Participants

Chairperson

The Chairperson is a student conduct administrator who facilitates the panel conference process and serves as the accused student's main contact. He or she will assist the student by holding a pre-conference information session individually with the student prior to the panel conference to answer any questions, explain the student conduct process and procedures, review pending charges and potential sanctions, connect students to additional resources, and help students further prepare for beginning their conduct process.

During the panel conference, the Chairperson is responsible for:

- Greeting the accused student, their advisor, any witnesses, and/or any other individual who will be participating in the panel process.
- Answering questions.
- Operating the recording equipment.
- Reading the panel conference script and facilitating the conference.
- Documenting the outcome of the panel conference in a written letter.
- Assisting the panel members with questions or needs that may occur during the conference.

Student Conduct Administrator

The Student Conduct Administrator represents Texas A&M University during the panel conference process. He or she will alert the accused student via a written charge letter that information forwarded to the Offices of the Dean of Student Life indicates that there may have been a violation of the University Student Rules and may request a Student Life Conduct Conference.

During the panel conference, the Student Conduct Administrator is responsible for:

- Preparing information that supports that a University Student Rule has been violated
- Presenting the information that identifies the potential violation (i.e., Police Reports, Probable Cause Statements, Incidents Reports, etc.)
- Presenting witnesses on behalf of the university
- Questioning the accused student
- Questioning witnesses that are presented on behalf of the accused student
- Informing the Panel Members of the accused student's prior conduct history
- Informing the Panel Members of the Sanctioning Guidelines as they apply to the current conference
- Working with the complainant and/or complainant's advisor in situations where there is an alleged violation of the sexual misconduct, dating violence, domestic violence, and/or stalking policy

Panel Members

University Panel Members are a group of trained administrators, staff and/or students who serve as conduct officers during the panel conference process. Panel Members listen to all of the information presented during the conduct conference and use that information to make decisions regarding the accused student's level of responsibility and appropriate sanctions if necessary.

During the panel conference, Panel Members are responsible for:

- Reading the information that identifies the potential violation (i.e., Police Reports, Probable Cause Statements, Incidents Reports, etc.)
- Listening to and considering all subsequent information presented by the Student Conduct Administrator, accused student and/or witnesses including character witness documents
- Questioning the accused student, Student Conduct Administrator, any witnesses, and/or complainant
- Deciding the accused student's level of responsibility based on a preponderance of the information standard
- Deciding appropriate sanction, if necessary, based on the following criteria:
 - The nature of the violation
 - The student's prior conduct history
 - Mitigating/aggravating circumstances
 - Motivation for the behavior
 - The educational and community impact

Observers

Observers are other administrators, staff, and/or students who may be present during the accused student's panel conference for educational and training purposes. These observers are usually new panel members who are attending as a part of their training and continuing education process. Observers do not participate in the conduct conference in any way and are allowed admission to the conference with the consent of the accused student.

Advisors

An advisor or counselor is a support person who may attend student conduct related meetings with the accused student or a complainant to provide advice or direction, but may not represent the accused student or complainant, directly question or cross-examine witnesses, or address Panel Members, except in a case where the university is represented by an attorney. The accused student or complainant may have only one person serve as an advisor or counselor. Other Texas A&M students who are charged in the same fact pattern or who are "not in good standing" with the university are not eligible to serve as an advisor or counselor.

During the panel conference, a student's advisor is responsible for:

- Serving as a source of support for the accused student
- Assisting the accused student with filling out paperwork related to the panel conference process

- Guiding the accused student in sharing information regarding the incident and/or charge(s), presentation/ questioning of witnesses, and answering questions from the Panel Members

Witnesses

Witnesses are individuals who may be called by the university and/or the accused student and/or the complainant to share factual information regarding the incident and/or charge(s) in question. A witness can be any person who has first-hand knowledge of the event. There is no limit to the number of witnesses who can participate in the panel conference process. Character witness statements may be submitted in written form only.

During the panel conference, witnesses are responsible for:

- Presenting factual information regarding the incident and/or charge(s) in question
- Answering questions from the Panel Members, Student Conduct Administrator, accused student, and/or complainant

If a witness is unable to participate in the panel conference process in person, the Chairperson may approve the submission of a written witness statement for consideration.

You will have the opportunity to provide documentation and/or witnesses who have first-hand knowledge of the incident(s) resulting in charges. You must provide the Student Conduct Office with a list of witnesses in writing and any documentation you wish to have considered during your Panel at least one full business day prior to the start of your Panel. Additional witnesses and/or information may be admitted at the discretion of the Chairperson. This documentation may be provided to the Student Conduct Office in person or via e-mail at scrs@tamu.edu.

Complainant

In situations where there is an alleged violation of the sexual misconduct, dating violence, domestic violence, and/or stalking policy, the person impacted by the alleged conduct may be in the room during the panel conference. The complainant may be interviewed during the investigation process and may provide written statements regarding the alleged conduct. The complainant is not required to be present during the panel process. Previous behavior of the complainant will not be discussed during the panel conference unless it is deemed specifically relevant to the conference by the Chairperson.

During the panel conference, the complainant's role may be:

- Providing information regarding the alleged behavior
- Asking questions of the charged student and any witnesses, and/or answering questions from the Student Conduct Administrator, the Panel, and/or the charged student
- Providing an Impact Statement during the sanctioning portion of the conference should there be a finding of responsibility