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 for inconsistencies and omissions as well as reviews the disciplinary history disclosed on admission materials.

The Office of Undergraduate Admissions, the Office of Graduate Admissions, and the Office of International Affairs staff screen each application for:

1. any affirmative answers to six campus safety questions
   - Have you been convicted of a crime?
   - 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?
   - Have you otherwise accepted responsibility for the commission of a crime?
   - Do you have any criminal charges pending against you?
   - Have you ever been expelled, dismissed, suspended, placed on probation, or otherwise subject to any disciplinary sanction by any school, college, or university?
   - If you have ever served in the military, did you receive any type of discharge other than an honorable discharge?; and
2. materially inconsistent answers that have not been satisfactorily explained; and
3. omitted answers without an acceptable explanation for the omission; and
4. unexplained time period(s) during which the applicant was not, for example, enrolled at an educational institution, enlisted in the military, or employed fulltime.

These Offices will also confirm the veracity of each application through the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction Enrollment database, the University of North Carolina Suspension/Expulsion database, and the National Student Clearing House.

Only admission materials of academically qualified applicants will be reviewed under this policy. Applicants may be conditionally admitted to ECU pending the outcome of this review, which must be concluded prior to the applicants’ matriculation. Individuals who are admitted within two weeks prior to the beginning of the semester and who are subject to having a criminal background check performed pursuant to this policy may be conditionally admitted and matriculate pending the results of the review.

Applicants who seek enrollment in distance education courses while incarcerated must fill out all relevant admission materials, including the campus safety questions; however, a criminal background check will not be required of them. These applicants will be admitted only for one semester. Upon being released, if they wish to continue their education at the University, they must re-apply and are subject to review under this policy.
Review of Information
The Office of Undergraduate Admissions and the Office of International Affairs will conduct reviews only of initial school disciplinary incidents. If an applicant provides an affirmative answer to any of the six safety questions or if there is an omission or an inconsistency on the application, the admission materials will be forwarded to the Dean of Students Office for review. A copy of the entire application along with any documents addressing the disclosed disciplinary background or pertinent information gathered through the databases will be sent forth.

Upon receipt of the application materials by the Dean of Students Office, the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities will be consulted to determine whether or not the applicant has a past judicial history with ECU. If so, such information will be prepared for the review process.

The Dean of Students Office staff will screen each of the applications for information pertinent to the safety of the ECU community. Applicants who
1. indicate that they have a significant school disciplinary record or a criminal history; or
2. omit an answer on the application; or
3. provide inconsistent information; or
4. report unexplained time periods during which they were not enrolled at an educational institution, enlisted in the military, or employed fulltime
will be requested to do a criminal background check through Certiphi, Inc. ECU reserves the right to ask applicants to submit to a criminal background check for any other reason it deems relevant to this review process. Permission to conduct the check and to use the applicant’s social security number will be secured by Certiphi, Inc. 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 in the last seven years. Applicants will incur the costs of the criminal background check.

The scope of the criminal background check will depend on the residential history of the applicant:
1. 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.
2. 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.
3. For international students, a criminal background check of appropriate scope will be conducted.

In addition to the materials provided by the respective admission offices and/or revealed through the criminal background check, the Dean of Students Office staff may request in-depth documentation of the incident(s) in question (i.e.: a detailed account of the circumstances of the situation; court documentation; letters from previous educational institutions; etc.).

Once sufficient documentation is provided, the Dean of Students Office staff will review each application for discrepancies between the application, the supplemental information provided by
the applicant, and the criminal background check results (if applicable). If a discrepancy is detected, the applicant may submit a written explanation of the inconsistency or proof that the information gathered by ECU is erroneous. 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 in spite of the failure to disclose.

The Dean of Students Office staff will make a determination as to whether or not the applicant poses a significant threat to the safety of the ECU community. Each disciplinary history 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 caused to self, others, or community; mitigating or aggravating circumstances; sanctions or sentence imposed on the applicant; and completion of sanctions or sentence requirements. This review will be conducted in accordance with the “Regulation Concerning Review of Disciplinary Information Disclosed on Student Admission Application”. Upon completion of the review, the Dean of Students Office staff will:

1. notify the appropriate admission office that based on the documentation provided, there is no suggestion that the applicant will pose a significant threat to the safety of the ECU community; or
2. refer the case to the Admissions Safety Committee for consideration.

The Admissions Safety Committee is comprised of seven members who each represent the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities, the Counseling and Student Development Center, the ECU Police Department, the Chief Diversity Officer, the Enterprise Risk Manager, the faculty and the pertinent admission office. The University Attorney’s Office representative will serve in an advisory capacity. The Committee has the same investigative authority as the Dean of Students Office staff. The Dean of Students Office staff member convening the Committee will present the case and relevant information regarding the applicant. Upon deliberation and consideration of all information, the Committee will instruct the Dean of Students Office staff member to:

1. recommend to the Dean of Students that based on the documentation provided, there is no suggestion that the applicant will pose a significant threat to the safety of the ECU community; or
2. recommend to the Dean of Students that based on the documentation provided, there is a suggestion that the applicant will pose a significant threat to the safety of the ECU community, and accordingly, a denial of admission is recommended.

The Dean of Students will then notify the Admissions Office of these decisions. Both the Dean of Students Office staff and the Admissions Safety Committee may impose restrictions on applicants once they matriculate at ECU including, but not limited to, a ban from living in residence halls or enrolling in a certain field of study. Each restriction must be closely related to the disciplinary history of the applicant.

The Admissions Safety Committee will not meet with applicants. Applicants are encouraged to submit written documentation for consideration. The decision of the Admissions Safety Committee
Committee is final. Applicants who are denied admission based on disciplinary grounds or due to falsification of admission materials may re-apply for the following semester.

**Record Retention**
East Carolina University will maintain a record of the background checks, if any, conducted on each applicant and the results of those checks. 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 or not the applicant posed a significant threat to the ECU community along with all documentation that was used as the basis for this determination.

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, a separate file with the pertinent information will be created within the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities. This record may be used for appropriate sanctioning if the applicant violates the Student Code of Conduct once enrolled at the University.