

Student Admissions Safety Review

Updated: September 11, 2017

POLICY:

REG11.30.03

TITLE:

Student Admissions Safety Review

CATEGORY:

Student Affairs

SUB-CATEGORY:

Student Discipline

AUTHORITY:

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RELATED POLICIES:

[UNC Policy Manual 700.5.1\[R\]](#)

[Notice of Nondiscrimination Policy](#)

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES:

[Guidelines for Review of Disciplinary Information Disclosed on Student Admission Applications \(pdf\)](#)

[Admissions Safety Committee Procedure \(pdf\)](#)

[Petition to Re-enroll](#)

HISTORY:

Approved September 11, 2017; reviewed July 2022, no updates needed.

PREVIOUS VERSIONS:

No previous versions available.

1. Introduction.

In accordance with the University of North Carolina Regulation on Student Applicant Background Checks (Section 700.5.1[R] of the UNC Policy Manual) and in an effort to create a safe campus environment, East Carolina University (ECU) examines each student application in accordance with this regulation. Only admission materials of academically qualified applicants will be reviewed under this regulation.

2. Nondiscrimination.

In accordance with the ECU Notice of Nondiscrimination Policy, admission decisions will not be based on race/ethnicity, color, genetic information, national origin, religion, sex (including pregnancy and pregnancy-related conditions), sexual orientation, gender identity, age, disability, political affiliation, or veteran status.

3. Background Checks that Apply to All Students.

Before any student matriculates, the Office of Undergraduate Admissions, the Graduate Admissions office, and the Office of International Affairs staff may conduct background checks through the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction Enrollment database, the University of North Carolina Suspension/Expulsion database, or the National Student Clearing House.

4. Criminal Background Checks that Apply to Students Who Meet Certain Criteria.

Prior to Matriculation, East Carolina University will require criminal background checks if the application and supporting materials contains one or more of the following triggers (or red flags):

- 4.1. Materially inconsistent answers that have not been satisfactorily explained;
- 4.2. Omitted answers without an acceptable explanation for the omission;
- 4.3. An affirmative answer to any of the five campus safety questions:
 - 4.3.1. Have you been convicted of a crime?

- 4.3.2. Have you entered a plea of guilty, a plea of no contest, a plea of nolo contendere, or an Alford plea, or have you received a deferred prosecution or prayer for judgment continued, to a criminal charge?
- 4.3.3. Have you otherwise accepted responsibility for the commission of a crime? Do you have any criminal charges pending against you?
- 4.3.4. Have you ever been expelled, dismissed, suspended, placed on probation, or otherwise subject to any disciplinary sanction by any school, college, or university (including East Carolina University)?
- 4.3.5. If you have ever served in the military, did you receive any type of discharge other than an honorable discharge?
- 4.5 Any unexplained time period(s) during which the applicant was not, for example, enrolled at an educational institution, enlisted in the military, or employed fulltime; or
- 4.6 Any other reason sufficient to East Carolina University, to include, but not limited to anonymous reports regarding an applicant's conduct.
- 4.7 All admission letters for applicants who are to have criminal background checks performed will state that the admission is conditional on the results of a criminal background check.
- 4.8 Applicants with any of the triggers referenced above will be requested to provide a criminal background check through Castlebranch.com or other state-approved background screening company. Castlebranch.com (or other state-approved background screening company) will secure permission to conduct the check using the applicant's social security number. Applicants will incur the costs of the criminal background check. Unjustified refusal to provide this permission or pay for the criminal background check may be grounds for denial of an application if any of the triggers referenced above have been detected.
- 4.8.1 The applicant will be required to disclose all locations where s/he has lived or gone to school outside of the state of North Carolina for more than six months during the last seven years. The scope of the criminal background check will depend on the residential history of the applicant:

4.8.2 For current North Carolina residents who do not report an absence from North Carolina for more than six months, a North Carolina criminal background check will be conducted.

4.8.3 For non-residents and North Carolina residents who disclose living outside of North Carolina for more than six months, a residence check will be conducted, and then a criminal background check will be conducted for all appropriate states unless the applicant opts for a national Federal Bureau of Investigation fingerprint check.

4.8.4 For international students, a criminal background check of appropriate scope may be conducted.

4.9 Applicants that are admitted within two weeks of the start of a semester, and that are subject to having a criminal background check, maybe conditionally admitted to East Carolina University pending the outcome of the review described in the regulation.

5. Review of Information from all Background Checks by the Dean of Students Office.

If, as a result of information obtained pursuant to the background checks referenced in paragraphs 3 or 4 above, it is determined that an applicant has a positive criminal or disciplinary record, then the admission materials will be forwarded to the Dean of Students Office (DOS). DOS Office will:

5.1. Compare the results of the checks to the application and supplemental information supplied by the applicant. In addition, the DOS Student Services Specialist will consult the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities to determine whether the applicant has a prior conduct history with East Carolina University, and any relevant information will be included in the review process. The DOS Student Services Specialist may request additional documentation of the incident(s) in question, including but not limited to: a detailed account of the circumstances of the situation; court documentation; and letters from previous educational institutions.

5.2. Once this material is provided, the DOS Student Services Specialist will review the materials.

5.3. If a discrepancy is detected, the DOS Student Services Specialist will request that an applicant submit a written explanation of the

inconsistency or proof that the information gathered by East Carolina University is erroneous.

5.4. The DOS Student Services Specialist will also report information concerning drug convictions to Financial Aid for entry into the Banner Student Records System.

5.5. Based on the nature of any crime committed or other behavior disclosed, together with other available information, the DOS Student Services Specialist will make a determination as to whether the applicant will pose a significant threat to the safety of the East Carolina University community.

5.6. Each disciplinary history, including all relevant information collected by the University, will be reviewed in light of the following factors, which include but are not limited to: date of the offense; nature of the offense; number of offenses; severity of harm involved; mitigating or aggravating circumstances; sanctions or sentence imposed on the applicant; and completion of sanctions or sentence requirements.

5.7. Upon completion of the review, the DOS Student Services Specialist will:

5.7.1. Notify the appropriate admissions office that, based on the documentation provided, there is no suggestion that the applicant will pose a significant threat to the safety of the East Carolina University community;

5.7.2. Reject any application in which felony criminal charges for violent conduct are currently pending in a court of competent jurisdiction over the applicant; or

5.7.3. Refer the case to the Admissions Safety Committee for consideration.

6. Admissions Safety Committee.

The Admissions Safety Committee is comprised of representatives from the following offices: the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities, the (Undergraduate) Office of Admissions, the Graduate Admissions office, the ECU Police Department, the Dean of Students, the Enterprise Risk Manager, and the faculty. The Office of University Counsel will serve in an advisory capacity. The Center for Counseling and Student Development will serve in a consulting

capacity. The Committee has the same investigative authority as the Dean of Students Office under this Regulation. The DOS Student Services Specialist convenes the Committee and presents the case and relevant information regarding the applicant. Upon deliberation and consideration of all information, and using the standards set forth in section 5.6 of this regulation, the Committee will:

6.1. Decide that based upon the documentation provided, there is no suggestion that the applicant will pose a significant threat to the safety of the East Carolina University community and, as such, supports a recommendation of admission or

6.2. Decide that based upon the documentation provided, there is a suggestion that the applicant may pose a significant threat to the safety of the ECU community, and accordingly, denial of admission is recommended.

6.3. The decision of the Admissions Safety Committee is final and cannot be appealed.

7. Falsification.

7.1. It is presumed that admission will be denied or withdrawn if the applicant has failed to accurately disclose relevant information in response to a question on the application. The burden is on the applicant to demonstrate that the omission or misinformation was the result of an honest mistake, that it was not intended to mislead, and that the applicant should be admitted despite the failure to disclose.

7.2. Where East Carolina University identifies a potential instance of falsification, the applicant will be asked to provide the University with additional information, and be given notice regarding the allegation prior to being subject to dismissal, as stated in the undergraduate and graduate admissions catalogs.

8. Record Retention.

Consistent with the applicable University records schedule, all materials are retained by the Dean of Students Office and/or the Office of Admissions. For applicants whose record shows a history of conviction of, guilty plea to, or acceptance of responsibility for a crime; a significant disciplinary sanction at another educational institution; or a serious military discipline record, the Dean of Students Office will maintain a record of the process used to determine whether the

applicant posed a significant threat to the ECU community along with all documentation that was used as the basis for this determination.

8.1. If it is determined that an applicant be recommended for admission, but that his/her disciplinary information is relevant to the safety of the ECU community, or if an applicant is denied admission, a copy of the file will be provided to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities.