

Pennsylvania College of Technology

Procedure Statement

Title: Academic Drug & Alcohol
Screening Procedure

Number: PR 4.58

Approved by:
Presidential Action

Approved Date: 08/2015

Implementation Date: 08/2015

Last Review Date: 10/2025

Last Revision Date: 10/2025

Persons/Departments Affected:

Students, faculty and staff, Penn College Police, College Health Services,
academic school deans/assistant deans/program directors

Responsible Department:

Academic Affairs

Definitions:

Academic activities – Curriculum-driven activities taking place in instructional settings, including, but not limited to, classrooms, laboratories, testing center, tutoring center, and fieldwork/internship/clinical sites.

Alcohol – Ethyl alcohol (ethanol) as used in any intoxicating beverage or edible product.

Controlled substance – Any substance, the access to which is controlled by law (other than alcohol, but including prescription medicine), that has known mind or function-altering effects that may impair or affect the ability to safely and effectively engage in academic activities.

Drug – A controlled substance or an illegal drug.

Illegal drug – Any form of drug, narcotic, hallucinogen, depressant, stimulant, cannabis, or other substance whose use or possession is prohibited by law and is capable of creating or maintaining impairment or otherwise affecting one's physical, emotional, or mental state.

Dean – The dean of the academic school in which the academic activities are taking place or have taken place. Where "designee" is noted, this may include assistant/associate dean or program director.

Procedure:

I. Identification & Reporting

A. Reasonable suspicion testing is based on specific, articulable observations, such as:

1. Direct observation of drug/alcohol use
2. Strong, recognizable odor of alcohol or substances such as marijuana coming from the breath, body, or clothing
3. Impaired coordination/staggered gait
4. Slurred or unusually loud speech
5. Glassy eyes
6. Dilated/pinpoint pupils
7. Exaggerated/slow movements
8. Unusual or erratic behavior, including aggression
9. Information provided either by a reliable and credible source or independently verified.

B. In accordance with associated policy [P 4.58](#), any faculty or staff member who has reasonable suspicion that a student is participating in academic activities while under the influence of alcohol or drugs or is aware that a student was involved in a vehicle or other accident or unsafe practice involving personal injury or damage to property shall follow these steps:

1. Remove the student to a safe area where the situation can be discussed with regard for the student's privacy and confidentiality of information.
 - a. The student should remain under direct supervision until such time that they are released or taken for testing.
 - b. If the student is aggressive, combative, or may be a danger to self or others, contact Penn College Police immediately.
2. Immediately report any suspected impairment to the dean or designee. If the dean or designee cannot immediately be reached, contact the Penn College Police.
3. Make note of all observations and interactions with the student as soon as possible to ensure an accurate incident record, which is to be submitted to the academic school dean or designee. Include information about any accident, injury, or illness that precipitated awareness of the student's condition.

- C. When possible, the dean or designee shall personally assess the student's condition. In the case of field work or internships, the dean or designee may confer with site personnel via phone.
- D. If the dean or designee concurs with the faculty or staff member and shares reasonable suspicion that the student is under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or that an accident involving personal injury or property damage warrants, they will contact College Health Services and arrange for further evaluation and, if warranted, a drug or alcohol screening.
- E. In the case that the dean or designee is not available, a Penn College Police officer may assess the student's condition and contact College Health Services if appropriate.
- F. The dean or designee (or police officer) shall document all interactions, observations, and decisions.

II. Drug/Alcohol Screening

- A. The student must sign a written consent/release form for the purpose of breath alcohol testing and/or collecting and analyzing urine specimens required for drug screening, or any other testing. Refusal may result in immediate suspension from the College.
- B. If the decision is to require a breath alcohol analysis, College Health Services will conduct the analysis using a breath analyzer. The results will be printed. A reading of 0.02 or greater will be considered positive. The student may also be subject to drug or alcohol testing.
- C. If the decision is to test for the presence or absence of drugs or alcohol, the student will be transported by College staff to College Health Services for testing.
 - 1. If the testing is urine sample analysis, the procedure for collection will involve a witness of the sample, securable containers, and chain-of-custody procedures to ensure the integrity of the sample.
 - 2. College Health Services will provide the test results to the student and the dean or designee, who will make the information available to appropriate administrators. Delivery of results will be accomplished in a manner that secures the integrity and confidentiality of the information.
 - 3. Within five business days of receiving the results, the dean or designee will inform the student of the sanctions, as indicated in section III, below. If more time is needed to fully investigate the matter, the dean or designee will provide all parties with written notice of the adjusted timeline.

- D. If the drug is a prescription medication, the student must provide the required documentation of the prescription and its effects within seven days.
- E. Pending the results of a drug or alcohol test or documentation of a prescription, the student may face interim suspension.

III. Sanctions

- A. In the event of positive drug or alcohol test results, the dean or designee will determine appropriate academic sanctions, up to and including dismissal from the academic program.
 - 1. Prior to imposing sanctions, the dean or designee will meet with the student to discuss the outcome of the drug or alcohol testing.
 - 2. After meeting with the student, the dean or designee will consult with the Senior Director of Campus Life & Residential Experience to determine if the student will be referred to the College's student conduct process for violation of the [Student Code of Conduct Standards](#). Sanctions may be in addition to or in lieu of academic sanctions, as the situation warrants.
 - 3. The dean or designee will alert the Assistant Dean of Academic Operations prior to formalizing academic sanctions and/or to note referral to the student conduct process.
- B. The level of sanction will be appropriate to the severity of the situation and will be determined by factors including, but not limited to,
 - 1. the type and amount of drugs or alcohol found to be in the student's system;
 - 2. aggravating circumstances such as injury or damage resulting from the student's actions/behavior;
 - 3. potential harm to self or others;
 - 4. policies specific to the student's academic program, i.e., program manuals; and
 - 5. prior policy violations related to drug or alcohol use.
- C. In cases that involve a violation of local, state, or federal law, the College may impose sanctions whether or not any legal action is pursued or dismissed.
- D. Sanctions may include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - 1. assessment by Counseling Services or outside agency

2. educational programming
 3. treatment plan (via outside agency)
 4. subsequent or periodic retesting
 5. financial restitution, such as for testing fees or for damage to property or equipment
 6. dismissal from the academic major/program
 7. suspension from the College (determined through the College's student conduct process)
 8. expulsion from the College (determined through the College's student conduct process)
- E. The dean or designee will provide the student with written notice of the academic sanctions and/or referral to the student conduct process within five business days of receiving drug or alcohol test results. A copy of that notice as well as a detailed report of the incident and findings will be sent to the Assistant Dean of Academic Operations. If more time is needed to fully investigate the matter, the dean or designee will provide all parties with written notice of the adjusted timeline.
- F. Students who are suspended or expelled from the College are not entitled to refunds of tuition charges and/or housing charges.

IV. Appeals

- A. Sanctions imposed through the student conduct process can be appealed as detailed in the Student Code of Conduct Standards Procedure [4.43](#).
- B. Sanctions imposed by the academic school dean or designee may be appealed to the Assistant Dean of Academic Operations as provided in the following:
1. The appeal must be submitted in writing to the Assistant Dean of Academic Operations within five business days of the date of the written notice of the sanctions and must clearly state the basis for the appeal.
 2. The Assistant Dean of Academic Operations will review all materials and provide to the student and the academic school dean a written outcome within five business days of receiving the appeal. If more time is needed to fully investigate the matter, the Assistant Dean of Academic Operations will provide all parties with written notice of the adjusted timeline.

3. The decision of the Assistant Dean of Academic Operations is final. No further level of appeal exists.

V. Re-admission after Suspension

- A. A student who is suspended from the College due to a positive drug or alcohol test or refusal to take a drug or alcohol test will be considered for re-admission after serving their term of suspension if the following conditions are met:
 1. The student has submitted to an evaluation for substance abuse by a College-approved evaluation and/or treatment agency and has completed prescribed treatment. (See the Drugs & Alcohol resource listing in the College's Annual Security & Fire Safety Report, available at www.pct.edu/campuslife/safety/)
 2. The student has submitted to College-specified drug or alcohol testing, at the student's expense. A positive drug or alcohol test at this point results in permanent ineligibility for re-admission to the College.
 3. The student has met any conditions/sanctions imposed through the College's student conduct process.
 4. The student agrees to enroll under specific conditions, which may include, but are not limited to, ongoing educational programming and regular consultation with Counseling Services.
 5. Additionally, students are subject to all other requirements as outlined in the Undergraduate/Graduate Reenrollment Policies.
- B. Re-admitted students who thereafter test positive for drugs or alcohol in accordance with this policy may face expulsion from the College.
- C. Eligibility to return to some majors (e.g., Nursing & Health Sciences majors) may be restricted due to professional licensure or clinical site regulations.

VI. Law Enforcement

- A. At any time during this process, the College may refer the matter to law enforcement officials.

VII. Record retention

- A. Only sanctions of expulsion and suspension shall become part of the student's permanent academic record.
- B. All documentation (electronic or hardcopy) related to application of Academic Drug and Alcohol Screening Policy and Procedure, including breath alcohol

testing and drug screening reports, are maintained by the Academic Affairs Office. The results and reports are considered confidential and subject to Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) regulations, including applicable exceptions under FERPA.

- C. For cases that are referred to the College student conduct process, documentation relating to that process and its sanctions are maintained by the Student Affairs Office.

Revision History:

Date: 10/2025 Add cross references to Undergraduate Reenrollment Policy, P 4.33, and the Graduate Reenrollment Policy, P 4.62; updated titles, added reference to policies specific to academic programs as related to level of sanctions

Date: 09/2020 Updated position titles.

Date: 04/2020 Updated position title and school name; updated reporting of results to students to reflect practice.

Date: 08/2015 Implementation of procedure.

Cross References:

Academic Drug and Alcohol Screening Policy, [P 4.58](#)

Undergraduate Reenrollment Policy, [P 4.33](#)

Student Conduct Policy and Procedure, [P 4.43](#) and [PR 4.43](#)

Alcohol/Drug Policy: School of Nursing & Health Sciences, [P 4.51](#)

Graduate Reenrollment Policy, [P 4.62](#)