

# Preparing for a Hearing

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FOR ACCUSED STUDENTS

Student Conduct  
CSU CHANNEL ISLANDS

# Introduction

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## Purpose of this document

The purpose of this document is to provide resources and information to students who have allegedly committed one or more violations of the *Student Conduct Code* or other related University policies to prepare for a formal hearing.

This document is not an exhaustive guide, nor does it replace any information contained within [CSU Executive Order 1098-Student Conduct Procedures](#).

Additionally, this guide is not intended for you to “win” a case, but it has been designed to assist you in understanding the student conduct process.

If you have any questions regarding the information presented in this document please contact the Student Conduct office.

Student Conduct

805-437-3332

[studentconduct@csuci.edu](mailto:studentconduct@csuci.edu)

<http://www.csuci.edu/studentlife/student-conduct/>

# Getting Started

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## Focus on Your Classwork

Preparing for a hearing can be stressful, especially when you are balancing a full course load and possibly working during the semester. Subsequently, it is important to remember to focus on your classwork during this period. You are presumed “not responsible” until proven otherwise, therefore your classes should remain a priority during this time period.

## Seek Support

Sometimes students feel overwhelmed when going through the student conduct process so it is important to find individuals to support you. This may include your parents/guardians, family members, friends, a counselor, faculty member or whomever. Our website has a list of available resources to you within the campus community and off-campus. Please go to our resource section on our website for more information.

## Prepare

It is recommended that you do not wait until the last minute to prepare for a hearing. A hearing is something to take seriously as it pertains to your academic career. As soon as you have had your initial meeting with a staff member in the Student Conduct office, you should begin preparing your case.

# Before the Hearing

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## Steps to Prepare

- Review the hearing notification that includes the charge(s) and make sure you understand the charge(s). If you do not understand the charge(s) consult with staff in the Student Conduct office or with an advisor.
- Set a reminder on your phone or planner with the date, time and location of the hearing (that information is located in the hearing notification).
- If you have not already been provided a copy of the report and relevant evidence from the Student Conduct office, request a copy.
- Read [CSU Executive Order 1098-Student Conduct Procedures](#).
- Are there any witnesses that observed the alleged incident? If so, contact those individuals and request that they attend the hearing. If they cannot attend, ask them if they could be available via phone or submit a written statement of their account. ***Please submit in writing the names and contact information of the witness(es) that will be present three working days prior to your hearing to [studentconduct@csuci.edu](mailto:studentconduct@csuci.edu).***

- You are permitted to have an advisor present during the hearing. However, this individual may not speak on your behalf. Refer to CSU Executive Order 1098, Article III, Section C on the role of advisors. Attorneys are only permitted if the recommended sanction is expulsion, if there are pending felony charges, or if the case has been categorized as a discrimination, harassment, retaliation, Title IX (sexual assault, dating/domestic violence, stalking).
- Prepare any relevant evidence (if applicable) to present during the hearing.
- Prepare questions to ask of your witness(es), if applicable.
- Prepare your opening statement, narrative account and closing statement.

## Prepare your Opening Statement

During the hearing you may present an opening statement (this is not required). An opening statement is a summary of what you intend to present during your narrative account. You may include an overview of the types of evidence you intend to introduce and/or witnesses to support your case. This can also serve as a way to introduce yourself to the hearing officer, for example providing them information about your major, career plans, involvement on campus, etc.

## Prepare your Narrative Account

During the hearing you will be asked to present a narrative account. The narrative provides you with the opportunity to share your account or statement as to what occurred related to the alleged incident in question. In addition, during your narrative account you may present evidence to support your statements.

## Tips on Preparing your Narrative Account

- Write up your narrative in advance of the hearing. It is recommended (but not required) that your narrative be written in chronological order to make it easier for the hearing officer to better understand your account.
- Try to stay on topic, avoid undue repetition, and present facts relevant to the incident in question.
- Focus on your own behavior.
- Determine appropriate times during your narrative to introduce the evidence you have prepared, if applicable.

## Prepare your Closing Statement

After the narrative accounts have been presented, the hearing officer will ask if you would like to provide a closing statement. The closing statement is a way to summarize your main points relative to the incident. Additionally, the University will present recommended sanctions during their closing statement. During your closing statement you may offer alternative sanction options to the University for the hearing officer to consider if you are found responsible for violating the *Student Conduct Code*. You do not have to provide a sanction recommendation; however, this is your opportunity to voice your thoughts on what you feel would be appropriate.

# At the Hearing

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The hearing is an informal proceeding not comparable to a criminal trial. While a hearing may be intimidating or stressful, the student conduct process should be seen as an educational process. Hopefully, by going through this process it will reinforce your values, make you aware of CI's policies, and provide you with an opportunity to articulate a position.

During the hearing, the hearing officer's objective is to determine the facts of the case, to make a determination of responsibility regarding the alleged violations of University regulations, and to recommend appropriate disciplinary sanctions, if necessary. If you have procedural questions throughout the hearing process, the hearing officer may answer any questions you have relative to the process.

## Tips for the Hearing

- Make sure you are on time.
- If you do not attend the hearing, the hearing may be conducted in your absence and the information pertaining to a hearing will be reviewed without your participation.
- The information that you and/or your witnesses present should be truthful. A pattern of lying and fabrication may be considered when sanctions are determined. Additionally, intentionally providing false information during the hearing may result in further disciplinary charges.
- Be courteous and respectful to all participants.
- If you have an advisor, be sure they understand their responsibilities and remind them that they may not speak on your behalf. Advisors that are disruptive to the hearing process may be asked to leave.
- Listen to all accounts provided and if you need to request a recess to review information that is presented during the hearing, request this of the hearing officer.

# Hearing Procedures

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# After the Hearing

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Once the hearing has concluded, you have successfully fulfilled your obligations in the student conduct process. Following the hearing, the Hearing Officer will write a Hearing Officer's report that includes the findings of fact, determination of responsibility, and sanction recommendations to the Vice President for Student Affairs (VPSA). The report is sent to the VPSA within 10 working days following the hearing.

After the Hearing Officer submits their findings and recommendation to the VPSA, the VPSA will review the case in its totality and issue a final decision within 10 working days. ***The VPSA's decision is considered to be final in the student conduct process.*** Pending the outcome, the Student Conduct office will follow up with you regarding any sanctions you may have to complete (if applicable).

## What to Do While Waiting for the Final Decision

- Wait patiently for the final decision
- Continue to focus on your academics and important occurrences in your life
- Access available resources on campus such as Counseling & Psychological Services for confidential support (805-437-2088)
- Contact the Student Conduct office if you have any questions or concerns (805-437-3332)