Policies and Procedures

ACADEMIC PROBATION, SUSPENSION, AND DISMISSAL

Western Dakota Tech requires that all students make satisfactory progress toward a diploma or degree to remain in good academic standing. Additionally, recipients of financial aid are required to make satisfactory academic progress toward a diploma or degree to remain eligible for federal financial aid. Western Dakota Tech has established and will apply the following standards of academic progress to all students.

Students bear the primary responsibility for their own academic progress and for seeking assistance when experiencing academic difficulty. Students are encouraged to keep a file of their grades and transcripts. Academic advisors are assigned to each student and review on a regular interval their students’ academic progress.

Requirements

A student who earns a cumulative grade point average (GPA) below 2.0 will be placed on academic probation. A student who fails to achieve a cumulative GPA of less than 1.0 will be suspended with no academic probation.

A student on academic probation must remain in good standing for the enrollment status registered for during the probation semester. (i.e. If a student registers as a full-time student, they must end the semester as a full-time student.) The student may continue to receive federal financial aid during a probation semester. Failure to complete the enrollment status attempted by withdrawing from class may result in academic suspension and federal financial aid suspension.

A student may attend Western Dakota Tech for one semester on academic probation. During that time, the student is expected to diligently work to bring the GPA to an acceptable level to prove satisfactory academic progress. Failure to achieve a cumulative 2.0 GPA during the probation semester will result in academic suspension and dismissal from Western Dakota Tech.

Midterm Review

Academic progress will be monitored as follows: All students will be monitored at midterm of each semester and at the end of each term. A student who earns a cumulative GPA below 2.0 at midterm will be given a warning that his or her academic status is unsatisfactory.

Academic Probation

A student who fails to achieve satisfactory academic progress by earning a cumulative 2.0 GPA at the end of a term will be placed on academic probation and will receive a probation letter from the Dean of Enrollment Services notifying him or her of their status.

During the probation semester, a student is encouraged to use the resources available through Enrollment Services. To arrange for academic assistance the student should contact the Academic Success Center and their instructors. For help with personal, financial or career concerns the student should contact Enrollment Services.

Academic Suspension

A student on probation who fails to meet the minimum cumulative GPA requirement for a second consecutive term will receive a suspension letter from the Dean of Enrollment Services and will be placed on academic suspension commencing immediately. Academic suspension is a serious action that will cause interruption of the student’s academic career. When placed on academic suspension, all courses for which the student was pre-registered will be canceled, and the student must wait one full semester before applying for re-enrollment.

A student who is enrolled in a two-semester program and placed on academic probation at midterm will be placed on academic suspension at the end of the probation term if he or she fails to achieve satisfactory
academic progress by earning a cumulative 2.0 GPA. The student will receive a suspension letter from the Dean of Enrollment Services notifying him or her of their status.

**Appeal**
A student placed on academic suspension has the right to appeal.

The appeal is initiated with a written petition submitted to the Dean of Enrollment Services within 10 calendar days following notification of the suspension. All supporting documentation must be attached to the appeal. Failure to do so will halt the appeal process.

Upon receipt of the petition, the Dean of Enrollment Services will arrange for an Academic Standards Hearing. The Academic Standards Committee will consist of at least five members made up of faculty and administration. The student will be notified of the hearing date and time.

After all evidence has been presented by the student, the committee will issue a decision. The Dean of Enrollment Services will, in writing, notify the student of the decision within five days of the hearing.

It is important to note that the academic suspension appeal and financial aid termination appeal processes are not the same. Student who wish to appeal the termination of the financial aid should refer to the Financial Aid Bulletin.

**STUDENT WITHDRAWAL PROCESS**
If a student desires to withdraw from school, the student should contact the Dean of Enrollment Services as soon as the decision has been made. The date of notification will be considered the official termination date for any refund calculation. A tuition refund will be made, if applicable.

Students who do not withdraw properly through the Dean of Enrollment Services will not be considered withdrawn, and charges will remain the responsibility of the student. Unpaid charges will be forwarded to a collection agency and may affect the student’s credit rating.

**FINAL GRADE APPEAL PROCESS**
(To appeal an individual assignment or test/quiz grade, please see the Complaint/Grievance Procedure.) Should a situation arise in which a student believes he/she has not been treated fairly in the calculation of a particular course grade, the appeal process is as follows:

1. The student must attempt to meet/communicate with the respective instructor to review the reason for the grade within ten (10) calendar days after the final grade has been posted. All reasonable efforts by both parties will be made to resolve the problem at this level.
2. If the student is not satisfied with the disposition of the matter at Step 1, the student needs to meet with the Dean of Academics within fifteen (15) calendar days after the final grade has been posted in an attempt to resolve the issue. The Dean of Academics will meet with both parties to determine a resolution.
3. If the student is not satisfied with the decision made at Step 2, the student may file a written appeal to Dean of Enrollment Services within five (5) calendar days of the receipt of the Dean of Academics decision.
4. Within five (5) working days, the Dean of Enrollment Services will issue a response. The decision will be communicated in writing to all parties.

**COMPLAINT/GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**
WDT is committed to providing a safe environment that promotes intellectual growth and personal development. Students should be afforded the right to an environment free of unfair or improper action by any other member of the WDT academic community. To that end, WDT provides the following process for resolving any alleged violation of a student’s rights. (Student Code of Conduct Violation procedures are addressed in the Student Accountability section of the WDT Student Handbook.)

WDT works to protect the rights of all students. It should be noted that students hold a responsibility for complying with all WDT policies and procedures and the requirements of individual classes as outlined on
the course syllabus provided by each instructor.

**Informal Resolution:**

**Step 1.** WDT faculty and staff strive to resolve complaints and grievances at the lowest possible level. Any WDT student who feels their rights have been violated should first attempt to resolve the matter with the individual involved. The student may contact Academic Services Coordinator or their academic advisor for assistance with informal resolution and meeting facilitation.

**Step 2.** If satisfactory resolution is not reached through step 1, the student needs to request a conference with the Dean of Academics. This conference will be held within five working days of the completion of step 1 in the informal resolution process.

If the student feels that the grievance/complaint has not been resolved at any of these conferences, a formal grievance form must be submitted to the Dean of Enrollment Services or designated official.

**Formal Resolution**

1. Within five working days of the completion of step 2 in the informal resolution process, the student must submit a formal grievance to the Dean of Enrollment Services or designated official.
2. The Dean of Enrollment Services or designated official will, within five working days of receiving the formal grievance, request a response from the person with whom the grievance is made. That person should respond within five working days. Failure to respond will not stop the resolution process.
3. The Dean of Enrollment Services or designated official will review all submitted material and, within five working days, make a recommendation for resolution to the parties involved.

**Appeal**

Should the student feel the resolution reached by the Dean of Enrollment Services or designated official to be unsatisfactory, the student should submit a written appeal to the President within five working days of the formal resolution. The President will conduct an investigation and if necessary, appoint a committee to review the appeal. The President will issue a decision within 10 working days of the appeal.

**TITLE IX (DISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT) COMPLAINT PROCEDURES**

**Section I**

If any person believes that Western Dakota Tech or any part of the school organization has inadequately applied the principles and/or regulations of Title IX or is in some way discriminatory, he/she may bring forward a complaint, which shall be referred to as a grievance, to the local Title IX Coordinator.

**Section II**

The person who believes he/she has a valid basis for grievance shall discuss the grievance informally and on a verbal basis with the local Coordinator, who shall in turn investigate the complaint and reply to the complainant within five (5) business days. If this reply is not acceptable to the complainant, he/she may initiate formal procedures according to school policy. The Coordinator will advise the student of the procedure.

**SECTION 504 COMPLAINT PROCEDURES AND DISABILITY SERVICES AT WDT**

**ADA Policy**

It is the policy of Western Dakota Tech, in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) to ensure that no qualified person shall, solely by reason of disability, be denied access to participation in, or the benefits of, any program or activity operated by the institute. Western Dakota Tech works to ensure campus accessibility for persons with disabilities, which would include, but not be limited to admissions, services, educational opportunities, programs, activities, employment practices and facilities use/ maintenance, except where to do so would result in a fundamental alteration of the program or place undue financial and administrative burdens upon the Institute and that can be provided without lowering academic and other essential standards.
Your rights and responsibilities
As a student entering post-secondary education, you have new rights and responsibilities as related to your disability. It is important to inform yourself so you can fully engage in the educational opportunities available.

- [http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transition.html](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transition.html)

Student Responsibility
To be eligible for accommodation, the student must contact the ADA Coordinator. This contact should be made as early as possible. It is the student’s responsibility to provide medical or other diagnostic documentation of disability and limitations. If documentation is not adequate, the student may be asked to participate in additional evaluation prior to receiving accommodations. The student will incur the cost of this testing.

Students with disabilities are not exempt from following WDT policies and procedures, such as drug/alcohol policies, grade appeal procedures, etc. These procedures are policies and outlined in the WDT Student Handbook.

Faculty and Staff Responsibility
If a student discloses a disability to a staff or faculty member, the staff/faculty has the responsibility to direct the student to the Academic Services Coordinator. As noted above, students with disabilities have the responsibility to follow institutional policies and procedures.

Transitioning
Transition to higher education is a big step. These pamphlets, published by the Office of Civil Rights of the Department of Education, provide guidance and suggestions for students entering post-secondary education.

- [http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transitionguide.html](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transitionguide.html)
- [http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/parent-20070316.pdf](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/parent-20070316.pdf)

WDT is honored to welcome veterans to our campus. If you are a vet returning to college, you may find the following publication helpful.

- [http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/back-to-school-2008.html](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/back-to-school-2008.html)

Available Services

Academic Accommodations
Students who request academic accommodations will be required to provide the appropriate documentation to the Academic Success Center. The Academic Success Center will review the documentation and meet individually with the student to determine which accommodations will be allowable. The student will be given an “ADA Accommodation Request” form and the student is responsible for taking this form to each class/teacher in which accommodations are requested. Instructional/classroom accommodations may include, but are not limited to:

- Oral tests
- Enlarged material
- Extended time on exams (up to twice the time)
- Distraction-free environment
- Note takers
- Readers
- Taped texts (must be registered through the State Library)
- Tape recorders
- Preferential seating
- Graphic organizers
SECTION 504/ADA GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE
Western Dakota Technical Institute (hereinafter “the Institute”) does not discriminate on the basis of disability in its education-related programs and activities and provides equal educational opportunities to persons with disabilities. The Institute has adopted an internal grievance procedure providing for prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any action prohibited by the American with Disabilities Act and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. These Laws and Regulations may be examined in the office of the Institute’s Disability Coordinator (“the Coordinator”), (605) 718-2426, who has been designated to coordinate the effort of the Institute to comply with the ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

The availability and use of this grievance procedure does not prevent a person from filing a complaint of discrimination on the basis of disability with the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, and Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division.

The Institute will make appropriate arrangements to ensure that disabled persons are provided other accommodations, if needed to participate in this grievance process. Such arrangements may include, but are not limited to, providing interpreters for the deaf, providing taped cassettes of material for the blind, or assuring a barrier-free location for the proceedings. The Coordinator will be responsible for such arrangements.

Any person who believes she or he has been subject to discrimination on the basis of disability may file a grievance under this procedure. It is against the law for the Institute to retaliate against anyone who files a grievance or cooperates in the investigation of a grievance.

PROCEDURE

Level 1 (Grievance): Grievances should be submitted as soon as possible, but no later than twenty-five (25) calendar days after the alleged act of discrimination. A grievance must be submitted to the Disability Coordinator, Western Dakota Technical Institute, 800 Mickelson Drive, Rapid City, South Dakota, 57701. In the event the grievance is against an action taken by the Coordinator, the complainant may file his/her grievance with the Dean of Enrollment Services, Western Dakota Technical Institute, 800 Mickelson Drive, Rapid City, South Dakota, 57701 ((605) 718-2419).

A grievance must be in writing and contain the following:
- The name, mailing address, e-mail address, and phone number of the individual filing the grievance;
- A full description of the problem; and
- A statement of the remedy or relief requested.

Alternative means of filing complaints, such as personal interviews or a tape recording of the complaint will be made available for persons with disabilities upon request.

The Coordinator (or her/his designee) shall conduct a prompt investigation of the complaint. This investigation may be informal, but must be thorough, affording all interested persons an opportunity to submit evidence relevant to the complaint. The Coordinator, at his or her sole discretion, may gather additional information necessary to the consideration of the grievance, including but not limited to interviewing individuals who may possess relevant information. The Coordinator will maintain the files and records of the Institute relating to such grievances. Complaints will remain confidential except to the extent necessary to conduct a review of facts and to the extent authorized by law.

Within thirty (30) calendar days after receipt of the grievance, the Coordinator (or the Dean of Enrollment Services in the event the grievance has been filed against the Coordinator) will respond in writing, and where appropriate, in a format accessible to the person filing the complaint, such as large print, Braille, or audio tape. This deadline may be extended for good cause, as determined by the Coordinator, or by written agreement of the parties. The Coordinator’s (or Dean’s) written decision shall also include notice of complainant’s right to appeal the decision.
If the Disability Coordinator finds that the requested accommodation is reasonable and does not create an undue burden, then the Coordinator shall orally, or in writing, communicate with the student’s instructors regarding the accommodation to be implemented. Instructors shall respond promptly, orally or in writing, to the Coordinator’s notification and work with the Coordinator to ensure that the accommodation is implemented.

**Level 2 (Appeal):** If the complainant disputes the Coordinator’s verification of a disability, determination regarding the need for an accommodation, and/or denial of an accommodation, then the complainant may appeal the Level 1 decision to the President of the Institute within fifteen (15) calendar days after receipt of the Level 1 decision. The appeal must be submitted to Coordinator (or the Dean of Enrollment Services in the event the grievance has been filed against the Coordinator).

The appeal must be in writing and contain the following:
- The name, mailing address, e-mail address, and phone number of the individual filing the grievance;
- The specific factual and/or procedural basis for the appeal or disagreement with the Level 1 decision.

An appeal must be directed only to issues raised in the original grievance, and cannot raise new issues. Upon receipt of an appeal, the Coordinator (or Dean) shall submit the appeal and the materials prepared at the Level 1 grievance (including the results of the Level 1 investigation) to the President.

The President shall review the written appeal and the investigative materials. The President, at his or her sole discretion, may request additional information necessary to consideration of the appeal. Within thirty (30) calendar days of the filing of the appeal, the President shall issue a written decision. This deadline may be extended by the President for good cause.

**SEXUAL HARASSMENT COMPLAINT PROCEDURES**

**Sexual Harassment Statement**

According to federal law, Title VII, sexual harassment is illegal. Sexual harassment is also a violation of the South Dakota Human Relations Act of 1989, Section 20-13-22. Sexual harassment is any behavior, which through inappropriate sexual content or disparagement, members of one sex, interferes with an individual’s work or learning environment. In determining whether alleged conduct constitutes sexual harassment, it is necessary to look at the entire context and pattern of behavior. However, any behavior, whether verbal or physical, constitutes sexual harassment if:

1. Unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, (e.g., uninvited touching) are explicitly made as a term or condition of an individual’s employment or education;
2. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of sexual nature are used as a basis for employment or academic decisions affecting that individual (e.g., grades, evaluation, promotion, letters of recommendation);
3. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature have the purpose of effect of unreasonable interfering with an individual’s academic or work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or learning environment (e.g., sexual innuendo in the classroom).

Students, who believe they have been harassed, should report such an act to the Equity Coordinator, who will assist the grievant in seeking redress through the appropriate procedure. Both information and formal resolutions are available. Reprisals are not taken against an individual for reporting or objecting to sexual harassment. In those situations where the complainant chooses not to file a formal grievance, WDT reserves the right to investigate and take appropriate action because the Institute believes that the matter of sexual harassment cannot be ignored. The official policy followed by WDT is available from the Equity Coordinator.

Additional support and information can be obtained through the Division of Human Rights, 222 East Capitol, Suite 11, c/o 500 East Capitol Avenue, Pierre, SD 57501; phone (605) 773-4493.