

Student Rights & Responsibilities

The administration of Copiah-Lincoln Community College recognizes the right of each student to a fair hearing with regard to any student grievance.

Student Rights

To ensure the protection of the rights of every student in disciplinary matters, Copiah-Lincoln Community College has established the Judicial Council. In all disciplinary matters every student has the right to appeal the decision of college personnel before this Council. Students have three days in which to make a decision to accept or reject the disciplinary procedures.

Appeals must be in writing. A hearing is not required, but in cases not heard by the Council, the student must sign a waiver refusing the right to a hearing. Upon signing this waiver, the student accepts the decision of the college personnel.

The Judicial Council shall be composed of the following members: three (3) students, three (3) faculty members, and three (3) administrative officers. The three students shall be the president of the Student Government Association, the president of the freshman class, and the president of the sophomore class. The vice president of each of the three listed groups shall serve as alternates. These three alternates may attend all meetings of the Council, but they may vote only upon the absence of the respective president. Should a hearing be required at any time, and the freshman and sophomore officers have not been elected, the officers of the Student Government Association shall serve in the following order: president, vice president, secretary, treasurer; so that a total of three students is serving. At the pre-school faculty meeting, the total faculty shall elect by popular vote, three (3) faculty members and a first and second alternate to serve on the Council. The alternates may attend all meetings of the Council in a non-participatory capacity, but may vote only upon the absence of one or more of the regular members. If one regular member is unable to attend, both alternates shall be contacted. Prior to the first meeting of the Judicial Council, the President of Copiah-Lincoln Community College shall appoint three (3) administrative officers and three alternates, not to include the Dean of Student Services or the Assistant Dean of Student Services (Wesson Campus), Vice President of the Natchez Campus or Vice President of the Simpson County Center, to serve on the Council. In the event of absences at a meeting of the Council, even after notification of alternates or absences by members without notification to the Chairman at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the meeting, a total of any five (5) members shall constitute a quorum and the meeting of the Council shall be valid and binding. Alternates may be substituted if a case pertains to an area of their particular expertise.

After the Judicial Council has been completely constituted, the Dean of Student Services (Wesson Campus), Vice President of the Natchez Campus or Vice President of the Simpson County Center shall elect one member of the Council to serve as Chairman. The Dean of Student Services (Wesson Campus), Vice President of the Natchez Campus or Vice President of the Simpson County Center shall instruct the Chairman as to the policies and procedures. The Chairman shall vote only in the event of a tie among the other members.

In the event that a student member of the Council is involved in a hearing of the Council as either defendant or witness, the member shall be ineligible to serve on the Council for that hearing and an alternate shall replace said member.

For all hearings before the Judicial Council, the Dean of Student Services (Wesson Campus), Vice President of the Natchez Campus or Vice President of the Simpson County Center or their designated representative shall present the charges against the student and the evidence to support the charges.

After hearing all evidence and information pertinent to the case in question, the Judicial Council shall deliberate in executive session. Only the constituted members of the Council shall be present during these deliberations. It shall be the responsibility of the Council to decide, (1) guilt or innocence of the accused, and (2) the sanctions to be levied by the institution if a guilty decision is rendered. A majority of the members present at the hearing shall be sufficient to determine guilt or innocence. In the event that expulsion, dismissal or suspension is the sanction levied, a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the members present shall be required.

The decision of the Council shall be relayed in writing to the Dean of Student Services (Wesson Campus), Vice President of the Natchez Campus or Vice President of the Simpson County Center by the Chairman of the Council. The Dean of Student Services (Wesson Campus), Vice President of the Natchez Campus or Vice President of the Simpson County Center, shall in turn, relay the decision in writing to the student. It shall be the responsibility of the Assistant Dean of Student Services (Wesson Campus), Vice President of the Natchez Campus or Vice President of the Simpson County Center to enforce all decisions of the Judicial Council.

A summary of all facts pertinent to each case heard by the Judicial Council shall be prepared by the Dean of Student Services (Wesson Campus), Vice President of the Natchez Campus or Vice President of the Simpson County Center and relayed to the President of Copiah-Lincoln Community College.

The accused student may appeal the decision of the Judicial Council to the President of Copiah-Lincoln Community College. A student wishing to appeal must notify the Dean of Student Services (Wesson Campus), Vice President of the Natchez Campus or Vice President of the Simpson County Center in writing within three (3) days after a decision has been rendered by the Council. Should a student request an appeal, the parents and/or guardians of the student shall be notified of the action. In all appeal hearings before the President, the Chairman of the Judicial Council, or the Chairman's designated representative shall represent the Council.

The following policies, procedures, and rights shall be in effect for all cases heard by the Judicial Council:

1. The student shall be notified at least three (3) days in advance of the hearing, except when by mutual agreement, the time of the hearing and the date the hearing, the place of the hearing, a statement of the charges to be brought against the student, the right to have witnesses in the student's behalf at the hearing, and the student's right to appeal.
2. All individuals appearing at the hearing will be asked to sign a statement attesting to the truth of their statement made before the Council.

3. The charges against the student shall be read before the Council in the presence of the student.
4. The student will be asked to plead “guilty or not guilty” to the charges.
5. The evidence against the student shall be presented to the Council in the presence of the student.
6. The student shall be allowed to present his/her evidence and the witnesses in his/her behalf.
7. The decision of the council shall be transmitted to the student in writing.
8. The decision of the Council may be appealed to the President of Copiah-Lincoln Community College.

Complaint to the State

After exhausting the College’s grievance policy, a student who did not receive a satisfactory resolution at the College may follow the State complaint process of the Mississippi Commission on College Accreditation (MCCA). Information can be found at: http://www.mississippi.edu/mcca/student_complaint_process.asp

Students who wish to initiate and file a complaint at the State level must do so at this website. Please note that according to the MCCA policy, in order for an investigation to be initiated, the student must have exhausted all available grievance procedures established by the Institution.

Privacy Act Policy

Copiah-Lincoln Community College adheres to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974 (Buckley Amendment). The College discloses education records without a student’s prior written consent under the FERPA exception for disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the College in an administrative, supervisory, academic or research, or support staff position (including law enforcement unit personnel and health staff); a person or company with whom the College has contracted as its agent to provide a service instead of using College employees or officials (such as an attorney, auditor, or collection agent); a person serving on the Board of Trustees; or a student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibilities for the College.

Upon request, the College also discloses education records without consent to officials of another school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

V.I.P Records - Release of Student Information

It shall be the policy of Copiah-Lincoln Community College to release only “directory” information on students to third parties without permission from such individual students. Any student information of a confidential nature shall not be released without the expressed written consent of the student or upon the proper service of a court order. The release of such information without expressed consent shall be approved by the President or his designee. The following is considered student directory information:

1. Name
2. Home address
3. Telephone listing
4. Date and place of birth
5. Major field of study

6. Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
7. Weight and height of person in athletics
8. Dates of attendance
9. Degrees and awards received
10. Most recent previous educational agency or institution attended

Student Rights

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the College receives a request for access. A student should submit to the registrar, vice president, head of the academic department, or other appropriate official, a written request that identifies the record(s) the student wishes to inspect. The College official will make arrangements for access and notify the student of the time and place where records may be inspected. If the records are not maintained by the College official to whom the request was submitted, that official shall advise the student of the correct official to whom the request should be addressed.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA. A student who wishes to ask the College to amend a record should write the College official responsible for the record, clearly identify the part of the record the student wants changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the College decides not to amend the record as requested, the College will notify the student in writing of the decision and the student's right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to provide written consent before the College discloses personally identifiable information from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.
4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the College to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-5901

Buckley Amendment Waiver

Students may grant permission to Copleah-Lincoln Community College personnel to provide information to parents or legal guardians and/or to other parties designated on any and all matters pertaining to curriculum, grades, and financial statements. A Buckley Amendment Waiver Form is available in the Admissions Office at the Wesson and Natchez campuses and the Simpson County Center.