

Safety Questionnaire Review Committee

Subject: Admissions Review of Students Disclosing Behavioral Concerns

Policy: Admissions Review Committee

Revised: June 2014

Review Date: June 2017

Responsible Party: Vice President for Student Success

Introduction and Purpose: Board of Regents Policy

The Montana Board of Regents of Policy (Policy 301 of Policies and Procedures Manual), provides the following:

Any campus may deny or condition admission, readmission, or continuing enrollment of any individual who, in the judgment of the campus, presents an unreasonable risk to the safety and welfare of the campus and persons thereon. In making such judgment, the campus may, among other things, take into account the individual's history and experience relative (a) to violence and destructive tendencies, (b) to behavior at other educational institutions, and (c) to any rehabilitative therapy the individual may have undergone. A decision to utilize the authority conferred by this paragraph shall be communicated to the individual in writing. Each campus shall have a procedure by which such decisions may be appealed.

The purpose of the Safety Questionnaire Review Committee is to implement this Policy at Montana State University. The Committee is responsible for reviewing and evaluating new and returning applicants for admission to Montana State University who, in accordance with the university admissions policy, disclose a criminal or other specified behavioral history of a nature that may adversely affect their own or others' safety and success at Montana State University, and for determining whether they should be accepted into the university community in accordance with this Board of Regents Policy.

Persons applying for admission to Montana State University or returning to the university following a break in attendance are required to disclose whether they have been convicted of a felony crime, have been institutionalized for threatening or causing injury to persons or property, and/or have been dismissed and/or suspended from a college for disciplinary reasons. An affirmative response to one or more of these questions generates a requirement for further review by the Committee.

Policy:

The Safety Questionnaire Review Committee will review the safety questionnaires and applications of students who disclose that they been convicted of a felony crime, have been institutionalized for

threatening or causing injury to persons or property, and/or have been dismissed and/or suspended from an educational institution for disciplinary reasons. The Committee reserves the right to review the status of students who are convicted of a felony crime or are institutionalized for threatening or causing injury to persons or property after admission. Students who knowingly or negligently provide false information regarding criminal or other disciplinary information or institutionalization in their original application may be denied admission, asked to provide additional information, or to appear before the committee.

The Committee is a University committee comprised of representatives of the University Police, Registrar, Counseling Services, Auxiliary Services (campus housing authority), the Graduate School, and the Faculty. The Faculty member shall be appointed by the Faculty Senate for a three year term, which term may be extended for additional three year terms by the Faculty Senate. The committee is chaired by the Dean of Students or designee.

The Committee will review and confirm the information provided by the Applicant, and may conduct a personal interview with the Applicant. Upon completion of the review the Committee will recommend to the Dean of Students whether the Applicant should be recommended for admission and what restrictions or conditions, if any, should be imposed on the Applicant.

In the event that an Applicant is residing in a correctional institution (including, but not limited to, prisons and the Treasure State Correctional Training Center), Department of Corrections associated treatment center (including, but not limited to, WATCH, NEXUS and START), or adult prerelease center at the time of application, the Admissions Committee will automatically recommend denying admission to the Dean of Students until the Applicant has completed the designated time in the correctional/treatment institution or prerelease center. The Applicant will be asked to reapply for a future term, once time in the correctional/treatment institution or prerelease center has been completed. However, the Committee shall have the discretion to recommend acceptance when such Applicant makes a showing of extenuating circumstances supporting admission.

The Dean of Students will consider the Committee's recommendations and determine whether the Applicant will be recommended for admissions and which, if any, restrictions will be imposed if approved.

Procedures:

Upon the University Registrar's office, the Graduate School Admissions office, or the Office of Admissions have been notified that a prospective student has submitted a safety questionnaire, they will ensure that copies of applications or intents to register requiring review are provided to the Dean of Students. The Dean of Students will convene the Committee as necessary to accomplish the review. Applicants making disclosures will be notified in writing if they must provide additional information about the disclosed events using the Safety Questionnaire form found at: <https://www.montana.edu/cswquestions/>. Applicants shall provide this information within ten (10) days of receipt of the request, unless the Committee Chair provides an extension for good reason. The Committee may also, at its discretion, require a criminal background check. Refusal to undergo a criminal background check when requested shall be grounds for denial of admission.

A Safety Questionnaire Review Committee hold shall be placed in Banner on Applicants making such disclosures to assure that they cannot register for classes until this review process is completed. The Committee shall not review the Safety Questionnaire until the Applicant accurately

completes the entire form. Misinformation on the Safety Questionnaire may disqualify the Applicant.

Once the Applicant completes the Safety Questionnaire, the Committee shall review the Applicant information and make a recommendation to the Dean of Students within thirty (30) days of receipt of complete information, unless there is good reason for an extension. The Committee will consider a number of factors which may include, but are not limited to: (1) nature and severity of the crime(s) or basis for dismissal/suspension; (2) currency and frequency of the crime(s) or incident(s); (3) the Applicant's activities since conviction (employment, education, participation in mandatory/voluntary programs); (4) recommendations of parole officers/case managers and professional practitioners concerning the Applicant's rehabilitation and potential for success in the university environment; (5) the Applicant's prior academic achievement, if appropriate; (6) the accuracy and completeness of information provided to the Committee and the Applicant's forthrightness in providing it; and (7) an assessment of the Applicant's potential to be successful as a member of the University community. The Committee will make findings and recommendations to the Dean of Students.

The Committee may condition acceptance on the following: disallowance of use of university housing; periodic meetings with university or law enforcement officials; compliance with treatment plans; completion of probation requirements; or such other conditions as it deems appropriate.

The Dean of Students will recommend for approval or deny the Applicant's admission to the university and notify the Applicant of the decision. The Dean of Students will inform Applicants denied admission of their right to appeal the decision to the Vice President for Student Success.

An Applicant whose application for admission is denied by the Dean of Students may appeal the Dean's decision by submitting a written appeal to the Vice President for Student Success.

If the Vice President for Student Success determines that there is basis for appeal, the appeal may be remanded to the Committee for clarification, additional information or reconsideration. The Vice President may require a personal interview with the Applicant. The Vice President for Student Success will then render a written decision to the Applicant.

The decision of Vice President for Student Success is the final decision of the University.

Applicant Records:

Committee review materials shall be considered student records (regardless of whether the applicant is admitted) and will be handled in accordance with federal and state law and University policy for securing and controlling access to student records.