HEARING PROCESS OVERVIEW & POINTERS

The information below is intended as recommended guidance in the hearing process. For additional details regarding the hearing process, please review the Student Code of Conduct. Any questions regarding the conduct process should be directed to the Office of Student Conduct in 200 Ruby Jones, 610-436-3511.

1. **Review Material in Advance:** It is optional but highly recommended that you schedule a meeting with the Office of Student Conduct prior to your scheduled hearing in order to review the hearing materials, to understand the process, and to ask any questions you may have. It is important that you understand the meaning of the alleged violation(s) and what to expect in the hearing process.

2. **Witnesses:** If you want to include any witnesses on your behalf, you must provide the names and contact information to the Office of Student Conduct no later than two days after receipt of the Notification of Hearing Letter, as outlined in your letter. When thinking about who to bring as a witness, consider who may have critical information regarding the incident that would be important for the hearing officer/board members to hear from in determining responsibility for the alleged violations. During the hearing you will have an opportunity to ask questions of witnesses.

3. **Advisor:** You have the right to be assisted by one advisor during the hearing. The advisor may only consult and interact privately with you. This person cannot actively participate in the hearing (i.e. ask questions of the other party or any witnesses). Your advisor could be a family member, friend, attorney, etc. A witness cannot serve as an advisor. You can also select to have a trained hearing advisor who is well-versed in student conduct proceedings and process. Please consult the Trained Process Advisor Information to find contact information.

4. **Understand the Hearing Procedure:** A staff member will indicate when it is your turn to ask questions or to present information. Do not interrupt or argue with another person giving testimony. An outline of the hearing procedure is in the Student Code of Conduct.

5. **Preparing for the Hearing:** In addition to reviewing the materials in advance and meeting with someone in the Student Conduct Office, you may want to prepare notes in advance for your use during the hearing. Consider the following:

   A. Are there any violations for which you are planning on accepting responsibility?
      i. **Note:** At the start of the hearing you will be asked for your response to each individual violation. This is when you will state for the record if you believe you are responsible or not responsible for each alleged violation.

   B. Prepare your description of the incident and focus on the FACTS of the case. You should be prepared to present your version of the incident, specifically related to areas of disputed information.
C. At the end of the hearing, you will have a chance to give a closing statement. You may want to consider: What are the most impactful points you would like the hearing officer or board members to remember about the incident and the information you shared? What do you want them to consider, impose, or not impose as an outcome to this case and why (if found responsible)?

   i. During the hearing, you may wish to make additional notes to share in your closing statement.

6. **Know Your Rights & Options:** During the hearing process, you have several rights and options that are important to be aware of:

   A. Speak or not speak on your own behalf. If you decline to speak, it will not be inferred that you are accepting responsibility for the violations. Merely, you are exercising one of your rights as provided in the Student Code of Conduct.

   B. Rebut any statements made or presented during the hearing.

   C. Question persons who provides a testimony and examine all written material.

7. **Support Options:** In cases where the complainant and respondent are both students, both parties are typically in the same room during the hearing. If you have concerns about this, please contact the Office of Student Conduct at 610-436-3511 as soon as possible to discuss possible support option. This may include room dividers, virtual participation options, and/or alternate methods of providing information.

8. **Prior Conduct History:** If you have prior conduct history, the hearing officer or board members will not receive this information until after a determination of responsibility has been made for the alleged violations. When there is a finding of responsibility, prior conduct history is utilized in determining appropriate sanctioning.

9. **Appeal:** After a decision has been determined, you will receive a written Notification of Outcome Letter. This letter will include the determination of responsibility and any sanctions imposed, if found responsible. Information about the process to appeal will also be included. You must file a written appeal with the Office of Student Conduct within five (5) University business days from the date noted on your Notification of Hearing Outcome letter.

Remember: Be a participant, ask questions, and seek advice!