



STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE: **Education, Monitoring Procedures, and Penalties**

Approved by the Assembly, October 2012

Ethical college counseling and admission have been the cornerstones of the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) since its founding in 1937. The association strives to ensure principled conduct among professionals in the counseling and recruitment of students and throughout the students' consideration of their transition to postsecondary education options. The Statement of Principles of Good Practice (SPGP) was created by our founding institutions and continues to be maintained to articulate the association's preferred and recommended code of conduct. It includes practices and policies reflecting principled concerns for the ethical treatment of students and relationships among professionals in the admission process. All NACAC members agree to abide by the SPGP in the execution of their work.

The Admission Practices Committee of NACAC, together with the Admission Practices Committees of the affiliates, are responsible for promoting awareness of and compliance with the Statement of Principles of Good Practice (SPGP). The Admission Practices Committee primarily seeks to educate admission and counseling professionals and their institutions on ethical college admission standards and to assist them in fully integrating similar policies and procedures into their practices. The goal of the Admission Practices Committee is to seek full compliance with all provisions of the SPGP on a voluntary basis. Believing that member professionals and institutions wish to practice high ethical standards, one of the committee's chief functions is that of education. In addition, the committee monitors compliance with the SPGP, investigates alleged infractions, and recommends the application of penalties when necessary. Penalties may include issuance of a Statement of Noncompliance, exclusion from NACAC-sponsored events, suspension of membership and membership privileges, or termination of membership.

The Statement of Principles of Good Practice (SPGP) is a complex document comprised of both required and recommended practices designed to protect students in the college admission process. The SPGP's format includes the following:

The **Mandatory Practices** of the SPGP section outlines required practices and, as such, these practices will be monitored and enforced by the national and affiliate Admission Practices Committees.

The **Interpretations of Mandatory Practices** section includes further explanations or examples to enhance understanding of the Mandatory statements. A statement with an asterisk in the Mandatory section will have a corresponding statement in the Interpretations section.

The final section, **Best Practices**, offers recommended behaviors or guidelines for good practice but will not be strictly monitored or enforced. They represent how admission counseling professionals should function in the execution of their professional business.

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A. Procedures

Any allegation of noncompliance with the Mandatory Practices of the Statement of Principles of Good Practice shall be referred to the appropriate Admission Practices Committee as follows:

NACAC members who hold membership with an affiliate:

The allegation shall be referred to the affiliate's Admission Practices Committee. If adequate investigation or resolution cannot be made at the affiliate level, the allegation shall be referred to the national Admission Practices Committee for further action.

NACAC members who do not hold membership with an affiliate:

The allegation shall be referred directly to the national Admission Practices Committee

Parties who are neither NACAC nor affiliate members:

The allegation shall be referred to NACAC's Chief Executive Officer or designated staff member who will consult with the national Admission Practices Committee on the appropriate response. To preserve the anonymity of all parties involved in the allegation process, the complainant and the presiding committee shall hold in strict confidence the identities of both the original complainant and the alleged noncompliant party.

1. Allegations of infractions against a member of NACAC who is also a member of an affiliate shall be reported to the chairperson of the affiliate Admission Practices Committee which shall become the presiding committee. The complainant must agree to maintain confidentiality while the complaint is being processed. The chair shall then notify the president of the affiliate of which the noncompliant party is a member.
2. a) Any allegation shall be sent to the presiding affiliate Admission Practices Committee chairperson in writing and shall contain as much specific documentation or evidence as possible. Upon examining the allegation and supporting information, the chairperson shall determine which specific provision(s) of the Mandatory Practices of the SPGP is (are) involved in the alleged noncompliance.
b) When a party is accused of violating the SPGP, the chairperson shall immediately notify that party of the alleged violation of the SPGP and of the potential noncompliance issue(s). Such notification shall be in writing and shall direct the noncompliant party to respond in writing to each allegation within 30 days. If the noncompliant party does not respond to the initial communication within the specified time, the presiding affiliate chairperson shall refer the complaint to the national Admission Practices Committee.
c) If the written response by the alleged noncompliant party demonstrates to the satisfaction of the presiding affiliate Admission Practices Committee that there is, in fact, compliance with the Mandatory Practices of the SPGP, then the matter shall be closed.
d) If the noncompliant party confirms that past practice has not been in compliance with the Mandatory Practices of the SPGP but offers to amend the practice in the future, the presiding affiliate Admission Practices Committee may declare the matter closed.

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- e) If the presiding affiliate Admission Practices Committee determines noncompliance and the non-compliant party does not offer to amend the practice, the presiding affiliate Admission Practices Committee will take the following action:
 - If the practice in question is a Best Practice, the presiding affiliate Admission Practices Committee will educate the noncompliant party as to why the stated practice should be adhered to and will request voluntary compliance.
 - If the practice is a Mandatory Practices of the SPGP, the presiding affiliate Admission Practices Committee will refer the case to the national Admission Practices Committee and notify the complainant.
3. The noncompliant party, the original complainant or the affiliate Admission Practices Committee that initiated the complaint may appeal the presiding affiliate Admission Practices Committee's findings to the national Admission Practices Committee within 30 days from the date of the presiding affiliate Admission Practices Committee's findings.
 - a) The noncompliant party (or other appealing party) shall be entitled to offer new evidence or contest the conclusions of the presiding affiliate Admission Practices Committee to the national Admission Practices Committee via written communications and/or conference calls.
 - b) The noncompliant party (and other appealing party), and members of the presiding affiliate Admission Practices Committee shall be given at least 30 days prior notice of such deliberations.
 - c) The affiliate's decision will remain in place, if the decision is not appealed.
 - d) If an appeal is filed, penalties will not be imposed at that time, pending results of the appeal.
4. In the event an appeal goes to the national Admission Practices Committee after consideration of all the facts relating to the allegations, the committee shall notify the appealing party, the noncompliant party and the presiding affiliate Admission Practices Committee of its decision, including whether a penalty is to be imposed.
5. The national Admission Practices Committee may impose penalties, including a Statement of Non-compliance or exclusion from NACAC-sponsored events. In accordance with NACAC Bylaws, Article V, Discipline, only the NACAC Board of Directors may censure, suspend or expel any NACAC member. Therefore, the national Admission Practices Committee may only recommend such action to the Board of Directors.
6. The Board of Directors will then consider all information, including the recommendation of the national Admission Practices Committee, to suspend or expel a member for non-compliance with the SPGP.

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7. The decision of the Board of Directors shall be final, unless the noncompliant party files an appeal with the Board of Directors within 30 days after the date of the decision of the board.
8. In this case, neither the affiliate Admission Practices Committee nor the national Admission Practices Committee shall publish the decision, pending results of the appeal. The decisions of the national Board of Directors shall be final and binding on all parties.

B. Penalties

The NACAC leadership, in consultation with the national and/or local Admission Practices Committee(s), may impose on the guilty party one or more of the following penalties:

1. **Statement of Noncompliance:** The guilty party will be formally notified of noncompliance with the SPGP and will be asked to desist engaging in such practices. All members of NACAC and appropriate affiliate leadership may be notified of the practices engaged in by the accused party that have been found to violate the Mandatory Practices of the SPGP.
2. **Exclusion from NACAC-sponsored events, including, but not limited to:** NACAC National College Fairs, professional development opportunities and the national conference. Those out of compliance will not be permitted to register or pay non-member fees for any NACAC-sponsored events. All members of NACAC and appropriate affiliate leadership will be notified of the practices engaged in by the noncompliant party that has been found to violate the Mandatory Practices of the Statement of Principles of Good Practice.
3. **Suspension of Membership and Membership Privileges:** All members of NACAC and appropriate affiliate leadership will be:
 - notified of the practices engaged in by the guilty party that have been found to violate the Mandatory Practices of the SPGP;
 - notified that the NACAC membership privileges of the guilty party have been suspended. Such suspension will last until lifted by the Board of Directors upon the recommendation of the national Admission Practices Committee.
4. **Termination of Membership in NACAC:** All members of NACAC and appropriate affiliate leadership shall be notified in association communication venues of the practices engaged in by the guilty party that have been found to violate the SPGP and that the membership of the guilty party in NACAC has been terminated.