

*An Introduction to the
Academic Integrity Referral Process
2011-12*



Rights and Responsibilities (R&R) is the student code of Conduct for every undergraduate and graduate student. Section 4 of *R&R* describes the University's policies as they relate to academic integrity. Students whose academic scholarship or conduct is alleged to violate any of the elements found in Section 4 ought to be referred to the Department of Student Rights and Community Standards (DSRCS). The DSRCS reports to the Office of the Dean of Student Life; the lead administrator in that office is the Vice President of Student Affairs and Dean of Student Life, Rick Sawyer. Although this reporting chain resides in the undergraduate portion of the institution, *R&R* is the umbrella code of conduct and the DSRCS' Student Conduct Process is the umbrella adjudication process.

When an instructor seeks to make a referral to the DSRCS, the **Community Standards Report** is used. This web-based form is found at: <https://publicdocs.maxient.com/incidentreport.php?BrandeisUniv>. The referral should be accompanied by any supporting materials. The Community Standards Report asks the instructor to consider whether a Mediated Resolution Process (explained in Section 18 of *R&R*) is a feasible first approach to the resolution of the conflict. The web site also requests the instructor to suggest a potential outcome if the mediated process is not offered. The suggested outcome will be carefully considered and weighed against precedents and the student's individual circumstances should the student choose responsibility or be found responsible by the Student Conduct Board.

Instructors are encouraged to first contact the student whose behavior is in question. This approach provides a valuable opportunity in which to dispel any chance of misunderstanding of the misconduct, and also to inform the student that there will be a neutral party (the DSRCS) contacting the student soon to initiate the Student Conduct Process. Once this instructor-student interaction has occurred and the DSRCS receives the Community Standards Report, the process will be underway. While the case is pending, the student shall not be permitted to drop the course to which the alleged misconduct is associated, nor should the instructor further discuss the conduct matter with the student. The student will receive these instructions also, and will be encouraged to speak about the pending case with the DSRCS as often as is necessary. Additionally, the place-holding grade notation of **NG** or **No Grade** will be recorded by the University Registrar if the case continues past a grade report deadline, and until the case is concluded and the DSRCS has communicated the result to the instructor and the Registrar.

During the initial in-person meeting between DSRCS staff and the accused student, the Community Standards Report will be shared in its entirety with the student, as well as any supporting documentation and/or materials. The accused student will not be expected to make a commitment as to their willingness to take responsibility for the allegation during this meeting. Instead, the student will leave the DSRCS meeting with a **Choice of Action Form** and will have 48 hours to return it to the DSRCS. As the *Choice of Action Form* describes, the student will have three or four choices, depending on whether the instructor has offered a Mediated Resolution Process option or not. Briefly, the choices are:

- A: Student denies responsibility;** a full hearing that involves the participation of the instructor and student before the Student Conduct Board (SCB) will follow
- B: Student accepts responsibility** and requests the SCB to convene to decide what the outcome (sanction) shall be
- C: Student accepts responsibility** and requests the DSRCS to make an administrative decision as to the outcome
- D: Student accepts the instructor's offer for a mediated process** (contingent on the DSRCS' approval)

Should the student select A or B, the DSRCS will assemble the appropriate voting panel as soon as is possible. More information about the SCB, its purpose and composition, can be found in Section 20 of *R&R*.