

ICCCSSO
Suspension Re-entry Protocol, Second Request
Conducted by Julia Waskosky, KCC, January 2014

<p>Sometimes when a student wants to return to campus after a suspension, I have great concern about the potential for another violation to the Code of Conduct or even the safety of others. Our BIT group is working on a policy that would require students like these to undergo a medical and/or mental health assessment by a college appointed physician. Do any of your institutions have such a policy and medical/mental health release forms that you would feel comfortable sharing? If so, may I request your response by Jan 30? If your college does not have a policy, then a response is not necessary.</p>	
<p>Susan Martin Dean, Students College of DuPage</p>	<p>At COD we do not have a formalized process but follow the same protocol as Harper listed below. Regarding the mental health assessment evaluations, we now have contract with Cadence Health for a Student Employee Program (similar to an EAP) that affords us the opportunity to obtain outside evaluations. This is our first semester and our BIT team has already utilized their professional services.</p>
<p>Nancy Partch Kishwaukee College</p>	<p>Kishwaukee College is working on a return policy for suspended students. Currently they need to contact me prior to requesting readmission and the TAT team reviews the written request and determines if the student can return and under what conditions. I have requested a mental health evaluation from one student so far with no follow through at this point. Attached is the counseling release form we use. I need to create a separate form for the TAT team. If you have any questions please let me know, it is an evolving issue on our campus.</p>
<p>Joianne Smith Oakton Community College</p>	<p>We use the same process at Oakton.</p>
<p>Linda Moore Parkland College</p>	<p>Same at Parkland. The only time we might require the psych eval for a student to return is when we have had to do an involuntary administrative withdrawal, which is a very rare occurrence -- i.e., when the student's behavior is so dangerous/threatening/disruptive that we believe we should, at least temporarily, put the student conduct process on hold and get the student evaluated; or when a student facing conduct charges wants to introduce evidence of a mental disorder.</p> <p>Same as Harper and Waubonsee Community College.</p>

<p>Amy Diaz Lynn Perkins Rock Valley Community College</p>	<p>Not sure if you want to include our plan but it might be helpful for your colleagues. We need to revise our BIT plan with the changes in laws, best practice, and RVC staffing. I indicated this below.</p> <p>“Sometimes when a student wants to return to campus after a suspension, I have great concern about the potential for another violation to the Code of Conduct or even the safety of others”.</p> <p>It is always possible that a student upon their return after a break will misbehave in the future so we require a suspended student seeking re-enroll to meet with the Dean of Students. We talk about what they have done to change their behavior such as therapy/reflection/action steps, etc. We ask specifically how they will make future decisions and what support mechanisms they have in place, etc. All returning suspended student remain on disciplinary probation and they are told during the mandatory meeting if another violation occurs it may result in immediate suspension or permanent expulsion. The most important thing is we talk with the student to find out what they have done to change their behavior and why they believe they are ready to return. This is also a good time to talk about goals/purpose/focus. This is not a written policy just best practice.</p> <p>In some cases we have asked for a letters from Professional Therapist (depends on the reason for suspension). A suspended student whose behavior was brought to the attention of the BIT, they were required to complete a mental health assessment and a suspension was warranted due to the threatening nature of the incident, will be required to provide our BIT with a letter from a professional upon their re-enrollment. The therapist letter must indicate the student is capable of returning to the college environment. We do not ask for diagnosis, (BIT is focusing on behavior) but we do ask the student to sign a release of information from their professional therapist to our college Counselor. We then set up a plan for the returning student to check in with our Counselor, the frequency depends on the situation.</p> <p>Our BIT group is working on a policy that would require students like these to undergo a medical and/or mental</p>
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	<p>health assessment by a college appointed physician. Do any of your institutions have such a policy and medical/mental health release forms that you would feel comfortable sharing? We have provided a copy of our BIT plan that outlines our procedure, page 17 provides information related to mandated mental health assessment and suspension. This plan will undergo a second revision 2014 due law changes, best practice, and staffing changes at RVC. Please feel free to adapt for your college. We received this template from South West College.</p>
<p>Melinda L. James, Ed.D. Vice President of Student Development Waubonsee Community College</p>	<p>Ditto for WCC (Harper's comments)</p>
<p>Ashley B. Knight, Ed.D. Dean, Student Affairs William Rainey Harper College</p>	<p>Our Student Conduct Officer, who coordinates our BIT as part of her job responsibilities, provided this response for the list:</p> <p>At Harper, we do not have a formalized process for students returning to campus who may pose a threat to the safety of themselves or others, and who tend to fall in two categories:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Students who are suspended through the conduct process or 2) Students who choose to withdraw on their own due to medical, personal, or psychological issues. <p>The first category is actually fairly easy to address – through the conduct process, a suspended student can be required to address their behavior prior to returning. Examples can include: providing documentation of having completed anger management courses, meeting with conduct staff to discuss how they have addressed their behavior, providing documentation of drug/alcohol rehabilitation, etc. This isn't written as a formal policy; rather it is just a practice employed through our conduct process. Our Student Conduct Officer has typically NOT required mental health evaluations, as this doesn't necessarily demonstrate that the student has addressed the behavior; it only provides a diagnosis.</p> <p>With regards to the second category, that can be more challenging because most schools (esp community colleges) are open enrollment and students can come and go over time. Some 4-year colleges are starting to require that ANY student who withdraws has to be readmitted by the College.</p>

	<p>This is one way to prevent possible discrimination or perceptions of discrimination against students with disabilities (i.e. mental health conditions), because any student has to go through the reapplication process, which should state the requirements for readmission. The other challenge with conducting mental health evaluations is that even if you come to learn a student has a mental health condition, you can't necessarily take action based on this as it can violate ADA/504. Here is a link to a letter from the Office of Civil Rights that illustrates some concerns with what one University did with a student who chose to leave and was then required to complete certain things prior to returning: http://ncherm.org/documents/OCRLetter_SpringArborU.pdf.</p> <p>Some BIT's are turning to forensic evaluations for those few cases where an individual exhibited a potential threat that isn't otherwise addressed in the student code of conduct. We are in the process of exploring off-campus options for this for those few cases that our campus BIT can't evaluate effectively to their satisfaction, but it can be very costly.</p>
<p>Mike Elbe John Wood Community College</p>	<p>John Wood Community College requires those students to meet with me and our Chief of Police before being allowed back on campus, but we do not have a release form nor a policy requiring a doctor or mental health assessment before approving a return to campus.</p>