**Philosophy**

Certain standards of job performance and employee conduct are necessary if Biola University is to operate effectively and fulfill its mission. When an employee's work or conduct does not meet acceptable standards, corrective action may be initiated to resolve the problem.

While the particular corrective action taken will vary according to the severity of and the circumstances surrounding a situation or incident, the general nature of corrective action is restorative. The intent is that the employee can be helped to restore his or her performance or conduct to a satisfactory level and consistently maintain that level. Sometimes certain corrective measures, including disciplinary measures, may be required in the restoration process. Dismissal may even be a necessary part of the process.

Nothing in this policy shall be construed to modify or affect in any way the "at will" employment relationship between the employee and Biola University as set forth in the Employee Handbook and employment application.

**Part 1: Discipline**

Infractions of departmental or university general rules of conduct are addressed by disciplinary corrective action.

The standard university actions are:
1. Oral reprimand
2. Written warning
3. Suspension from work without pay
4. Dismissal

These standard actions may be modified or waived by the university in situations where other forms of action are deemed to be appropriate.

**Guidelines**

In order to provide guidelines for the corrective action to be taken in various situations, some "first-time" offenses have been listed in groups according to severity, along with the appropriate disciplinary action. The following is not intended to be a complete list of offenses and the seriousness of the offense or other extenuating circumstances may affect the action taken or sequence of actions taken in a particular incidence.

**Group 1—Action: Oral Reprimand**

- Tardiness
- Unexcused absences from work
- Violating parking rules
- Violating university safety rules
- Doing personal work during company time
- Personal phone call of excessive length during work time
- Arguing disruptively with another employee
- Loitering or loafing during work hours
• Use of abusive, obscene, profane, or blasphemous language
• Leaving the job to run errands or to go home for the day, during work hours, without permission
• Other offenses deemed to be of similar magnitude

Group 2—Action: Written Warning
• Repetition of any offense in Group 1
• Dangerous horseplay/prank
• Willfully neglecting or mishandling university machinery or other equipment
• Unexcused absence of one whole workday or more
• Threatening, coercing, or intimidating another employee while at work
• Showing insubordination to a supervisor
• Unapproved personal use of Biola resources or approved personal use without required university reimbursement—e.g., making photocopies, sending fax messages, or using a university phone to make long distance calls (in violation of department or university policy)
• Breach of department or university confidentiality or misuse of information
• Other offenses deemed to be of similar magnitude

Group 3—Action: Suspension of Work Without Pay For Up to Five Days or Dismissal
• Repetition of any offense in Group 2
• Falsifying a time card
• Falsifying an expense report
• Use of liquor or drugs while on the job
• Reporting to work under the influence of liquor or illicit drugs
• Deliberate destruction of university property (tools, machinery, equipment, records) or an employee's property
• Sexual harassment
• Theft from the university or an employee
• False statements on the employment application
• Failure to reaffirm the University Doctrinal Statement or serious violation of University Standards of Conduct
• Physically assaulting an employee or student
• Other offenses deemed to be of similar magnitude

Disciplinary Action Definitions

Oral reprimand
An oral reprimand is the disciplinary censure of an employee by his or her supervisor through a conversation held in a reasonably private location, such as the supervisor's office. In the course of this conversation, the employee is told the exact nature of the offense and what the employee must do to remedy the situation. The employee is given a chance to present his/her views and to ask any questions or to ask for clarification. Although an oral reprimand can include mention of future corrective action, the major purpose of an oral reprimand is to firmly inform an employee that his/her behavior was unsatisfactory and to present the action that the employee must take to correct the problem. Formal, written documentation of an oral reprimand is unnecessary; however, informal
notes may be made and retained for possible future supervisory reference in a situation where the unsatisfactory behavior seems to be part of a pattern.

**Written Warning**
A written warning provides written disciplinary documentation and is given by the supervisor of an offense. This documentation should include a clear description of the problem and a description of any previous oral or written counseling, reprimands, or warnings that addressed this particular problem. Also included are the steps the employee must take to correct the problem. Finally, the consequences of failure to correct the problem should be stated. This would include a warning of possible suspension without pay or a warning of possible termination, depending on the nature and history of the problem.

The employee should receive a copy of this warning and should be asked to acknowledge, in writing, at the bottom of the written warning, that he/she has received a copy of the written warning. (Should an employee refuse to sign the corrective notification of disciplinary action or refuse to accept a copy of it, the supervisor should note that fact on the form.)

**Suspension From Work Without Pay**
Suspension from work without pay is a disciplinary action that is customarily used where severe action is called for, short of dismissal. The most common suspensions are a three-day suspension and a five-day suspension. The length is determined by the nature and history of the offense. There should be a written warning in the form of a suspension notice included in the suspension procedure. This warning should provide the employee with information as outlined under "Written Warning" (above).

**Dismissal**
Dismissal for disciplinary reasons is usually effective immediately. The employee may be told orally the reason(s) for the dismissal. The employee is not given a written notification; however, a "Release Notice" is completed and sent to Human Resources.

**Disciplinary Action Approval**

**Oral Reprimand**
The supervisor has the authority to issue an oral reprimand.

**Written Warning**
The supervisor may issue a written warning after informing the department head about the reason(s) for such action and receiving the approval of the department head.

**Suspension From Work Without Pay**
The department head may suspend an employee from work without pay, after informing the Senior Director of Human Resources about the reason(s) for such action and after receiving the approval of the Senior Director of Human Resources.

**Dismissal**
The department head may terminate the employment of an employee after informing the Senior Director of Human Resources about the reason(s) for such action and after receiving the approval
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of the Senior Director of Human Resources. A Notice of Release Form must be completed in advance.

**Part 2: Substandard Performance**

Substandard performance corrective action applies where employee job performance is deemed to be at an unsatisfactory level in one or more significant areas.

The standard actions are:
1. Oral counseling
2. Written counseling
3. Written warning
4. Dismissal

Biola may modify these standard actions in situations where other forms of action are deemed to be more appropriate.

**Guidelines**

Certain examples of unsatisfactory job performance have been listed. The following list is not intended to be a complete list of types of substandard performance and the extent of the performance deficiency and other extenuating circumstances may affect the action taken or sequence of actions in a particular incidence.

**Group 1—Action: Oral Counseling**
- Inability to understand or follow instructions
- Inaccurate work; carelessness
- Not getting work done on time
- Not following established procedures
- Inability to get along with other employees
- Lack of necessary work skills

**Group 2—Action: Written Counseling**
Continuance of unsatisfactory job performance traits in Group 1

**Group 3—Action: Written Warning**
Further continuance of unsatisfactory job performance traits in Group 1

**Group 4—Action: Dismissal**
Further continuance of unsatisfactory job performance traits in Group 1

**Substandard Performance Action Definitions**

**Oral Counseling**
Oral counseling begins with the supervisor’s review of the job responsibilities and standards in the area(s) where the employee is deficient and concludes with instruction in the proper way to achieve satisfactory performance. The meeting should be held in a reasonably private location such as the supervisor’s office. The nature of this meeting is similar to that of a training and assessment session,
although the employee should be made to realize that an unsatisfactory performance situation exists and that the supervisor needs to see improvement. There are no "warnings" given at this point.

**Written Counseling**
Written counseling references the specific deficiencies in an employee's work performance and details work procedures or other actions that the employee must do differently to achieve a level of satisfactory performance. This is not a "warning notice" but, rather, a restatement and reinforcement in writing of the assessment and instructions given to the employee during oral counseling. It can somewhat take on the form of an instruction sheet. Spelling out the incorrect and following with the correct procedures in writing may help the employee who is slow to learn, who is inclined to forget, or not pay close enough attention to oral counseling. This step can be combined with oral counseling as a written confirmation of the items discussed.

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A written warning provides written disciplinary documentation and is given by the supervisor for an offense. This documentation should include a clear description of the problem and a description of any previous oral or written counseling, reprimands, or warnings that addressed this particular problem. Also included are the steps the employee must take to correct the problem. Finally, the consequences of failure to correct the problem should be stated. This would include a warning of possible suspension without pay or a warning of possible termination, depending on the nature and history of the problem.

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