



POLICY 5.04

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Progressive Discipline and Termination

POLICY INTENT

This policy is intended to ensure that discipline and termination are conducted fairly and that such events are properly recorded in the Athabasca University Students' Union (AUSU) files to protect the organization. This policy is subject to the *Alberta Employment Standards Code*, Occupational Health and Safety legislation, Alberta Human Rights legislation, and any other applicable regulatory laws. The contents of this policy should be used with an EDI lens when addressing performance issues.

Employees will have the opportunity to correct any performance concerns that may arise. The intent of Progressive Discipline is to help employees correct their performance to become successful, productive workers.

POLICY STATEMENT

AUSU has established a set of reasonable rules and guidelines for employees to follow. These have not been put in place to restrict the freedoms of our employees; rather, they are in consideration of safety and the overall protection of AUSU employees, property, and business practices.

DEFINITION

Progressive Discipline – a formal process for dealing with issues of misconduct with consequences that are increasingly severe providing opportunities for an employee to improve performance. Progressive Discipline is meant to be corrective rather than punitive.

POLICY

- 5.04.01 In all personnel issues, Council, Executive, and Staff must consider relevant provincial regulatory legislation, and take measures to protect employee privacy.
- 5.04.02 AUSU expects all employees to perform their duties and responsibilities in a satisfactory manner, consistent with established performance standards and in a manner that adheres to the organization's vision, mission and values, and established policies. All employees will be treated fairly and consistently, and be provided opportunities to improve/change performance.
- 5.04.03 At all times, AUSU will be guided by a desire to coach and support the employee, but the ultimate responsibility is with the employee to correct their performance.
- 5.04.04 A system of progressive discipline shall be utilized where possible; the discipline process is progressive in that the consequences of not following the noted instruction will become

more serious if the employee chooses not to follow the direction they have been given. The system of progressive discipline is as follows:

- a. Documented verbal discussion(s);
- b. Documented written discipline; and
- c. Termination.

5.04.05 Documented Verbal Discussion - Performance concerns shall be addressed via discussion with the employee and the supervisor as soon as possible upon discovering the issue. The supervisor(s) shall try to identify any underlying reasons for the problem and discuss with the employee how the problem could be resolved.

5.04.06 Documented Written Discipline - If the performance concerns persist or reoccurs, the following is the procedure for the written discipline:

- a. the supervisor(s) shall have a formal discussion with the employee regarding the issue; and will reference previous meetings (if any);
- b. within seven (7) working days of the discussion, the supervisor(s) shall provide the employee with a letter outlining the reasons for dissatisfaction, how the actions contravenes AUSU policies and expectations and how the action impacts the organization, students, and/or coworkers, the corrective measures required, the date by which these corrective measures must be taken, and the disciplinary measures that may follow if the corrective action is not taken. This letter will be included in the employee's personnel file; and
- c. if the conduct addressed by the first written discipline is repeated or additional problems occur, discipline may progress to a second written discipline letter as a final opportunity to correct performance or behaviour before termination of employment is considered.

5.04.07 Dated summaries of disciplinary discussions should be kept in the employee's personnel file along with copies of all correspondence with the employee related to the issue. The employee must be notified that this correspondence will be placed in their file.

5.04.08 Employees may be given multiple opportunities to correct unacceptable performance, depending on the circumstances. The type of corrective action used will be based on:

- a. The nature and seriousness or severity of the offense;
- b. Frequency of the event - whether it is a first-time offense or a repeat violation;
- c. Previous actions taken for similar offenses (past practice); and
- d. Existence of mitigating circumstances, including but not limited to past performance of the employee.

5.04.09 Performance issues will take into consideration cumulative infractions (i.e., different types of issues occurring within a specified period of time may be added together).

5.04.10 Termination - Employees who do not respond to corrective action requests as outlined above may be terminated, provided that the termination is approved by the Executive Director after consultation with the Executive Committee. Employment may be terminated based on progressive discipline or based on the severity of a single incident. The Executive Director will ensure proper processes are followed. Termination decisions may be reviewed by legal counsel to reduce liability and ensure legal compliance. The Executive

Director will meet with the employee, who will be terminated either with or without cause, as per Alberta Employment Standards.

5.04.11 In the case of immediate dismissal, the executive director and executive committee shall consider if the reason for termination is likely to be considered just cause by the *Alberta Employment Standards Code*. In doing so, they may seek the advice of AUSU's HR firm or other applicable agency for assistance.

5.04.12 This policy recognizes that each situation is different and unique, and the Executive Director, the Executive Committee, and Council reserve the right to modify, as required, for exceptional circumstances outside what is defined in this policy. AUSU also reserves the right to skip the multi-step disciplinary process and move to a more advanced step in the process, including straight to termination, based on the severity of the situation.

RELATED REFERENCES, POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND FORMS

This Policy References

Alberta Employment Standards Code

This Policy is Referenced by

None

POLICY RESPONSIBILITY

Executive

POLICY HISTORY

Original Approval Date:	September 26, 2005
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