

Effective: October 1997

**Student Policy**  
**STUDENT BILL OF RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Approved:** Reviewed 6/30/05, Student Affairs;  
December 1969, American Association of State Colleges & Universities,  
Amended, December 1976, AASCU

**Article I: Discrimination**

**Freedom:** Every aspect of University life should be free from discrimination because of race, religion, color, ancestry, national origin, sex, or sexual preference. Student housing, organizations, athletics, classes and community facilities should be open to all who desire to participate.

**Responsibility:** It is the responsibility of all members of the academic community to ensure through word and action that discrimination because of race, creed, or religious belief is not present in University activities or the community.

**Article II: Governance**

**Freedom:** Students should be free to make recommendations on institutional governance. They should be involved in decision-making to the extent that a decision would be arbitrary, unilateral or capricious without their participation.

**Responsibility:** Students must recognize that the ultimate power of decision has been vested by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in the Council of Trustees. Therefore, all members should strive to outline their recommendations to the Student Senate in a responsible fashion. It is the responsibility of students who are dissatisfied with decisions that have been made relative to institutional governance to utilize existing channels of appeal to reverse a decision. Any action that disrupts the normal operation of the institution will thereby place individuals in violation of University or civil codes and subject them to all resultant penalties.

**Article III: Curriculum Revision**

**Freedom:** All students should be free to present proposals for curricular revision. They should be represented in the formulation of changes in the curriculum.

**Responsibility:** Students must recognize that curriculum revision entails perceiving the scope of the entire University.

#### **Article IV: Teacher-Student Relationships**

**Freedom:** Students should be free to develop relationships that will supplement formal classroom instruction. Personal contacts should be developed that will enable both teacher and student to benefit from the increased exposure to each other.

**Responsibility:** It is the responsibility of the student to respect the privacy of other persons. Relationships in society carry responsibilities of good taste that should not be superseded in the University environment or society in general.

#### **Article V: Improper Disclosure of Information**

**Freedom:** All students should be protected against the improper disclosure of information pertaining to academic records, evaluations by others, and personal comments made in confidence. They should have assurance through the overt actions of authorized personnel that information about them will be available only to persons as noted on a list of personnel authorized to receive such information.

**Responsibility:** It is the responsibility of each member of the University to respect the laws of privileged communication as prescribed by state legislation and to refrain from placing unauthorized personnel in a position where disclosure of information would be necessary.

#### **Article VI: Student Conduct**

**Freedom:** Students should be free to participate in the formulation of regulations governing student conduct. Students should be free from arbitrary regulations that have not been considered by student representatives.

**Responsibility:** Students must recognize that there is a difference between student participation and student autonomy. As a result, students and University officials must work in an atmosphere of congeniality, yet with the firm conviction that the regulation of student conduct is not unilateral and arbitrary by either group.

#### **Article VII: Off-Campus**

**Freedom:** Students must be free from University restrictions at off-campus activities except in those cases where violations of state, federal, or local ordinances occur.

**Responsibilities:** Whereas off-campus rights should not be denied individuals by University officials, individuals must be responsible for their actions without expecting University assistance in off-campus matters. It is the responsibility of individuals

to divorce membership in the University from off-campus activities that are not sanctioned activities of the University.

### **Article VIII: Private Citizen**

**Freedom:** Students should be free to utilize their rights as citizens to the extent accorded any citizen of the United States. Students should be free to participate in off-campus activities that are of their own choosing.

**Responsibility:** Students must recognize that activities conducted off-campus do not entitle them to more rights than other citizens. Activities conducted by members of a University are not conducted in the name of the University, unless duly authorized, and participants are responsible to civil authorities for their actions. Students should not expect that University officials will come to their defense for activities committed in violation of codes.

### **Article IX: Expression**

**Freedom:** Students collectively or individually should have the freedom to examine and discuss all questions that are of interest to them as citizens.

**Responsibility:** Student expression should incorporate the codes of morality and good taste and also the legal responsibility for the accuracy of statements made in public or in the press.

### **Article X: Association**

**Freedom:** Students should be free to affiliate and organize for educational, political, social, religious, or cultural purposes without restriction by University officials. Associations should be free to voice their position on issues as long as there is no disruption of normal University activities in the process.

**Responsibility:** Student organizations have a responsibility to protect the rights of individuals who do not desire to affiliate or sympathize with their position. Organizations that advocate the overthrow of the University, the upheaval and disorganization of the University, or the disruption of University activities should be responsible for their actions as individuals and should not expect to be given freedom of affiliation. Organizations and affiliations must be consistent with legal mandates of the state and nation in order to gain recognition by University officials.

### **Article XI: In the Classroom**

**Freedom:** Students should be free to express their thoughts and positions on all issues pertaining to curricular material being presented in the classroom. There should be freedom to express opposing views on all subjects by all individuals.

**Responsibility:** It is the responsibility of all participants in the classroom to present their thoughts and positions in a logical, cogent manner. Subjects of a controversial nature that could have serious impact upon members of the University community must be supported by evidence that reduces hearsay and rumor. It is the responsibility of the individual to recognize that the University does not provide exemption for statements held to be libelous or slanderous.

### **Article XII: Speakers and Topics**

**Freedom:** Students and student organizations should be free to invite speakers to the campus to speak on any topic chosen by the students. There should be freedom to use University facilities for speakers invited to campus, and the scheduling of facilities should not be used as a selective deterrent for excluding controversial speakers.

**Responsibility:** Students and student organizations must recognize that the presentation of a balanced program of speakers and topics is essential for a true and exhaustive analysis of critical issues. While organizations will necessarily support tenets to the exclusion of others, the opportunity to hear opposing premises is vital if an informed student body is to result. Furthermore, students and student organizations must recognize that they are responsible for the safe and orderly conduct of speakers and the audience.

### **Article XIII: Protest**

**Freedom:** Students should be free to protest on any topic that is deemed to be important to them.

**Responsibility:** The freedom to protest carries the responsibility to ensure that the freedoms of those not protesting are respected. University functioning must be upheld for the protection of those who do not support a protest. It is thereby the responsibility of those protesting to emphasize their position, but not to hinder the orderly and daily routine of the University community or its members.

### **Article XIV: Communication Media**

**Freedom:** All student communication media should enjoy the freedom of expression to the extent accorded all communication media in the United States. There should be editorial freedom to develop policies and news coverage as determined by the students.

**Responsibility:** The student communication media should be responsible for ensuring that balanced representation of views of crucial issues is accorded all interested parties. As a forum for student opinion, it should be possible to air responsible views regardless of any disparity with editorial belief. The students involved in communication media should recognize the limits of good taste as members of the local community. It is the responsibility of the students involved in communications to verify the accuracy of all communications and to recognize that each communication will be subject to the legal exigencies that may arise from the improper reporting of news.