

Program description

The Student Accountability in Community (SAC) Seminar started in 1998 as a joint effort between Student Life and MSU Safe Place to provide an early intervention for students with accountability issues.

SAC is educationally oriented and generally appropriate for incidents of intimidation or verbal harassment. SAC is not an “anger management program” nor is it a substitute for counseling or batterer intervention. All students attending SAC are, however, screened for a variety of issues and referred to other campus resources.

SAC involves 4 one-hour sessions: an individual intake and three more individual or group sessions. The curriculum stresses accountability: understanding one’s own actions, being able to better assess the potential consequence of actions on others, and being able to identify alternative behaviors that promote accountability.

The cost is \$25 for all four sessions, although there is an additional \$10 charge for each missed session. All students are required to pay the \$25 fee prior to the intake session.

When to refer a student to SAC

SAC is intended to be an *early* educational intervention for students with accountability issues. Examples of situations that would generally be appropriate for SAC include:

Residence halls and apartments

- Trying to intimidate hall staff during an alcohol confrontation
- Humiliating a boyfriend or girlfriend
- Bullying roommates or suitemates
- Verbally abusing night receptionists
- Vandalism
- Engaging in sex when consent is questionable

Classrooms

- Disrespecting other students’ academic freedom
- Insulting instructors or teaching assistants
- Plagiarism

Student organizations

- Making sexist, homophobic, or racist remarks at a meeting
- Interfering with a member’s legitimate duties
- Failing to understand how members’ actions affects others
- Disrupting a social function

Referring a student to SAC

There are two types of referrals to SAC: voluntary and mandatory. *Voluntary referrals* to SAC do not have judicial consequences for non-compliance. Any faculty or staff member can make a voluntary referral to SAC. *Mandatory referrals* require students to complete SAC as a judicial sanction and non-compliance typically results in a hold being placed on the student’s account. While only judicial administrators can require students to attend SAC as part of sanction, anyone can initiate the process by filing a formal judicial complaint against the student through Student Life.

Voluntary referrals are appropriate when the behavior is problematic but did not violate university regulations, repetition of the behavior will generally not be to the detriment of others, and the student is motivated to change.

Mandatory referrals should be considered when university regulations have been violated, repetition of the behavior will be to the detriment of others, or the referral is being considered in conjunction with a separate judicial sanction.

Contact Student Life if you have questions about whether a voluntary referral is appropriate or how to initiate a formal judicial complaint.

Voluntary referrals

To make a voluntary referral:

1. Talk with the student about their behavior.
2. Share with the student why you think that they might benefit from attending SAC.
3. Clearly state to the student any expectations that you have about when they should complete SAC or consequences for not completing SAC. Make sure the student understands your expectations.
4. Give the student the blue SAC bookmark and tell the student that they can schedule their first SAC session by calling Student Life (432-2471).
5. Call Student Life (432-2471) to notify us about your referral.

After you have made the referral, you can call Student Life to inquire about whether or not the student has signed up for a session. You will automatically receive a notice if the student completes SAC. However, Student Life will not take additional action if the student does fails to sign up for or complete SAC.

Mandatory referrals

To make a mandatory referral:

1. Talk with the student about their behavior.
2. Explain to the student why you think they might benefit from attending SAC.
3. Give the student a specific date for *completing* SAC. For example, “4/12/03” versus “end of spring semester 2003.”
4. Let the student know that failure to complete SAC by that date will result in a hold being placed on their account.
5. Give the student the blue SAC bookmark and tell the student that they should schedule their first SAC session by calling Student Life (432-2471).
6. Call Student Life (432-2471) to notify us about your referral.

After you have made the referral, you can call Student Life to inquire about whether or not the student has signed up for a session. You will automatically receive confirmation that the student has completed SAC.

Student Accountability in Community Seminar

Faculty and Staff Guide

A joint program from MSU Safe Place and Student Life.

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