



Student Judicial Affairs

INTRODUCTION

2009

The Role of Student Judicial Affairs (SJA)

OUR MISSION

SJA has responsibility for administering matters arising from student conduct on campus. The Student Judicial Affairs mission is to create an environment that strives to assure a fair and objective process that upholds the high behavioral and academic standards articulated in the *UTSA Student Code of Conduct*. The office uses educational strategies and disciplinary counseling as catalysts for self-understanding and personal growth.

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UTSA’s Office of Student Judicial Affairs (SJA) addresses student behavior and academic conduct on-campus and in some cases, off campus. This is accomplished by informing and guiding students toward personal responsibility, academic success, and citizenship.

Please take the time to read the Student Code of Conduct at <http://www.utsa.edu/infoguide/appendices/b.html>

SJA strives to have a fair, educational, and objective process by providing opportunities for students to understand their own role in the community as a whole at UTSA and respect the community that transcends our boundaries.

The Office of Student Judicial Affairs believes that the

most successful students are those who inform themselves of the university’s policies and resources for prevention.

SJA is dedicated to the level of student support that is necessary to learn skills in citizenship, responsibility, and true membership of an academic community.

SJA attends, hosts, and participates in university events to educate students including: Orientation, Ethics Bowl, National Hazing Prevention Week, Homecoming, health fairs, Roadrunner Days, and many others. Outreach and student support from SJA is offered in several ways:

- Faculty may request SJA presentations to classes ranging in topics from scholastic dishonesty, classroom behavior,



Access the Student Code of Conduct at www.utsa.edu/osja

alcohol and other drugs.

- Students, staff, and faculty may call or visit our office with their specific concerns and questions. Our door is open.
- All university community members may pick up information that is helpful in addressing a friend/classmate that they might be concerned about from our office or at campus events.
- Check out the SJA website for additional educational information.

The E.P.I.C. Journey

The **E.P.I.C.** Journey is a unique collaborative strategy addressing violations of community standards by assessing skill sets in four areas; **E**ngagement with the university, **P**ersonal development, **I**nterpersonal development and **C**ommunity membership. The E.P.I.C. Journey philosophy

was developed at The University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) by SJA and campus housing. This approach involves giving students a question based assessment during their educational meeting, developing creative sanctions, utilizing motivational interviewing to develop willingness and

confidence to change, assigning a mentor to develop engagement, and subsequently, implementing programming that reinforces the desired skill sets.

This holistic approach forms an intentional personal journey aimed at transforming decision-making patterns.

E.P.I.C. Mentors

The E.P.I.C. Journey also includes a group of professional mentors that bridge academics and student affairs. These individuals represent a variety of offices and disciplines across the campus that serve as “E.P.I.C. mentors” or guides through specified parts of the student’s journey. Mentors bring their expertise to students developing a retention strategy that involves one of the student’s interests or reducing barriers that stand in the way of their success, i.e. financial aid concerns, lack of stable peer groups, and many more. Mentors

represent staff and faculty positions across campus that have volunteered to discuss their offices’ resources, key research and teaching areas, personal community involvement, and personal interests and hobbies with students. We found that many times personal connection is what is most needed by students experiencing the campus judicial system. Mentors also are available that discuss career possibilities, i.e. a farming lifestyle, sports enthusiasts, prescription drug abuse researchers, and more. Each mentor brings a new perspective.

Each student comes with new questions. To date over 50 mentors have volunteered or been nominated to serve in the role representing each and every division of the university.

To recommend more E.P.I.C. Mentors or to serve yourself please contact the Office of Student Judicial Affairs at 458-4720.



Disposition of Scholastic Dishonesty

As described in UTSA H.O.P. 2.37, “When there is reason to believe that scholastic dishonesty has occurred, the faculty member should gather all pertinent evidence and identify any possible witnesses. During an exam the faculty member may ask a student suspected of cheating to move to another desk, but the student should be allowed to complete the exam in question. After the exam (or other situation of suspected scholastic dishonesty), the faculty member will arrange to meet with the student(s) involved and discuss the alleged violation and the evidence that supports the charge. In this meeting every effort should be made to preserve the basic teacher/student

relationship. The student(s) should be given the opportunity to respond to the allegations but may not be forced to comment. Since an accused student may appeal a penalty decision, the student must be allowed to attend all classes and complete all assignments until the due process procedures are complete. This is an essential step. Unless the faculty member dismisses the allegation, the student has two options: If the student admits the facts upon which the charges are based and elects to waive his/her option to proceed to a student disciplinary hearing in accordance with the procedures provided for in the Student Code of Conduct, the instructor shall complete the Faculty

Disposition of a Scholastic Dishonesty Case form as a written waiver of the hearing procedures. All penalties assessed by an instructor must be reported on a Faculty Disposition of a Scholastic Dishonesty Case form provided by the Office of Student Judicial Affairs.”

That chapter of the Handbook of Operating Procedures also outlines a list of penalties that faculty may choose from. The student may choose not to sign the form accepting responsibility and then the case and all documentation is forwarded to SJA for investigation and disposition if founded. More information is available on the SJA website at www.utsa.edu/osja.

Civility Week

In ancient times, Civitas represented an understood expectation of citizenship in the areas of behavior, law, governance, and relationship. As one of the three tenets of the University of Texas at San Antonio, civitas or citizenship is a quality that educators hope to instill in our students and community. The behavior displayed in classrooms, social settings, ath-

letic fields and residence hall rooms does not always exemplify the Civitas that we hope to inspire. The UTSA Civility Project: CHOOSE CIVILITY is designed to enhance the transformation of our students in the area of civil interaction. Choose Civility is a week of events that centers on the theme of civility trying to connect civility to students’ lives in

tangible ways. Last year’s programs included Roadrunner Roundtable, UTSA Night Out, SGA Candidate Forum, Poster Campaign, Volunteer Services Fair and many more.

**CHOOSE
CIVILITY**

UTSA Civility Project
www.utsa.edu/osja