

# Palo Alto University

Psychology | Counseling

Student Handbook

2023-2024

## **Student Handbook Disclosure**

This Student Handbook was prepared to provide information and does not constitute a contract. Palo Alto University (PAU) reserves the right to change, delete, supplement or otherwise amend at any time and without prior notice the information, requirements, and policies contained in this Student Handbook. PAU recognizes its obligation to provide program accessibility for persons with disabilities. Contact the Office of Accessible Education at (650) 433-3818 (Voice) to obtain information about the existence and location of services, activities, and facilities that are accessible to persons with disabilities. This Student Handbook is available in alternate format upon request by persons with disabilities. Palo Alto University is accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Schools, Western Association of Schools and Colleges (ASC WASC), 533 Airport Boulevard, Suite 200, Burlingame, CA 94010-2009, tel: (650) 696-1060, email: [mail@ascwasc.org](mailto:mail@ascwasc.org), web: <https://www.acswasc.org/>. For additional ACS WASC accreditation information, please visit <https://www.wscuc.org/institutions/palo-alto-university/>.

# Vision, Mission, Strategic Pillars

## PAU's Path to Inclusive Excellence: Strategic Plan 2021-2026

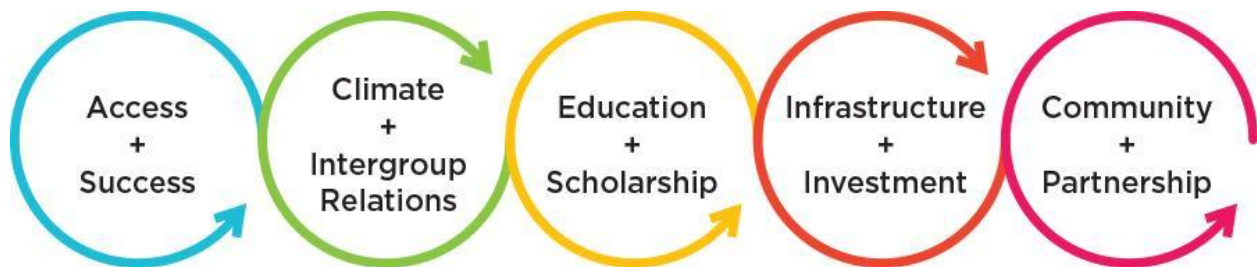
### Vision

A world in which insight into human behavior improves well-being and contributes to just and inclusive communities.

### Mission

Through education, research, and training in psychology and counseling, PAU prepares its students to address pressing and emerging issues that equitably meet the needs of our ever-changing human condition.

### Inclusive Excellence



#### **Strategic Pillar 1: Academic Excellence**

Prioritize academic excellence as the cornerstone for PAU distinctiveness.

- Priority 1: Develop and enhance programs and curriculum.
- Priority 2: Invest and advance professional development.
- Priority 3: Maintain excellence in psychology and counseling education.

#### **Strategic Pillar 2: Student Success**

Enhance the PAU culture for student-centered excellence.

- Priority 1: Adopt best practices in providing support services to enhance student success.
- Priority 2: Adopt student-centered financial policies and practices.

#### **Strategic Pillar 3: Operational Excellence**

Enhance Invest in operational excellence for innovation and high performance.

- Priority 1: Strengthen organizational and technological infrastructures.
- Priority 2: Improve operational effectiveness and efficiencies, making the best use of all PAU resources.

#### **Strategic Pillar 4: Awareness**

Enhance PAU's regional and national identity and reputation.

- Priority 1: Elevate the awareness and reputation of PAU.
- Priority 2: Increase and strengthen engagement with key audiences.

#### **Strategic Pillar 5: Financial Strength**

Expand resources to support PAU Vision, Mission, and Values.

- Priority 1: Assure continued strength of PAU's financial position by diversifying revenue sources.
- Priority 2: Develop and support initiatives that generate sustainable financial growth.



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# Section 1: Student Success

## **1.1 Department of Student Success**

The Department of Student Success supports students on their journey outside of the classroom at PAU. It includes the Office of Accessible Education, Military and Veteran Student as well as International Student Success, Student Activities and Support, the Writing Studio, and the Office of Financial Aid.

We encourage any student needing academic or mental health support as well as students seeking student leadership opportunities to reach out to [studentsuccess@palloatou.edu](mailto:studentsuccess@palloatou.edu).

## **1.2 Office of Accessible Education**

The Office of Accessible Education (OAE) offers several services. OAE works with students with disabilities to secure reasonable accommodation.

### **1.2.1 Services for Students with Disabilities**

Palo Alto University (PAU) complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. Accordingly, no otherwise qualified disabled student shall, solely by reason of their disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in any academic, research, counseling, financial aid, or other postsecondary education program or activity which PAU provides for all students. PAU's students with disabilities meet the requirements and levels of competency required of all students in the program.

For purposes of this policy, a student or applicant with a disability is a person who: has a physical or mental impairment which limits one or more major life activities (such as walking, seeing, speaking, learning, or working); has a record with the school of such impairment, or is regarded by the school as having such an impairment, or who is otherwise defined by law as a qualified disabled student or applicant.

### **1.2.2 Requesting Reasonable Accommodations**

Students can request accommodations by going to the MyPAU Portal and clicking on the 'Student' tab. Requests for accommodations must include current documentation of any disability and any other relevant information. Once a request is received by the Office of Accessible Education, PAU's representative and the student will meet to discuss and determine what reasonable accommodations will be provided. Students are encouraged to complete the intake and registration process *before their program of study begins* so that any accommodations that are to be provided may be implemented at the start of the program of study.

Students with qualified disabilities can request reasonable accommodations through the Office of Accessible Education (OAE). The Office of Accessible Education is located on the Mountain View Campus, 1172 Castro Street, Mountain View, CA 94040, Room 112. The phone number is 650-433-3818. The Office of Accessible Education can meet students at all PAU locations or via Zoom.

#### **Notification of Reasonable Accommodations**

The Office of Accessible Education will notify all students in writing whether their request has been approved. If a request is approved, the student will be



provided reasonable accommodations in writing as well. The faculty for the classes for which the student is registered will also be informed of the accommodations. However, the reason for the accommodations is not disclosed. The student may decide to self-disclose as deemed appropriate.

Students with disabilities must meet the qualifications and requirements expected of PAU students, and must be able to perform the essential requirements of the curriculum, either with or without reasonable accommodations.

### **Right to Appeal**

Students who are dissatisfied with decisions made regarding a student's eligibility for OAE services or the reasonable accommodations that are offered by PAU, may resolve the matter by speaking with OAE staff. If the student is still dissatisfied, the student may submit a written complaint using the grievance procedures as outlined in this Student Handbook.

### **1.2.3 Use of Service Animals**

Service animals assisting individuals with disabilities are permitted on campus. To utilize a service animal for ongoing accommodation, students must follow the above procedures and register with the Office of Accessible Education. "Service animal" is defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) as any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including, but not limited to, guiding individuals with impaired vision, alerting individuals with impaired hearing to intruders or sounds, providing minimal protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, or fetching dropped items.

A service animal may be asked to leave PAU facilities or programs if the animal's behavior or presence poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others. For example, a service animal that displays vicious behavior towards people may be excluded. Service animals may also be excluded in areas where the presence of a service animal fundamentally alters the nature of a program or activity. Questions related to the use of service animals on campus should be directed to the Office of Accessible Education at (650) 433-3818.

Only animals approved as service animals through the Office of Accessible Education are permitted on campus. Additionally, emotional support animals may be permitted for student employees if approved by Human Resources. Otherwise, animals are not permitted on campus.

The person whom a service animal assists is referred to as a "partner." The service animal's partner is at all times solely responsible for the cost of care, arrangements, and for the well-being of the service animal, as well as any property or other damage caused by the service animal.

Service animals on campus must:

- Meet all requirements for the presence of animals in public places (vaccinations, licensure, ID tags, etc.) mandated by state or local ordinance;
- Be healthy: the animal must be in good health;

- Be under control of their partner: the person with a disability must be in full control of the animal at all times. Reasonable behavior is required from service animals while on campus.

The partner is required to clean up the waste of their service animals. Partners who are not physically able to pick up and dispose of waste are responsible for making necessary arrangements for assistance. Other than approved service animals, no other animals are permitted on any PAU campuses or locations. This includes emotional support animals, unless approved by Human Resources as an accommodation related to employment.

### 1.3 Academic Student Support

The Department of Student Success offers tutoring support, and one-on-one and group sessions on such topics as time management, effective test taking, etc. Students can contact [studentsuccess@paloinyo.edu](mailto:studentsuccess@paloinyo.edu) for more information. The Department of Student Success is located on the Calvin Campus, Building 3, Room 304. The phone number is 650-433-3836.

### 1.4 Financial Aid

Financial assistance is available to eligible PAU students in the form of federal and state grants, institutional scholarships, Federal Student Loans, Private Student Loans, and on-campus employment. Some type of government-subsidized and/or alternative student loan funding is available to most all students.

#### 1.4.1 Contacting the Financial Aid Office

Our mailing address is: 1791 Arastradero Rd. Palo Alto, CA 94304  
 Email: [financialaid@paloinyo.edu](mailto:financialaid@paloinyo.edu)  
 Phone Number: 650-433-3824  
 PAU FAFSA School Code: 021383-00

#### 1.4.2 Office Hours

The Financial Aid Office is open virtually Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Please contact [financialaid@paloinyo.edu](mailto:financialaid@paloinyo.edu) for appointments. Financial Aid drop-in office hours are held via Zoom Monday – Friday, 10:00 – 11:00 a.m., see [website](#) for Zoom information.

#### 1.4.3 Important Deadlines

<b>October 1</b>	FAFSA application available for the next academic year
<b>March 2</b>	California State Grant Deadline (Undergraduates only)
<b>July 5, 2023</b>	Student financial aid files must be complete for fall start
<b>March 1, 2024</b>	Student financial aid files must be complete for spring start
<b>First or second week of classes</b>	First round of refund checks available

For more specific information about eligibility, Satisfactory Academic Progress and other matters related to Financial Aid specifically, please see the [University Catalog](#).

## 1.5 Mental Health Support

While Palo Alto University does not have a counseling center on campus for students, we do have several mental health support options. If you need mental health support, please reach out to the Department of Student Success at [studentsuccess@paloinc.edu](mailto:studentsuccess@paloinc.edu).

Some services available include (subject to change):

Through [TimelyCare](#), part of [TimelyMD](#) a leading telehealth company specializing in higher education, all students have access to:

- 24/7 virtual access to medical and mental health care from anywhere in the United States - **at no cost**. Any PAU student has access to a licensed provider via a smartphone or any web-enabled device. Licensed providers are available to offer medical and mental health support via phone or secure video visits.
  - **Medical** - On-demand virtual access to a medical provider that can treat a wide range of common illnesses like cold and flu, sinus infection, allergies, and more
  - **Scheduled Medical** - Appointment-based options to speak with a medical provider
  - **TalkNow** - 24/7, on-demand access to a mental health professional to talk about anything at anytime
  - **Scheduled Counseling** - Speak to a licensed counselor (up to **12** visits per year, every August to August)
  - **Group Sessions** - Weekly Guided Meditation and Yoga Group Sessions, plus specialized discussions throughout the year.
- 
- [Session Sync](#): Session Sync is a telehealth platform that provides clinicians across 43 states. It is free to search and care is provided exclusively by licensed psychologists with secure messaging, online booking, and is HIPAA compliant. For insurance reimbursement, contact your insurance provider to see if they offer out of network coverage for mental health and discuss superbills with your selected clinician.
  - [E-Clinic](#): The PAU eClinic is a fully online clinic offering mental health services. Due to potential conflicts of interest, **this service is only available to undergraduate students at PAU**.
  - [American Psychological Association \(APA\) Psychologist Locator](#): This website provides you the opportunity to find practicing psychologists in your area.
  - PAU encourages all students to become familiar with personal insurance plan coverage to access additional mental health and healthcare as needed.

## 1.6 International Student Support

PAU enthusiastically welcomes and supports international students. If you are an international student and have questions about your status or about applying to PAU, please contact the Department of Student Success at 650-433-3851. The [International Student Success website](#) has information for both current and prospective international students:

### 1.6.1 Masters Programs - International Students

International students who plan to be in their home country while being enrolled in an online PAU Master's program are eligible to apply.

However, international students currently living in the U.S. in F-1 status and those interested in becoming an F-1 international student for studying in the U.S. are not eligible to apply to PAU Masters in Counseling on-campus format.

### **1.6.2 Maintaining Legal F-1 International Student Status**

In order to maintain their legal F-1 status, students should:

- Keep their passport valid for six months into the future at all times;
- Maintain a valid I-20: have their I-20 updated by the Department of Student Success if they have changes such as major, change of name, and/or completion of degree date;
- Enroll in a full course load every quarter. Full time for undergraduates is 12 units per quarter. Full time for graduates is 9 units per quarter, except during practicum and internship;
- NOT work on- or off-campus without appropriate authorization from the Department of Student Success or the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) as required. See the [International Student Services website](#) for more information.
- Contact the Department of Student Success if you need to transfer to another institution, extend your program or if you have a new address;
- Have their passport and I-20 checked by the Department of Student Success before traveling internationally.

### **1.6.3 International Students & Health Insurance**

While no Federal regulatory requirements exist for F-1 students to have health insurance, PAU strongly encourages all students, including international students, to have personal health insurance plans.

### **1.6.4 International Students & Employment**

- F-1 International Students are permitted to work on campus jobs at PAU. F-1 students may work up to 20 hours per week. Unfortunately, F-1 students are not eligible for Federal College Work Study jobs.
- F-1 International Students must have immigration authorization to work off-campus.
- International students must apply for CPT for required practicum and internship. Please be sure to review the [information](#) on Curricular Practical Training (CPT) Optional Practical Training (OPT) before pursuing any off-campus employment.

## **1.7 Military & Veteran Student Services**

### **1.7.1 Veterans Benefits**

Palo Alto University is committed to serving our military and veteran community. We support eligible student Veterans, Reservists, National Guard, Active Duty, and dependents with federal education benefits and certification, as well as on- and off-campus resources that aid in the military to student transition.

For questions regarding your eligibility for educational benefits please call the Department of Veterans Affairs toll free at 1-888-442-4551 or visit them on the web at

[Education and Training Home \(va.gov\)](#). Eligibility is determined by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

Inquiries regarding enrollment certification for VA Educational benefits should be directed to [Lisa Harris](#) in the Palo Alto University Military & Veteran Department of Student Success at 650-433-3851.

### **1.7.2 Military Education Benefit Programs Recognized at PAU**

- Montgomery GI Bill® – Active Duty (Chapter 30)
- Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E) Program (Chapter 31)
- Post 9-11 GI Bill® (Chapter 33) GI Bill® is a registered trademark of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). More information about education benefits offered by VA is available at the official U.S. government Web site at <https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill>. The Post-911 GI Bill® may also include:
  - The Yellow Ribbon Program
  - Transfer Educational Benefits to Dependents (TEB)
  - Survivors and Dependents Assistance (Chapter 35)
  - Army, Air Force, and Navy Tuition Assistance (TA) Program

Veterans and their dependents may qualify for other federal, state, institutional, and private financing programs in addition to the Military Education Benefit Programs described above. For more information on these programs and eligibility, please visit the VA education and training benefits website. Prospective students are directed to receive approval from the student's ESO, military counselor or Service prior to enrollment. See the [Military Tuition Assistance website](#) for more information.

### **1.7.3 Transfer Credit Policy for Veterans**

Palo Alto University's undergraduate programs will accept transfer credit awarded for courses taken in the armed services. In order to have your military educational experiences evaluated for credit, you must submit evaluated transcript(s) from the appropriate agency.

The Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard now use the centralized [Joint Services Transcript System](#), which will electronically send your official transcript to PAU upon your request. The transcript includes your military training and occupational experience along with American Council on Education college credit recommendations. The Air Force uses the Community College of the Air Force (CCAF). To request a CCAF transcript visit [Air University's website](#).

Palo Alto University considers both military service and military coursework for academic credit using the guidelines issued by the American Council on Education (ACE). We refer to the ACE "Guide to Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Services" when determining applicable transfer credit for military experience and training. Job specialties (MOS, AFSC, Rate) must have a recommendation evaluation by ACE (in the ACE Guide) for credit to be awarded.

### **1.7.4 Student Responsibilities to Begin Receiving Benefits**

The following steps must be completed prior to a student receiving VA educational benefits at PAU:

- Students must be admitted to a degree program
- Complete the [PAU Veteran Student Application](#)

- Submit program acceptance letter, VA Certificate of Eligibility (CoE), original transcripts, and PAU application for VA benefits to the Military & Veteran Department of Student Success.

### **1.7.5 Student Responsibilities While Receiving Benefits**

Students must notify their School Certifying Official (SCO) at PAU when any of the following occurs:

- Dropping or adding course(s)
- Withdrawing from course(s)
- Discontinuing regular class attendance
- Change in programs (academic majors)
- VA educational benefits are payable for regular attendance in courses that are part of the veterans' program (major) curriculum.

#### **VA educational benefits are NOT payable for:**

- Classes not attended regularly
- Repeating a course for which a passing grade was received
- Classes taken on an audit basis
- Classes that are dropped
- Classes taken that are not part of the student's academic program (major) curriculum.

### **1.7.6 Reporting Requirements**

Recertification for benefits is not automatic and must be requested each quarter. The School Certifying Official (SCO) must report the actual beginning and ending dates and the number of units the military student is enrolled in. This requirement includes certifications for non-standard term enrollments (i.e., 5 week sessions, 8 week sessions, etc.). To prevent overpayment and subsequent indebtedness to the Federal Government, it is important to notify the SCO immediately of changes that may affect your eligibility for benefits. It is the responsibility of each student to keep their SCO apprised of the following:

- **Class Registration:** After registering, students should send a copy of their course schedule to the SCO for VA-Once certification. The earlier a student registers, the earlier certification can be transmitted to the Department of Veterans Affairs. All students receiving VA benefits have a responsibility to notify the SCO of any changes in credit hours enrolled once the quarter begins. Failure to notify the SCO may result in incorrect payment for which the student may be held liable.
- **Changes to Schedule:** Any additions, drops, withdrawals, or other interruptions must be immediately reported to the SCO by the student.
- **Failure to Attend Class:** Routine class attendance is required for students receiving VA benefits. Students who are unable to attend class for an extended period of time should notify their professors, program office, and their SCO.
- **Change of Major:** The VA must be notified when a student changes a major. These changes may be approved if there is minimal loss of credit hours.
- **Change of Address:** If a student's address changes, both the Department of Veterans Affairs and Palo Alto University must be notified.

### **1.7.7 Veterans Benefits-Academic Probation**

The Veterans Administration requires all students attending Palo Alto University under Veterans Educational Assistance Benefits to make satisfactory academic progress and systematic advancement toward an educational objective or be liable for

overpayments from the Veterans' Administration. Satisfactory progress and regular class attendance is expected. You are liable for overpayments from the Veterans Administration.

Veterans and eligible persons not meeting academic standards of progress will be placed on academic probation. If after two terms on probation the student is still not meeting academic standards, the VA will be notified and benefits terminated. Once the student is meeting academic standards, benefits will be reinstated.

Note: Most veteran & military students at PAU meet the conditions for "satisfactorily pursuing" a program of study for receiving VA benefits by meeting the Palo Alto University general catalog requirements for their program of study. Regular Attendance: Students must be in regular attendance of all classes for which they are registered.

### **Unsatisfactory Progress**

The University must notify the Veterans Administration that a student has made unsatisfactory progress if the student:

- fails or withdraws from all classes or,
- is placed on academic probation for 2 terms
- is suspended by the University
- classes not completed: Unless there are extenuating circumstances, students do not receive benefits for any portion of a class dropped after the add/ drop period or for classes in which incomplete (delayed) grades are received and not resolved within one year.

### **1.7.8 Veteran Called to Serve Policy and Process**

Palo Alto University is committed to providing the highest quality services for military students and their families. It is our goal to provide a seamless transition for students attending Palo Alto University who are recalled for national and international military service and their return to the University after deployment. Palo Alto University employees realize every student's situation is unique and dependent upon course load, financial aid status, and date called to serve. To prepare for military leave, please contact the School Certifying Official to review the following process:

- Finding online forms (Office of Accessible Education, Registrar and Financial Aid) and updating VA benefit status if applicable.
- The student must supply orders: a memo from a commanding officer on DoD or branch of service letterhead that describes the required training or deployment and the start/end dates. For non-mandatory trainings, the student must provide documentation that describes the program.
- Once documentation is received, the student will meet with the Department of Student Success to create a plan that ensures the student does not miss any work, projects, exams, etc.

### **1.7.9 PAU Financial Policies for Military Leave**

Palo Alto University will ensure students do not face an academic disadvantage as a result of being called to national or international service. When a student (or family member) receives orders to active duty or orders to deploy, the student can withdraw from the university with a 100% reversal of tuition and fees without penalty.

If classes are in session at the time of activation, each case may be evaluated individually and professors consulted as appropriate. The University will make every

effort to restore students returning from national and military service to the status as they held prior to their departure.

For more information about the process for those called into service and re-admission, click [here](#).

### **1.7.10 Contact Information for School Certifying Official**

Lisa Harris, International and Veteran Student Success Specialist, VA School Certifying Official

Email: [lharris@palou.edu](mailto:lharris@palou.edu)

Phone Number: (650) 433-3851

## **1.8 Student News Digest**

The Student News Digest (SND) is a newsletter that serves as the main channel of communication to students from the University. The SND is sent to students through their PAU email address, and includes information on important events, seminars, and announcements for students. Be sure to check your PAU email to get important announcements and event notifications from PAU.

## **1.9 Student Employment**

A student's work experience at Palo Alto University (PAU) can be fun and rewarding. It also provides students an opportunity to explore career choices and gain critical skills to improve marketability for professional employment. Students are responsible to seek out and apply for positions. A resumé, application and/or interview may be required prior to hiring. There are a variety of student employment positions including student assistant and teacher's assistant.

All available PAU student employment opportunities are posted on PAU's [Student Job Board](#).

Before starting a position, student employees are required to complete all new-hire paperwork through Human Resources. Students may not begin work until they and their supervisor have been notified that they have been authorized to do so by Human Resources. For further questions about student employment, please contact PAU's [Human Resources Department](#).

## **1.10 Student Housing**

Palo Alto University (PAU) does not have on-campus housing. Many PAU students live in towns that are near to where they study or receive clinical training at the Allen Calvin Campus or Stanford Psychiatry Building in Palo Alto as well as the campus located at 1172 Castro, Mountain View (including the Gronowski Center). Other cities near our campuses include Redwood City, Menlo Park, San Mateo, Santa Clara, and Sunnyvale. Some students live in San Francisco, which is a 45-60 minute drive away, depending on traffic, and some live in San Jose, 30-60 minutes away depending on traffic.

### **1.10.1 Roommate Survey and Roommate Questionnaire Spreadsheet**

To assist both new and returning students in their housing search, PAU has created a housing spreadsheet accessible via the Student Portal with a PAU email address. This spreadsheet is only available to those students with a Palo Alto University email address, and has two tabs:

- Looking for Housing/Roommates: This tab is populated by PAU students seeking housing.



- Available Housing: This tab is populated by PAU students who already have a place to live and seek roommates. Occasionally, the Department of Student Success receives requests from members of the community with available housing, which is added to the Available Housing tab.

Once you have successfully found a roommate/housing, please return to the spreadsheet to remove your information so other students still looking will not continue to contact you. PAU encourages all students to review additional housing information provided on the [Helpful Links webpage](#) and [Housing Tips webpage](#).

## **1.11 Civic Engagement & Constitution Day**

Annually, Palo Alto University celebrates Constitution & Citizenship Day by sharing educational information about the U.S. Constitution, as well as information about how to register to vote. Constitution & Citizenship Day is September 17th. The United States federal government requires any institution of higher education to share resources and information about Constitution and Citizenship Day, but of more importance than just complying with a regulation, PAU thinks it is critical that our community is civically engaged.

We encourage voter registration for all members of our community who qualify to vote. California residents can register to vote online through [the California Secretary of State's office](#). To be eligible to vote in California, you must be a U.S. citizen, a resident of California, and 18 years old on the day of the election. Other restrictions apply. You must be registered to vote at least 15 days before an election in order to cast your ballot. If you are outside of California, the [U.S. Election Assistance Commission](#) can direct you to where you can register online.

## **1.12 PAU Alert**

PAU Alert is Palo Alto University's emergency notification system. This is an opt-in system. All members of the PAU community are strongly encouraged to sign up. PAU Alert allows the community to sign up for location based emergency notifications. You can sign up to receive alerts via email, phone and/or text message.

To sign up for PAU Alert, go to PAU's portal and click on the PAU Alert icon.

## **1.13 Student Activities**

### **1.13.1 Student Government**

The purpose of PAU Student Government (PAU SG) is to be the voice of the PAU student body in matters of University governance and operations. PAU SG serves to represent student interests and advocate on issues impacting student welfare.

### **1.13.2 Student Organizations**

Palo Alto University (PAU) has student organizations that are open to all PAU students. There are interest-based organizations, affinity groups, organizations aligned with various academic interests, and honors societies. PAU holds an annual Student Organization Fair, typically in October, for all students to learn more about each organization before joining. A complete list of clubs and organizations can be found on the [Student Organization Directory on the PAU website](#).

### **1.13.3 Honors Societies**

Palo Alto University (PAU) has two honors societies: Chi Sigma Iota (Counseling Honors Society) and Psi Chi (Psychology Honors Society).

- [Chi Sigma Iota: Counseling Honor Society \(CSI\)](#) is the international honor society of professional counseling and for professional counselors. Its mission is to promote scholarship, research, professionalism, leadership and excellence in counseling, and to recognize high attainment in the pursuit of academic and clinical excellence in the profession of counseling.
- [Psi Chi: Psychology Honor Society \(PHS\)](#) is an international honor society whose purpose shall be to encourage, stimulate, and maintain excellence in scholarship of the individual members in all fields, particularly in psychology, and to advance the science of psychology. Its mission is to recognize and promote excellence in the science and application of psychology. Psi Chi is open to all eligible PAU students.

### **1.14 Student Survey**

Palo Alto University (PAU) conducts student surveys for all PAU students. We use the data generated from these surveys to improve and/or refine our students' experience at PAU. Surveys are administered as deemed most appropriate by PAU and all students are strongly encouraged to complete University surveys.

Additionally, for some academic programs, there are program specific surveys. Academic department offices will contact students directly with information about how to complete program specific surveys.

### **1.15 Parking**

Students are allowed to park at the Allen Calvin Campus and the campus located at 1172 Castro, Mountain View. No parking permit is required.

Students who use space at Stanford as part of the PGSP-Stanford PsyD Consortium should work with the consortium program staff on site at Stanford for parking assistance located at 401 Quarry Road, Stanford, CA 94304.

Students are encouraged to use alternative commute and transport options when possible. In addition to these alternative options, PAU also offers 2 commuting programs: Commute Smart Program and the Guaranteed Ride Home Program. To learn more about these alternative commute options and programs, [click here](#).

### **1.16 PAU ID Card**

For information about student IDs and to request a student ID, please visit the [Student ID page](#) on the Palo Alto University website.

## Section II: University Policies

### 2.1 New Student Orientation

All new students to the University are required to complete a University orientation before they begin classes. Additionally, most academic programs have a program orientation that new students must attend. Students can contact their academic department (Counseling or Psychology) for more information about their program orientation.

### 2.2 Required Student Training

All students are required to complete the below online trainings by the dates assigned by the Department of Student Success:

1. Sexual Assault Prevention for Adult Learners (Title IX) - required
2. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for Students (Introduction Inclusive Excellence at PAU) - required

Typically these trainings are sent to the students' PAU email account at the start of the fall quarter. For new students who start in the spring, these trainings will be sent to them at that time. Students who fail to complete the trainings by the deadline will have a hold placed on their student account and may face disciplinary action through the University conduct system.

### 2.3 Chosen Names & Pronouns

Palo Alto University is committed to supporting an environment of inclusiveness and supporting the chosen form of self-identification for our students, faculty, staff, and alumni.

Palo Alto University (PAU) recognizes that members of the PAU community may wish to identify themselves by a name other than their Legal Name. For this reason, PAU will allow students, faculty, staff, and alumni to use a "Chosen Name" where possible at PAU. People may also indicate their gender identity and pronoun. For some records, PAU is legally required to use a person's Legal Name. Whenever reasonably possible, a person's "Chosen Name" will be used.

For additional information regarding purpose, definitions, policy, and procedure, please refer to the University [Catalog](#).

### 2.4 Legal Name Change

Students who wish to change their legal name with the University should complete the appropriate form that can be found on the Student tab of the PAU portal. In most situations, additional supporting documentation is required to confirm a legal name change. Please contact the Registrar's Office for additional information.

### 2.5 Non-Discrimination Policy

Building an equitable, inclusive, and just community takes institutional commitment and individual practice. Palo Alto University's core values of social justice and cultural responsiveness drive our work to develop and sustain institutional systems that foster equity-minded training, inclusive practices, and a community that embodies belonging.

We ground this work in the foundational belief that inclusion is required for individuals and institutions to thrive and achieve their greatest potential. Palo Alto University uses the [Inclusive Excellence Framework](#) as the basis for our endeavors to build individual and institutional capacity in equity.

Further, Palo Alto University (PAU) is an equal opportunity institution of higher education and employer and is firmly committed to non-discrimination in its delivery of educational services and employment practices. In compliance with all applicable federal and state laws, such decisions will be made irrespective of the individual's race, color, religion, religious creed, ancestry, national origin, age (except for minors), sex, marital status, citizenship status, military service status, sexual orientation, gender identity, medical condition, disability and/or any another status protected by law.

## **2.6 [Sexual Misconduct/Title IX](#)**

Palo Alto University is committed to maintaining its campuses and programs free from all forms of sexual misconduct. All forms of sexual misconduct are prohibited, including sexual and gender-related: violence, assault, harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. Palo Alto University's [Sexual Misconduct Policy](#) can be found here.

Mary Haesloop, Director of Human Resources, is the Title IX Coordinator for Palo Alto University and can be reached at (650) 433-3881 or at [mhaesloop@paloinc.edu](mailto:mhaesloop@paloinc.edu).

## **2.7 Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords students certain rights with respect to their education records. For full details, please refer to the University [Catalog](#).

Under the FERPA exception for disclosure to University officials with legitimate educational interests, third parties identified as University officials are subject to the requirements in the Act with respect to disclosure or possible re-disclosure of personal identifiable information ([Disclosure and Re-disclosure information](#))- 34 C.F.R. 99.33.

FERPA permits disclosure of directory information without consent unless the student has filed a [Request for non-disclosure of directory information](#). Once the Registrar's Office receives the completed form, all directory information will be withheld until the Registrar's Office is notified to remove the hold.

For additional information regarding student privacy and FERPA, visit the [FERPA Website](#).

The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Palo Alto University to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202-5920

## **2.8 Continuous Enrollment**

To be a matriculated student of Palo Alto University, a student must be "continuously enrolled" in their academic program, with the exception of those students who are on an

approved leave of absence. For more information on continuous enrollment for undergraduate, master's, and doctoral programs, please see the University [Catalog](#) and refer to the [continuous enrollment policy](#).

## **2.9 Leave of Absence (LOA)**

### **2.9.1 Policy**

Students may apply to take a temporary leave of absence (LOA) from the University for medical, military, or exceptional personal circumstances (for example, a death in the family or housing insecurity). An approved LOA is for one quarter. Students have the possibility of extending the LOA for longer than one quarter, but an LOA cannot exceed 180 days (approximately 6 months) in one calendar year. The one calendar year begins on the first day of the student's initial LOA.

The quarter in which the student is approved for a LOA, 100% of the tuition and fees will be reversed to the student. Additionally, in compliance with current regulations, a student who does not return from their approved LOA by the established return date will be withdrawn from the University. The withdrawal date will be the date the student failed to return from the LOA.

### **2.9.2 Procedures**

1. Students who are interested in taking an LOA, should contact the Department of Student Success at [studentsuccess@paloinou.edu](mailto:studentsuccess@paloinou.edu).
2. A representative from the Department of Student Success will provide the LOA form to the student and meet with the student to ensure that the student is advised of the policy and procedures.
3. The student should complete their section of the LOA Form and include supporting documentation.
4. The student is required to meet with and obtain approval from (through signature on the LOA Form):
  - a. Their academic advisor (all students),
  - b. Office of Financial Aid (if applicable),
  - c. Director of Clinical Training for their academic program (if applicable)
  - d. International/Veteran Student Services (if applicable)
5. Once all required meetings occur and signatures have been obtained, the Department of Student Success will notify the following offices: Academic Department, Financial Aid, Registrar's Office, and the Bursar's Office.
6. While on a LOA, the student is required to check in monthly with the Department of Student Success.
7. At least three weeks before the student is scheduled to return, the student must meet with a representative from the Department of Student Success to ensure the student is on track to return to academic study.

### **2.9.3 Medical Leave of Absence (MLOA)**

Students may apply for a medical leave of absence if they cannot continue enrollment due to medical reasons. The eligibility, length of leave, tuition and fee reversal and procedures are the same as above under the subheading "Leave of Absence" **except** for the requirements to request a MLOA and return after a MLOA.

### **Requesting a MLOA and Returning to the University after a MLOA**

Students must provide documentation from a healthcare provider to validate the need for medical leave.

At least two weeks prior to their return date, students must provide a medical release from a healthcare provider. The release documentation must include that the student is:

1. permitted to return to the University,
2. capable of resuming academic studies, and
3. able to meet the program's requirements.

Students who do not provide a medical release from the same healthcare provider who validated the medical leave will be administratively withdrawn from the University after the last day to add/drop in the quarter in which they return.

\*\* This policy will be reviewed and revised as necessary to ensure compliance with federal and state laws and regulations and to ensure the health and well-being of students.

### **2.9.4 Administrative Leave of Absence**

Notwithstanding any other policy, the University reserves the right to place a student on administrative leave in response to instances of disruptive or other behavior that interferes with University community well-being in the judgment of Palo Alto University. Where the University believes that the behavior may be caused by, or related to, psychological or other health issues, PAU may require a mandatory independent medical evaluation, temporary or indefinite withdrawal, and/or other administrative action as deemed appropriate by the circumstances of the individual situation. Such action must be approved by the Provost/Chief Academic Officer or their designee, with possible consultation by others. The University may require documentation in order for the student to return to active status.

## **2.10 Administrative Holds**

In certain situations, the University may place a hold on a student account. This means students will not be able to register for classes, make adjustments to their schedules, or request transcripts until the holds are removed. Some reasons for a hold on a student account include, but are not limited to: failure to pay tuition and fees by established deadlines, failure to comply with University sanctions or remediation efforts, failure to complete a required University training by established deadlines, etc.

## **2.11 Grade Appeal**

The administration, following legal and academic freedom precedents, may not overrule an academic evaluation by a member of the PAU instructional faculty so long as that evaluation has been given within the scope of the course, in good faith, and done so on a rational basis. In sum, only grades apparently based upon non-academic criteria or a violation of PAU policy may be overturned by administration.

### **2.11.1 Informal Procedure**

When students at PAU are dissatisfied with a student evaluation received in a course, their first step must be to communicate or meet with the instructor for clarification and review of the grade within five (5) days of when final grades are posted in the course. If no resolution is reached, students may use the formal procedure described below.

### **2.11.2 Formal Procedure**

If a student believes that non-academic criteria have been used in determining their grade, or that the instructor has otherwise breached PAU policy in assigning the contested grade, the student may appeal the instructor's evaluation in writing to the Department Chair within fifteen (15) working dates of an attempt at an informal resolution of the matter. If the resolution of the Department Chair is not satisfactory to the student, the student has fifteen (15) working days to appeal the decision to the Provost. The Provost will have forty-five (45) working days to respond to the appeal. If the appeal is approved, then a hearing with the Institutional Grievance and Appeals Committee (IGAC) will be scheduled.

Only grades apparently based upon non-academic criteria or a violation of PAU policy may be overturned by any of the adjudicating groups (Department Chair or IGAC). The written decision of each adjudicating body should be explicit and clear in their outcome regarding overturning or upholding the course grade.

The student's written appeal at each step of the appeals process must specify the nature of the disagreement and include copies of all documents supporting the grievance. The student bears the burden of showing that non-academic criteria were used or that PAU policy was otherwise breached. The instructor will be consulted by each body of the appeals process (Department Chair and IGAC) for additional information, and will be given an opportunity to respond. All documents will be shared equally with both the student and the instructor. In addition, all materials related to the formal appeals process will be stored in the student's file. After reading the grade appeal policy, students may use the embedded link to access the [Grade Appeal Form](#).

## **2.12 Computer Network Usage Policy**

The use of Palo Alto University's network and computer resources should support the essential missions of the University in teaching, learning, and research. Users of Palo Alto University's network and computer resources ("users") are responsible for appropriately using and protecting information resources and for respecting the rights of others. This [computer network usage policy](#) provides guidelines for the appropriate use of information resources.

### **2.12.1 Email Communication**

All communications from Palo Alto University (PAU) to students will be done through the students' PAU email account. Therefore, students are responsible for checking their PAU email regularly and responding promptly to University communications.

### **2.12.2 Social Media Policy**

Palo Alto University (PAU) recognizes that the internet provides the community with unique opportunities to participate in interactive discussions and share information on particular topics using a wide array of social media platforms such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, blogs, and wikis. Students are advised to use appropriate and

professional judgment when using social media. PAU encourages open and transparent dialogue consistent with the ethical and professional comportment guidelines the American Psychological Association and the American Counseling Association set forth.

Content posted online by students on social media may be a factor in determining appropriateness for the profession. Therefore, any posting about clients, any derogatory postings about supervisors, faculty, programs, or sites, or any postings that present the student in an inappropriate or unprofessional light may be grounds for discipline or termination from a practicum or internship placement.

### **2.12.3 Student Professional Behavior and Use of Technology**

The policy of Palo Alto University requires that electronic devices be used in classes **solely** for classroom-relevant activities, such as note taking or presentations, or for instructor-advised internet access, such as to NIH websites. Using devices for personal use during class time is unprofessional and disruptive. Any student found engaging in the personal, non-academic use of devices during class time may face consequences that include grade penalization, Academic Training Committee (ATC) referral, or Student Evaluation Committee (SEC) referral for consideration of further disciplinary action.

## **2.13 Research Integrity Policy**

This statement of policy and procedures is intended to carry out this institution's responsibilities under the Public Health Service (PHS) Policies on Research Misconduct, 42 CFR Part 93.1. This [Research Integrity Policy](#) applies to allegations of research misconduct (fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism in proposing, performing, or reviewing research, or in reporting research results) involving:

- A person who, at the time of the alleged research misconduct, was employed by, was enrolled as a student at, was an agent of, or was otherwise affiliated by contract or agreement with this institution and
  1. PHS supported biomedical or behavioral research, research training or activities related to that research or research training, such as the operation of tissue and data banks and the dissemination of research information
  2. applications or proposals for PHS support for biomedical or behavioral research, research training or activities related to that research or research training
  3. plagiarism of research records produced in the course of PHS supported research, research training or activities related to that research or research training. This includes any research proposed, performed, reviewed, or reported, or any research record generated from that research, regardless of whether an application or proposal for PHS funds resulted in a grant, contract, cooperative agreement, or other form of PHS support or
  4. Any other research, supported by other funding sources or un-funded, including applications or proposals for support from other sources.

This statement of policy and procedures does not apply to authorship or collaboration disputes and applies only to allegations of research misconduct that occurred within six years of the date the institution or U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) received the allegation, subject to the subsequent use, health or safety of the public, and grandfather exceptions in 42 CFR § 93.105(b).



## 2.14 Tobacco-Free

It is the policy of Palo Alto University that the use of tobacco products in the University buildings and facilities and within 20 feet of main PAU entrances, exits, and operable windows is prohibited. "Tobacco products" include, but are not limited to cigarettes, electronic cigarettes, all forms of smokeless tobacco, pipes, and cigars. Except where otherwise posted as a "smoking area," the use of tobacco products is generally prohibited in outdoor areas. Violations of this policy may be subject to appropriate action to correct and prevent future policy violations.

This policy does not supersede more restrictive policies that may be in force to comply with federal, state, or local laws or ordinances.

## 2.15 Religious Holidays

Although PAU does not observe religious holidays as official institutional holidays, PAU recognizes that students and faculty may choose to make adjustments in the academic calendar for religious obligations. Schedule changes for this reason are made without penalty, and early planning for them by students and faculty is encouraged. Faculty may choose to dismiss classes that fall on religious holidays. Makeup sessions for canceled classes, while encouraged, are optional.

Students may request to be excused from classes that fall on religious holidays. Rescheduling class time missed, while optional, is encouraged, and arrangements should be made by the student in consultation with the instructor.

## 2.16 Graduation & Commencement

While related, graduation and commencement are two separate things: A student's official graduation from Palo Alto University occurs on the day the University confers students' degrees. After that date, students can commission or confirm with employers they have completed all degree requirements and are graduates of PAU.

Commencement is the official ceremony celebrating students' graduation. Graduation/degree conferral and the Commencement ceremony do not need to occur on the same day.

### 2.16.1 Graduation/Degree Conferral

Graduation/Degree Conferral occurs when a candidate has completed all academic requirements, submits an Intent to Graduate Form to the Registrar's Office, and their degree is conferred by the Board of Trustees. The Intent to Graduate Form initiates the audit of a student's academic records to confirm they meet all academic and other requirements for graduation. In order to participate in the June commencement ceremony, the Intent to Graduate Form must be submitted to the Registrar by the following dates:

#### Graduation Term - application deadlines

Fall 2024	November 1, 2024
Winter 2024	January 15, 2024
Spring 2024	April 1, 2024
Summer 2024	April 1, 2024

Students who miss the Intent to Graduate Form deadlines for a given year will still be able to obtain a graduation/date of completion when they finish the requirements specified above.

### **2.16.2 Commencement Ceremony**

Once a student has met all graduation requirements, they may participate in PAU's Commencement Ceremony. PAU holds one commencement ceremony in June each year to celebrate our graduates' accomplishments.

Students are eligible to participate in the commencement ceremony if they graduated in the academic year leading up to the June ceremony.

## **2.17 Academic Progress**

Students who fail to meet these requirements may be placed on academic probation or dismissed from the University. Students placed on probation must meet with their academic advisor to develop a student assistance plan (SAP) to address the academic deficiencies. This plan must be on file with the Department of Student Success and must be followed. Failure to follow a student assistance plan (SAP) may result in dismissal from the University.

### **2.17.1 Undergraduate Program**

All undergraduate students must maintain a cumulative and quarterly grade point average of 2.0 to be in satisfactory academic standing.

- **Quarterly GPA Requirements**

Students who earn a quarterly GPA between 1.01 and 1.99 will be placed on academic probation. Students who earn a quarter GPA of less than 1.0 will be dismissed from the University.

- **Cumulative GPA Requirements**

Students who earn a cumulative GPA between 1.01 and 1.99 will be placed on academic probation. Students have the two subsequent quarters to improve their GPA to satisfactory standing. Failure to do so will result in dismissal from the University.

### **2.17.2 MS in Psychology Program**

Masters students are required to make satisfactory academic progress, which is defined as follows:

- Maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0 (B);
- Receive no grade of "F" in any graduate or undergraduate course;
- Receive no more than two (2) grades of B- in a single quarter \*;
- Have fewer than nine (9) units of incomplete;
- Complete a minimum of 24 units a year, M.S. Psychology if not on a Modified Course Plan approved by the student's Academic Advisor
- Complete the program within five (5) years of starting the program.
- For M.S. Psychology students applying to PAU's Ph.D. Clinical Psychology, one B- during the duration of the program is allowed; and to be eligible to transfer to the Ph.D. a student cannot fail any class. The student must pass the research methods competency exam and an interview with a Ph.D faculty and student.

Additionally, this program must be completed within five (5) years of starting the program.

### **2.17.3 MA in Counseling Program**

Masters students are required to make satisfactory academic progress, which is defined as follows:

- Maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0 (B);
- Receive no grade of "F" in any graduate course;
- Receive no more than two (2) grades of B- in a single quarter;
- Receive a passing grade in practicum;
- Have fewer than nine (9) units of incomplete;
- Complete the program within five (5) years of starting the program.

Additionally, this program must be completed within five (5) years of starting the program.

### **2.17.4 PhD in Clinical Psychology Program**

PhD students are required to make satisfactory academic progress. Please refer to the PhD Program Handbook for details about academic standing.

Additionally, students must complete the program within 7 years from matriculation.

### **2.17.5 PsyD Program**

PsyD students are required to make satisfactory academic progress, which is defined as follows:

- Maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0;
- Receive no grade of "F" in any course;
- Receive no more than two (2) grades of B- in a single quarter;
- Receive a passing grade in practicum;
- Have less than eight point five (8.5) units of incomplete (I);
- Pass all three Clinical Competency Examinations within three (3) attempts;
- Perform at an adequate level in Dissertation research or internship training;

Additionally, students must advance to candidacy within 4 years from the date of matriculation and complete the program within 3 years of advancement to candidacy.

## Section III: How to Report Concerns to the University

### **3.1 General Incident Report**

Use this form to create a report about any alleged policy violations at PAU, including both academic and community-based policy violations.

### **3.2 Identity-Based Incident Report**

Use this form for reporting an incident or harm based on identity. Examples can include, but are not limited to, microaggressions, slurs, degrading language, epithets, and intimidation. These experiences may occur on campus or at external training sites.

### **3.3 Sexual Misconduct/Title IX Report**

Use this form for reporting an incident or policy violation related to the University's [Sexual Misconduct Policy \(Title IX\)](#). This report will go to PAU's Title IX Coordinator, Mary Haesloop.

# Section IV: Behavioral Expectations – Student Rights and Responsibilities

## 4.1 Introduction

Palo Alto University (PAU) is an academic community that endeavors to maintain the highest ethical and behavioral standards in all that we do. PAU administration, faculty, and staff have a responsibility to help students to understand, to be measured by, and to uphold the ethical and behavioral standards of our PAU community. Students have a responsibility to learn our community's ethical and professional standards and to maintain those standards in all of their work and professional relationships while at PAU. This includes their work and professional relationships as students, researchers, clinicians (including at practicum and internship sites), and as professional and academic colleagues.

The following policies and procedures outline student behavioral expectations as well as their rights should they be alleged to be in violation of any of these policies. Students are expected to abide by these policies.

Finally, the procedures outlined in this document detail administrative action the University will take should a student be alleged to have violated University policy. Consistent with the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) principles of academic freedom and tenure, the faculty instructor is responsible for determining any grades related to the courses they teach, including individual assignments and final grades. When alleged policy violations occur, faculty may consult with administration in determining an assignment or final course grade related to an alleged policy violation, but the ultimate responsibility for assigning course grades is the instructor's. Administrative action taken by the University cannot include dictating to faculty an assignment or final course grades.

## 4.2 Policy

The following behaviors violate PAU policy and may result in disciplinary action by the University.

### 4.2.1 Academic Integrity

- a. **Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is the inclusion, in any paper, draft, assignment, presentation, or other work, of someone else's product, words, ideas, or data and representing it as one's own work. Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to: the taking of any portion of a document, article, or book and representing it as one's own work, the lifting of a well-phrased sentence and including such sentence without crediting the author, or including another person's ideas as an example of one's own thought or work. Plagiarism includes using unpublished work as well as published sources, using another's term paper, or handing in a product that includes substantial work by another individual or agency, including internet services.
- b. **Self-Plagiarism:** Self-Plagiarism is using one's own work from a previous assignment without the permission of the current instructor and/or without properly citing this information.
- c. **Cheating:** Cheating includes, but is not limited to, using unauthorized materials in an examination; looking at another student's test paper to copy answers; using or supplying questions or answers from an examination to be given or in progress that have not been authorized for distribution; having a person other than the one registered and taking the course, stand in at an

examination or at any other graded activity; collaborating with others on projects where such collaboration is expressly forbidden; using resources, including electronic resources, forbidden by a faculty member. Cheating also includes facilitating any of these actions.

- d. Fabrication:** Fabrication includes, but is not limited to, submitting a paper, a lab report, computer data, or other academic exercises with falsified, invented, or fictitious information.
- e. Academic sabotage or obstruction:** Academic sabotage is an intentional interference with the work or progress of other students or researchers, and may include, but is not limited to, intentionally destroying or interfering with the work of others, stealing or defacing library materials or materials owned by others, and altering or copying computer files or documents owned by others without authorization.
- f. Unauthorized use or misuse of materials:** Unauthorized use or misuse of materials include, but are not limited to, reading, duplicating, copying, removing, or any other unauthorized use or misuse of a document, record, book, ledger, file, printout, tape, cartridge, disc, key, or any property maintained by any individual(s) or department(s) of PAU.
- g. Forgery:** Forgery is the unauthorized creation of an imitation of, forging, or any other unauthorized alteration of, a document, electronic file, form, record, identification, or any property maintained by any individual(s) or department(s) of PAU.
- h. Grade tampering, exam fraud, or other acts of dishonesty:** Academic misconduct includes other acts of dishonesty or impropriety occurring in the course of academic activities, such as grade tampering, or obtaining or distributing any part of any exam materials or any information about an exam, or knowingly providing false information.
- i. Professional Ethics & Dispositional Issues:** Violations of professional ethics in the context of earning academic credit including, but not limited to, violation of the ethical code or professional code of the profession that a student is preparing to enter (for example the [APA Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct](#) and the [ACA Code of Ethics](#)), using unethical research practices, and violation of professional ethics are also policy violation at PAU. Uncorrected dispositional issues incompatible for the professional fields (Counseling & Psychology) are also policy violations.

#### 4.2.2 Community

- 1. Alcohol:** No one under the age of 21 is permitted to possess, purchase, use, or be under the influence of alcohol at any time at PAU or PAU sponsored events. Students are expected to abide by all local, state, and federal laws: failure to do so is a violation of University policy. Impaired students are not permitted to be in class, interact with clients, or conduct research under any circumstances.
- 2. Abuse of Technology:** PAU is the licensee of many computer software packages that are protected by copyright laws. Misuse of computing facilities, software, hardware, unauthorized use of another individual's computer account, misuse of one's own computer account, or any violation of the policies for using computing and networking resources at Palo Alto University is prohibited.
- 3. Hazing:** Palo Alto University prohibits any form of hazing. Hazing is defined as any action or situation created by individuals, groups, teams, or student organizations, on- or off-campus, that could cause or has the potential to result

in harassment, emotional or physical abuse, harm, embarrassment, anxiety, ridicule, or the violation of a policy, no matter how positive the end result or intent. Hazing is prohibited regardless of consent, membership, or length of affiliation with an organization.

4. **Failure to Comply:** Failure to comply with the reasonable direction of a University official acting within their job responsibilities is prohibited. Failure to comply with any assigned sanctions resulting from PAU's student conduct system is also a violation of this policy.
5. **Disorderly Conduct:** Disruption of the educational or administrative process at PAU is prohibited.
6. **Vandalism:** The physical abuse or destruction of PAU property and/or property at one of our partner locations is prohibited.
7. **Harassing, Abusive, Threatening, and/or Bullying Behaviors:** Harassing, abusive, threatening, and/or bullying behavior of PAU community members, including but not limited to other students and employees of the University (and their family members) is prohibited. Any conduct that threatens or endangers the physical, mental, and/or emotional health and safety of a member of the University community, on or off University property, or at a University-sponsored or supervised activity is considered abusive or threatening behavior.
  - **Verbal:** includes, but is not limited to, threats, discrimination, harassment, bullying, and cyberbullying made in person, over the phone, left on voicemail, and/or by other electronic means
  - **Physical:** includes, but is not limited to, assault, battery, fighting, false imprisonment, coercion, hazing, stalking, prohibiting a person from freely entering or departing a room or event through physical force or the presence or otherwise confining a person, any unwanted physical contact between individuals, and/or attempts of physical threat
  - **Written:** includes, but is not limited to, online messaging, internet usage, email, cell phone/texting, social media, letters, signs, banners, clothing, and/or graffiti
  - **Retaliation:** includes, but is not limited to, blackmail and/or action taken against another member of the community who has been identified as a complainant, victim, witness, or University representative alleging misconduct
  - **Implied threats:** includes, but is not limited to, gestures, taunting comments, and/or any behaviors that create a threatening environment, including threats against the University and/or its property
8. **Criminal Violations and Arrest Notification:** Violation of any local, state, or federal criminal code on- or off-campus is prohibited. Behaviors and violations off-campus are referred to PAU's student conduct system at the discretion of the University administration. Students accused, arrested for, or convicted of any misdemeanor, felony, or sexual offense must notify the Department of Student Success of their status within 48 hours after their release from jail and/or a judgment, or at the time of enrollment into the University, whichever comes first. Failure to do so is a violation of Palo Alto University policy.
9. **Emergency/Fire Equipment & Procedures:** Students are prohibited from the misuse of, vandalism to, and/or tampering with fire and emergency equipment, including but not limited to, fire extinguishers, alarms, hoses, sprinkler heads, smoke detectors, AED devices, safety/emergency vehicles and property, and/or video surveillance equipment. Falsely reporting a fire, bomb threat, or other emergency is also a violation of this policy. In the event of an emergency or drill, students must follow the directives of University officials

and/or emergency personnel. Knowingly setting fire (arson), unintentionally setting fire, and intentionally setting off the fire alarm when there is no emergency is also strictly prohibited.

- 10. Theft:** Theft or attempted theft, unauthorized possession, misuse, or wrongful appropriation of property, or sale of property not belonging to oneself is strictly prohibited.
- 11. Drugs and Illegal Substances:** The possession or sale of illegal drugs is strictly prohibited at PAU. In addition, students are not permitted to be under the influence of illegal drugs at any time on PAU property and/or during PAU activities. Impaired students, whether legally prescribed medication that alters mental status or illegal drugs, are not permitted to attend class, interact with clients, or conduct research under any circumstances.
- 12. Recordings:** It is prohibited to videotape, audio record, or take pictures of persons using any current or future technologies without their knowledge and/or consent when there is a reasonable expectation of privacy and/or confidentiality.
- 13. Sexual Misconduct:** Palo Alto University is committed to maintaining its campuses and programs free from all forms of sexual misconduct. All forms of sexual misconduct are prohibited, including sexual and gender-related: violence, assault, harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. Palo Alto University's Sexual Misconduct Policy, in its entirety, can be found [here](#).
- 14. Weapons:** Possession of weapons and weapon replicas, including but not limited to, firearms, BB guns, air guns, knives, swords, machetes, blow darts, spears, compound bows/arrows, Tasers, brass knuckles, slingshots, martial arts devices, dangerous chemicals, incendiary devices, ammunition or other explosive substances including fireworks is prohibited and banned from University property and University-sponsored events.
- 15. Lewd Behavior:** Lewd, indecent, or obscene behavior is not permitted.
- 16. Solicitation:** Solicitation of and by students, student organizations, faculty, and staff for money, goods, or services without written authorization from the Department of Student Success is prohibited.
- 17. Animals:** Animals/pets are not permitted on any PAU campus, with the exception of service animals registered with the Office of Accessible Education and emotional support animals that have been approved by Human Resources as it relates to PAU employment. Emotional support animals are only permitted for employment-related activities and are generally not permitted with other activities related to the University.
- 18. Smoking/Tobacco-Free Environment:** Tobacco and smoking/vaping products include, but are not limited to cigarettes, electronic cigarettes, all forms of smokeless tobacco, pipes, and cigars. Except where otherwise posted as a "smoking area," the use of tobacco products is generally prohibited in outdoor areas.
- 19. University Logo Use:** The logo of Palo Alto University is the property of the University. It cannot be copied and used by students or student clubs and organizations except in respect to an official University function and if approval for the specific use is requested of and approved by External Affairs.
- 20. Breach of Confidentiality/Honor Code**  
In line with the ethical standards in the fields of counseling and psychology, PAU may require a signed confidentiality agreement to carry out certain student employment roles, a signed exam proctoring agreement or any other document requiring confidentiality or

maintaining ethical standards, including, but not limited to an honor code, and if breached, may be cause for disciplinary action.

## 4.3 Procedures

### 4.3.1 Reporting

- [General Incident Report](#): With the exception of reports of sexual misconduct and gender-based discrimination (Title IX), and identity-based bias incidents, all reports of an alleged violation of University policy should be reported to the Department of Student Success through the General Incident Report Form.
- [Identity-Based Incident Report](#): Reports of identity-based incidents should be reported to the Department of Student Success through the Identity-Based Incident Report Form.
- [Sexual Misconduct/Title IX Report](#): Reports of alleged violation(s) of the Palo Alto University Sexual Misconduct Policy (Title IX) should be reported to the University's Title IX Coordinator through the Sexual/Gender Bias Incident Report Form.

All three reporting forms can be found on the student tab of MyPAU Portal. If there is any confusion about which form to use, please submit your report through the General Incident Report Form.

Any member of the PAU community can submit an incident report, but faculty and staff are required to do so when they know or reasonably suspect that a policy violation has occurred. It is important that all alleged policy violations are reported to the Department of Student Success in order to have a complete and effective student conduct system that appropriately addresses student behavior, remediates behavioral concerns, and keeps the University and those affiliated with it safe.

A report of misconduct or allegation of policy violation should include: the name of the student(s) alleged to have violated University policy; a clear factual statement describing the nature of the conduct (date, time, place, witnesses); and the name(s), address(es) and telephone number(s) of those filing the report to support PAU's evidentiary process. Students may wish to make anonymous reports, but doing so will likely inhibit the ability of the University to respond.

Once a report is received, a representative from the Department of Student Success will review the report and determine if there is enough evidence to support the allegation of a policy violation. This may include reaching out to the person who submitted the report for clarification as needed, working with PAU's Student Evaluation Committee (SEC), and/or program department heads for resolution prior to a formal PAU conduct process.

### 4.3.2 Adjudication of Reports

If it is determined that there is not enough evidence to proceed with charges through the student conduct system, no further action will be taken. The student who was reported to have allegedly violated University policy will not be notified, and will not face any disciplinary action. Nothing will be included in the alleged student's file.



If it is determined that there is enough evidence to support charges, the representative from the Department of Student Success will send a charge letter and notice of alleged violation to the accused student through their PAU email account. This letter will include the following:

- the alleged policy violation(s) and when it occurred,
- a link to PAU's Student Handbook (this document), and
- request to meet with a representative from the Department of Student Success by a specific date and/or request that the alleged student provide an official written statement in response to the allegation if requested.

### **Charge Letter & Notice of Alleged Violations**

Students accused of misconduct will receive a charge letter and notice of alleged violation(s) via email from the Department of Student Success within a reasonable amount of time given the initial investigative process in collaboration with the SEC, and/or program department heads, and consideration to the number of students involved and/or the complexity of the case. This letter will also include a request to meet for an initial student conduct meeting and/or the alleged student may be asked to provide a written statement in response to the allegation. The meeting with a representative from the Department of Student Success must occur within 20 business days of the date of the Charge Letter and/or receipt of an official written statement by the alleged student in response to the allegation within 15 business days.

### **Student Participation in Conduct Proceeding**

Students alleged to have violated PAU policies are expected to be active participants in the student conduct process. Failure to respond to the charge letter and/or failure to meet with a representative from the Department of Student Success will result in a referral to the Student Conduct Board (SCB) for adjudication with an additional charge of Failure to Comply.

### **False Information**

Providing false information or withholding information from a University official during the conduct process is prohibited. This includes but is not limited to: falsification, distortion, or misrepresentation of information before any University official or hearing board, disruption or interference with the orderly conduct of the student conduct process, tampering with witnesses in preparing for or during the hearing process, and/or initiating a student conduct proceeding in bad faith. If throughout the conduct inquiry process it is found that the alleged student provided false information or withheld information from a University official, this will result in a referral to the Student Conduct Board (SCB) for adjudication with an additional charge of **Disorderly Conduct**.

### **Conduct Meeting/Written Response**

During the initial student conduct meeting, the student who is alleged to have violated PAU's policies will meet with a representative from the Department of Student Success who will:

- review the procedures to adjudicate alleged policy violations outlined in this Student Handbook
- review the charge letter and discuss the allegations against the student

- provide what they think is a fair sanction if the student wishes to accept responsibility for the violation
- if instead the alleged student is requested to provide a written statement, the student may receive a written response from the Department of Student Success versus a requested meeting

**The accused student will have an opportunity to:**

- ask questions about their rights as they relate to PAU's student conduct system
- review any reports or documentation that were submitted to the Department of Student Success related to their alleged violation of University policies
- discuss the allegations against them
- accept responsibility for the alleged policy violation(s) and the sanction determined by a representative from the Department of Student Success
- request a hearing with the PAU Student Conduct Board. Students may accept responsibility for their behavior and waive their right to a hearing with the Student Conduct Board, but they are not required to do so and cannot be forced to do so. An accused student can request a hearing with the Student Conduct Board at any time during this meeting with no adverse impact on the hearing.

**Accepting Responsibility for Violating PAU Policy**

If an accused student wishes, they may waive their right to a hearing and accept responsibility for violating PAU policy. In these cases, they will be assigned a sanction by a representative from the Department of Student Success. Some sanctions have deadlines, and all deadlines must be adhered to. Failure to do so may result in an additional charge of failure to comply and a referral to the PAU Student Conduct Board. By accepting responsibility for violating PAU policy, the student waives their right to any appeal of their case.

**Request a Hearing**

Students accused of violating PAU policy have the right to a hearing before the PAU Student Conduct Board. If an accused student does not want to accept responsibility for an alleged policy violation and the sanctions determined by a representative from the Department of Student Success or if the student simply wants to exercise the right to request a hearing, the Department of Student Success will schedule a hearing within a reasonable amount of time with consideration given to the number of individuals involved.

**Access to Student Conduct Material**

Student conduct documents (including, but not limited to, incident reports and statements given during the process by the complainant, respondent, or witnesses) may be reviewed by the complainant and/or the respondent but may not be duplicated or photographed. In some situations, to protect the identity of others involved, names and other personally identifying information of others may be redacted before the information is shared.

**Recording of Conduct Meetings and Hearings/Written Documentation**

Recordings, including but not limited to tape recording, video recording, recording on a mobile phone, etc. or forwarding of any written student conduct material are not permitted by anyone in any phase of the discipline process. The only exception to this

is during the Student Conduct Board hearing itself. The University will record all hearings and keep them on file in the Department of Student Success.

### **4.3.3 PAU Student Conduct Board**

#### **Hearing Notice**

The Department of Student Success will send a hearing notice with the PAU Student Conduct Board to the accused student notifying them of the date, time, and location of their hearing, providing sufficient time for the accused student to attend. This letter must include the charges the student will face at the hearing, and should be consistent with the charge letter the student previously received from the Department of Student Success. The hearing notice will identify the Student Conduct Board members selected to participate in the hearing.

#### **Membership of the Student Conduct Board**

The Student Conduct Board will include at least two faculty members selected by the Department of Student Success in consultation with the Provost's Office and the faculty. One faculty member must be affiliated with the department in which the student is studying, one faculty member must be from outside of the department in which the student is studying. The accused student's academic advisor cannot serve on the Conduct Board. Where the decision of the Student Conduct Board members is not agreed upon, a member of the Department of Student Success will make the final determining decision.

#### **Challenging an Appointed Hearing Member**

Students may challenge the inclusion of one Student Conduct Board member if they believe the member will not be able to participate in the hearing without bias. The student must make this request within three (3) business days of the date of the hearing notice letter. The request should be directed to the Department of Student Success, and should include the specific reason why the accused student does not believe the Student Conduct Board member can be involved in hearing the case without bias. Please note, because PAU is a relatively small University, it is not always reasonable to expect a Student Conduct Board member to have no knowledge of the accused student. For example, simply having had the Student Conduct Board member as faculty in the past would not be sufficient reason to be disqualified from participating in a hearing. A representative from the Department of Student Success will make a decision about the challenge. If a new Student Conduct Board member is appointed, that will be communicated as well. The decision about whether or not to remove a Student Conduct Board member is final and cannot be challenged.

#### **Evidentiary Standard**

In considering and adjudicating alleged violations, the evidentiary standard is "more likely than not." This means that those adjudicating a case must have a firm belief that the evidence demonstrates that there is a high probability that a violation of policy has occurred.

#### **Closed Hearings**

All Student Conduct Board proceedings are closed, meaning only the complainant, where applicable, the respondent, appropriate witnesses, Student Conduct Board members, and a representative from the Department of Student Success are permitted to attend the hearing. In addition, the respondent has the right to an advisor, per the guidelines noted below.

Prior to the Student Conduct Board hearing, and where applicable, a representative from the Department of Student Success will provide a list of witnesses and relevant information to either/or the complainant and respondent. All of the testimony and relevant information from the hearing will be kept in confidence, in accordance with the University policy and to protect the privacy of the student(s) involved under Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Failure to maintain the confidentiality of the matters and/or the privacy of the student(s) involved will result in a separate and independent charge for Failure to Comply.

### **Right to an Advisor**

Students have the right to have an advisor for support during the Student Conduct Board hearing. The advisor must be a member of the PAU community (employee or student). The advisor is not permitted to speak on behalf of the respondent, address the complainant or any witnesses if applicable, or the Student Conduct Board members. The advisor cannot be a lawyer or lawyers' representatives (e.g., paralegals) representing any of the involved parties.

### **Recording of Hearing**

The University will record the hearing proceedings up until the private deliberation by the Student Conduct Board members. The recording will be stored in the Department of Student Success. No other hearing participants are permitted to record the hearing in any way.

### **Participating in the Hearing**

Students are required to participate in the student discipline process when they are called to a hearing as a complainant, respondent, or witness. Should a student fail to appear when proper notification has been given or should the student fail to provide a statement during the hearing, the hearing will proceed without the benefit of that student's input.

### **Hearing Procedures**

The hearing shall proceed in the following manner:

1. Introduction of everyone in the room or Zoom meeting
2. One of the Student Conduct Board members will explain the procedures
3. One of the Student Conduct Board members will read the charges against the student policy and will summarize the incident report that resulted in the charges
4. One of the Student Conduct Board members will ask the accused student how they plead: responsible or not responsible for the alleged violations
5. The complainant, where applicable, or the representative from the Department of Student Success on behalf of the complainant, and the respondent will be allowed to make an opening statement regarding the allegation(s) of the complaint
6. Any witnesses will be called in one at a time to provide testimony
7. Conduct board members may individually ask questions of the complainant, where applicable, respondent, and witnesses
8. After all questions have been asked, and if they choose, the complainant, where applicable, and the respondent may make a closing statement to the hearing board
9. The Student Conduct Board members will then meet in private to deliberate on the information provided and determine an appropriate finding of "responsible" or "not responsible" for each of the charges the

respondent faced, using the more likely than not evidentiary standard. If a determination is made that the student is responsible for the charges against them, the Student Conduct Board members will also consider and recommend sanctions

10. A summary of the hearing outcome, including any recommended sanctions, will be sent in writing by one of the Student Conduct Board members to a representative in the Department of Student Success within a reasonable period of time.
11. The recommendations will be reviewed by a representative in the Department of Student Success who will either approve them, ask the Student Conduct Board member(s) for clarification, or assign sanctions a representative from the Department of Student Success determines appropriate. In most cases, the sanctions assigned by a representative in the Department of Student Success will be consistent with what the Student Conduct Board recommends, but the final determination of responsibility and sanctions lies with a representative in the Department of Student Success.
12. Upon receipt of the summary from the one of the Student Conduct Board members, a representative in the Department of Student Success will notify the accused student in writing of the outcome of the hearing and any applicable sanctions. The accused student will also be notified in this letter of their right to appeal. Appeal procedures are outlined in section 4.4 Appeals.

## **4.4 Appeals**

The accused student who accepts responsibility and the corresponding sanctions in the initial meeting with a representative in the Department of Student Success waive their rights to an appeal.

When a student has a Student Conduct Board hearing, he/she/they has/have the right to appeal the outcome within ten (10) business days of receiving written notification from the Department of Student Success. An appeal will only be considered on one or both of the following grounds:

- A process or procedural error was made that was significantly prejudicial to the outcome of the hearing.
- New information that was not available or known to the student appealing at the time of the hearing has arisen which, when considered, may materially alter the outcome. Information that the appealing student chose not to present at the time of the hearing is not considered new information.

Appeal Requests must be submitted in writing to the Provost, and must identify the grounds on which the appeal is based. Appeal Requests that do not identify and/or meet acceptable grounds for appeal will be denied. Within a reasonable amount of time upon receipt of the Appeal Request, the Provost will notify the student of one of the following:

- The appeal request has been denied because the student did not identify the grounds for the appeal;
- The appeal request has been accepted and a hearing with the Institutional Appeals Committee will be scheduled within a reasonable amount of time considering the number of individuals involved in the case.

# Section V: University Sanctions

## 5.1 Administrative Sanctions

PAU uses the following sanctions to address student conduct issues. These sanctions are not mutually exclusive or in sequential order, and more than one sanction may be applied.

Sanctions may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Disciplinary Reprimand (Disciplinary and/or Clinical):** Notifies the student that their behavior does not meet the University's standards and corrective action is needed.
- **Disciplinary Warning (Disciplinary and/or Clinical):** Notifies the student that their behavior does not meet the University's standards, immediate corrective action is needed, and future violations of PAU policies will likely result in probation.
- **Probation (Disciplinary and/or Clinical):** Notifies the student that their behavior does not meet the University's standards, immediate corrective action is needed within a specific time frame, and the student is in jeopardy of being separated from the University. A Student Assistance Plan must be completed with an academic advisor or as part of an outcome from the Program Student Evaluation Committee (SEC) and submitted to the Department of Student Success. All timelines must be adhered to; failure to do so will result in a referral to the Student Conduct Board for failure to comply. Disciplinary and/or Clinical probation may have serious negative implications for future academic, research, and training assignments and activities.
- **Suspension:** Separates the student from the University for a set amount of time, typically two to six quarters. Students who wish to return to PAU after suspension may be required to complete other sanctions before returning to the University community. Any student who wishes to return to the University after serving their suspension should contact the Department of Student Success to initiate the process to return.
- **Dismissal:** Permanently separates the student from the University, with no option to return.
- **Health/Counseling Assessment:** Referral to a clinician for an assessment, and completion of any recommendations that result from that assessment.
- **Educational Sanction(s) and Intervention Strategies:** Complete a training, paper, or other educational activities. Educational sanction(s) topic(s) may include, but are not limited to, professional integrity, time management, study skills workshops, reflection, or educational papers, etc.
- **Student Assistance Plan (SAP):** SAP, also known as remediation plans, are specific improvement plans with clear measurable behavioral expectations, to be completed within a specific time period. SAPs are developed in consultation with academic advisors and/or Program Student Evaluation Committees (SECs).
- **Restitution:** Compensation for loss, damage, or injury. This may take the form of appropriate service and/or monetary or material replacement.
- **No Contact:** No contact is a restriction from entering specific campus areas and/or all forms of contact with a certain person(s).
- **Loss of Privileges:** Denial of specific privileges for a specific period of time may be imposed. Privileges may vary but can include access to parking, computer labs, employment, participation in registered student organizations, etc.

## 5.2 Emergency Administrative Action Pending Outcome of Student Conduct Board Hearing

In cases when the University determines that someone is a danger to themselves or others, or where serious clinical issues exist that jeopardize client care, or there is a significant and

ongoing disruption to the University community, the University may take administrative action pending the outcome of the Student Conduct Board hearing. This may include, but is not limited to, suspension of the student from classes, no-contact orders, removal from clinical settings, etc. Final determination about emergency administrative action is at the sole discretion of the University and is not subject to appeal. When emergency administrative action is taken, every effort will be made to expedite the hearing process to determine an outcome as quickly as possible.

### **5.3 Timelines & Due Process**

Every effort shall be made by the University to follow the timelines described in these procedures. On some occasions, near the end of the quarter, over breaks or holidays, and in the summer, for example, there may be difficulties in adhering to the established timelines due to the availability of faculty and administrative staff. Deviations from prescribed procedures during these times does not necessarily invalidate a decision or proceeding unless it is demonstrated by the student alleging the deviation that there is significant prejudice to the final outcome of the discipline proceeding. When good faith efforts have been made by those involved with the conduct process to adhere to established timelines, unavoidable delays in adhering to the timelines will not necessarily be grounds for an appeal.

### **5.4 Student Conduct Records**

All student conduct records will be kept in the student's file in the Department of Student Success. Conduct records will be kept for at least five years after students leave PAU. All records that involve suspension or dismissal from PAU will be kept indefinitely in the Department of Student Success.

Consistent with FERPA and PAU policy, students can review their academic records, including student conduct files.

## **Section VI: Institutional Grievances & Appeals**

### **6.1 Procedures for Initiating Grievances**

Except for specific matters for which a designated procedure for issue resolution is otherwise provided in University policy (e.g., harassment complaint procedures), students may submit a written grievance against action or inaction by the University (staff or faculty), which the student believes violates University policy. All such grievances must be presented in writing, including email, and addressed to the Department of Student Success within 30 days of their occurrence.

### **6.2 Informal Procedure**

The grievant should first discuss the complaint with his or her advisor, or other appropriate campus officer, who will attempt to resolve the complaint informally. If the circumstances of the complaint prevent such informal resolution, or it is not resolved informally, the grievant should file a written complaint to PAU's Department of Student Success. Upon receipt of the complaint, the Department of Student Success will forward a copy of the complaint to the relevant Program Director, in the case of a faculty grievance, to the faculty member. In the case of a staff member, a copy of the complaint will be forwarded to the corresponding Supervisor and the staff member. In both cases, the individual against whom or related to whose action or decision the complaint is made will receive a copy of the complaint and the grievant will be advised that an investigation and discussion will begin within a reasonable amount of time of receipt of the complaint, except where additional time is required for

investigative purposes. If additional time is needed, the grievant will be notified within a reasonable amount of time.

### **6.3 Formal Procedure**

All grievances are reviewed and investigated by a representative in the Department of Student Success. Where the grievance affects a PAU faculty member, applicable information is also reviewed by the program head. Depending upon the nature of the grievance, PAU faculty, staff, and/or administrators are consulted with and contribute to a final decision. A final decision letter will be emailed to the grievant by a representative in the Department of Student Success.

### **6.4 Appeals**

If the grievant disagrees with the decision from a representative in the Department of Student Success, he/she/they has/have the right to appeal the outcome within ten (10) business days of receiving written notification from the Department of Student Success about the final outcome of their case.

Appeal Requests must be submitted in writing to the Provost, and must identify on what grounds the appeal is based. Appeal Requests that do not identify reasonable grounds for an appeal will be denied. Within a reasonable amount of time upon receipt of the Appeal Request, the Provost will notify the student of one of the following:

- The appeal request has been denied because the grievant did not identify reasonable grounds for an appeal;
- The appeal request has been accepted and a hearing will be scheduled within a reasonable amount of time considering the number of individuals involved with the Institutional Appeals Committee.

### **6.5 Arbitration**

If the grievant disagrees with the decision of the Provost and wishes to challenge that decision, he or she must submit the issue to binding arbitration under the Rules of the American Arbitration Association. The costs of the arbitrator's fees or any administrative fee imposed by the American Arbitration Association shall be divided equally by the grievant and the University. The arbitration process under this Institutional Appeal Procedure is the exclusive method of external review and is final and binding on both Palo Alto University and the grievant. The arbitrator's award shall be final, binding and conclusive upon the parties and may be entered in any state or federal court having jurisdiction.

In the event a student believes they have been unfairly treated by Palo Alto University they should follow the PAU grievance procedures. In the event a student feels it cannot be resolved by the methods outlined in the University's publications and Web site, the student has the right to contact the accrediting organizations and related governmental agencies.

An individual may contact the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education for review of a complaint. The bureau may be contacted at:

2535 Capitol Oaks Drive STE 400  
Sacramento, CA 95833  
Phone: 916-431-6924  
FAX: 916-263-1897  
Website: <http://www.bppe.ca.gov>