Mediation Process for Student Organization Disputes

1. Mediation is a consensual process that allows a neutral university mediation panel composed of two faculty and/or staff and one student member of the Student Government Association (Mediation Panel) to intercede in a student organization dispute that cannot be resolved informally.

2. The Mediation Panel is selected by the AVP for Student Development or his/her designee at his/her sole discretion.

3. The goal of mediation is to facilitate conversation that allows the disputing parties to reach mutually agreeable resolutions on their own. These resolutions must be in accordance with student organization as well as university policies.

4. Mediation will respond to the specific issues giving rise to the dispute and consider the needs and interests of the individuals involved, the student organization, and the University. Mediation will not respond to issues that exist outside of the Mediation Panel’s role in working with student organizations.

5. Positive participation is critical to mediation’s success. The disputing parties should actively listen, engage each other in dialogue, collaborate to solve issues, and consider other stakeholders to the dispute. To avoid assigning blame or increasing conflict, the disputing parties should focus on using “I” language to resolve the dispute. For example, “When X occurred, I felt…” “To resolve this, I would be willing to…”, “I felt my opinion wasn’t listened to when…” If the Mediation Panel feels a disputing party is not positively participating, it is encouraged to warn the party before ending mediation.

6. At any time, the Mediation Panel may end the mediation at its sole discretion when a majority of the panel believes further mediation will not be beneficial.

7. The Mediation Panel will remain impartial in its facilitation and will not conduct investigations, make findings of wrongdoing, or assign sanctions. If the disputing parties cannot come to mutually agreeable resolutions before mediation ends, the Mediation Panel may make recommendations based on majority vote that it feels will resolve the specific issues identified. If disputing parties fail to abide by these recommendations, that failure may be addressed via other university processes such as, but not limited to, Student Conduct violations for a student’s failure to comply; a review of the student organization’s funding, constitution, or operations by the Student Government Association or its designee; or referral to Human Resources for an advisor’s actions.

8. The Mediation Panel will not take any adverse employee actions. If one of the parties to the dispute is a university employee and the dispute involves employment matters, a student may select to file a grievance with Human Resources instead of or in addition to seeking mediation.

9. There is no appeal from the result of mediation.

10. A Mediation Panel will not mediate issues previously addressed. Upon receiving a request for mediation, the AVP for Student Development or his/her designee will determine if any issues in the request have previously been addressed via mediation and may deny mediation at his/her sole discretion.

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