

## **HEARING BODIES**

### **Student Community Court**

The function of the Student Community Court (SCC) is to provide a fair hearing and decision for students, and by students, in cases arising under the jurisdiction of the SCC.

The Student Community Court adjudicates minor violations that are not likely to result in suspension or expulsion, when responsibility is not freely admitted and/or there is dispute of evidence. Violations of a more serious nature (those that would result in suspension or expulsion) fall under the jurisdiction of the Dean of Students.

The SCC consists of a Chief Justice elected by the student body and up to twelve Associate Justices, who will be appointed by the SGA Senate with approval of the SGA President and by nomination of the Chief Justice. The SCC has the right to adopt its bylaws in order to function consistently and appropriately. The bylaws must not contradict Methodist University policies or the SGA Constitution.

The SCC has power to require the attendance of any witness to testify in any matter related to the hearing process. Witnesses who cannot attend the hearing must submit a pertinent reason before the appointed hearing date for not being present at the hearing. The SCC may impose sanctions of up to \$100 for failure to cooperate or attend a hearing.

A hearing body of three to five Associate Justices and the Chief Justice will hear cases. If the decision of the Associate Justices results in a tie, the Chief Justice will cast a tie-breaking vote.

All sessions of the court are closed. Records of the hearings will be maintained but will not be audio recorded. If a student is found responsible, the Student Community Court may impose sanctions, with the exception of suspension, as authorized by the Methodist University Student Code of Conduct. Students who are found responsible by the SCC may appeal the decision to the Dean of Students.

### **Residence Life Staff**

The Director, Assistant Director, and Residential Coordinators from the Residence Life staff conduct educational conferences. In the case that educational conferences cannot be resolved, the case may be sent to the Student Community Court for a hearing. Educational conferences are not audio recorded.

### **Vice President for Student Affairs**

The Vice President for Student Affairs (hereafter referred to as the Dean of Students) will hear charges of violations of a more serious nature (those that can result in suspension or expulsion). All hearings before the Dean of Students are closed. The Dean of Students shall conduct such investigations and interviews, as the Dean deems appropriate. The Dean may assign such sanctions that the Dean deems appropriate. Sanctions by the Dean of Students may be appealed to the Appeals Board.

### **Associate Dean of Students**

The Vice President of Student Affairs and Dean of Students may designate the Associate Dean of Students to hear Student Code of Conduct violations. In this case, the Associate Dean of Students will have the same authority rendered to the Dean of Students.

### **Administrative Hearing Board**

The administrative hearing board may be used for conduct cases involving personal violence, sexual misconduct or where there is a great dispute of the evidence. It is the decision of the Dean of Students or the Associate Dean of Students to use this board. The board is appointed by the Dean of Students. It is comprised of up to five faculty and staff members. At least three board members and the chair of the Administrative Hearing Board participate in each hearing. Students will be notified of the hearing date, time, and location(s).

### **Dean of Students' Hearing and Appeal Procedures**

If a student faces possible suspension or expulsion from Methodist University, he or she will have a conduct hearing with the Dean of Students. All hearings before the Dean of Students are closed; however, students are entitled to bring one Methodist University student, faculty or staff member other than the Methodist University Appeal Advisor to their hearing to be present during the time they are being questioned. Accused students will have the opportunity to call witnesses and present evidence to the Dean of Students. Character witnesses are not considered valid sources of evidence and may not be considered or heard when determining the outcome of the case.

In cases that can result in suspension or expulsion, it is the aim of the Dean of Students to complete the initial hearing and any appeals as quickly as possible. If a student is suspended or expelled from Methodist University, he or she will be given a letter outlining the sanctions being imposed. The Dean of Students will also forward a copy of the letter to the Associate Dean of Students to be placed in the student's code of conduct file. All appropriate departments and offices will be notified of the disposition of the student's case by an email sent from the Dean of Students.

If the result of the hearing is suspension or expulsion, the student will have two business days following the official email notification of the conduct decision to submit an appeal. If the student chooses not to appeal, the student must leave campus, and if applicable, the residence halls within two days of the time the decision is made. If the student chooses to appeal the suspension or expulsion, he or she will be allowed to remain in class, and if he or she is a residential student, he or she will be allowed to remain in the residence halls until the appeal process has been concluded. If the appeal process upholds the decision of the Dean of Students, the student must leave campus two days after the final decision has been rendered.

### **Note:**

If the Dean of Students determines that a student poses a safety risk to anyone in the Methodist University Community, the Dean of Students has the authority to remove the student from campus, including classes, immediately.