

Rights, Rules, Responsibilities

1.1 University Principles of General Conduct and Regulations

1.1.1 Introduction

The central purposes of a university are the pursuit of truth, the discovery of new knowledge through scholarship and research, the teaching and general development of students, and the transmission of knowledge and learning to society at large. Free inquiry and free expression within the academic community are indispensable to the achievement of these goals. The freedom to teach and to learn depends upon the creation of appropriate conditions and opportunities on the campus as a whole as well as in classrooms and lecture halls. All members of the academic community share the responsibility for securing and sustaining the general conditions conducive to this freedom.

The primary purposes of regulations and discipline in a university are to protect the well-being of the community and to advance its educational mission by defining and establishing certain norms of behavior. At Princeton, disciplinary proceedings have a role that is subordinate to positive guidance, rational admonition, and reasonable appeal to members of the University to observe its stated norms. The disciplinary system establishes procedures for a fair hearing, including advising individuals fully of the charges against them, affording them ample opportunity to speak on their behalf, and requiring a clear explanation of their rights of appeal. Disciplinary proceedings are instituted only for violations of standards of conduct defined in advance and published, or for actions that can be reasonably deduced as violations in light of those specifically defined as such. Regulations governing the conduct of members of the University community will be revised only after deliberations in which representatives of the appropriate groups are invited to participate.

Since rigid codification and relentless administration of rules and regulations are not appropriate to an academic community, the rules and policy statements that follow serve mainly to clarify commonly accepted standards of conduct within the University.

1.1.2 Academic Integrity

The ability of the University to achieve its purposes depends upon the quality and integrity of the academic work that its faculty, staff, and students perform. Academic freedom can flourish only in a community of scholars which recognizes that intellectual integrity, with its accompanying rights and responsibilities, lies at the heart of its mission. Observing basic honesty in one's work, words, ideas, and actions is a principle to which all members of the community are required to subscribe. (See sections under [2.3 \(/2023/students-and-university/23-undergraduate-honor-system\)](#), and [2.4 \(/2023/students-and-university/24-academic-regulations\)](#), regarding the Honor Code and other academic regulations.)

1.1.3 Statement on Freedom of Expression

Because the University is committed to free and open inquiry in all matters, it guarantees all members of the University community the broadest possible latitude to speak, write, listen, challenge, and learn. Except insofar as limitations on that freedom are necessary to the functioning of the University, Princeton University fully respects and supports the freedom of all members of the University community "to discuss any problem that presents itself."

Of course, the ideas of different members of the University community will often and quite naturally conflict. But it is not the proper role of the University to attempt to shield individuals from ideas and opinions they find unwelcome, disagreeable, or even deeply offensive. Although the University greatly values civility, and although all members of the University community share in the responsibility for maintaining a climate of mutual respect, concerns about civility and mutual respect can never be used as a justification for closing off discussion of ideas, however offensive or disagreeable those ideas may be to some members of our community.

The freedom to debate and discuss the merits of competing ideas does not, of course, mean that individuals may say whatever they wish, wherever they wish. The University may restrict expression that violates the law, that falsely defames a specific individual, that constitutes a genuine threat or harassment, that unjustifiably invades substantial privacy or confidentiality interests, or that is otherwise directly incompatible with the functioning of the University. In addition, the University may reasonably regulate the time, place, and manner of expression to ensure that it does not disrupt the ordinary activities of the University. But these are narrow exceptions to the general principle of freedom of expression, and it is vitally important that these exceptions never be used in a manner that is inconsistent with the University's commitment to a completely free and open discussion of ideas.

In a word, the University's fundamental commitment is to the principle that debate or deliberation may not be suppressed because the ideas put forth are thought by some or even by most members of the University community to be offensive, unwise, immoral, or wrong-headed. It is for the individual members of the University community, not for the University as an institution, to make

those judgments for themselves, and to act on those judgments not by seeking to suppress speech, but by openly and vigorously contesting the ideas that they oppose. Indeed, fostering the ability of members of the University community to engage in such debate and deliberation in an effective and responsible manner is an essential part of the University's educational mission.

As a corollary to the University's commitment to protect and promote free expression, members of the University community must also act in conformity with the principle of free expression. Although members of the University community are free to criticize and contest the views expressed on campus, and to criticize and contest speakers who are invited to express their views on campus, they may not obstruct or otherwise interfere with the freedom of others to express views they reject or even loathe. To this end, the University has a solemn responsibility not only to promote a lively and fearless freedom of debate and deliberation, but also to protect that freedom when others attempt to restrict it.

This statement was originally drafted and adopted by the University of Chicago and was adopted by the Faculty of Princeton University at its meeting of April 6, 2015.

1.1.4 Statement on Diversity and Community

Princeton University is a community devoted to learning. We actively seek students, faculty, and staff of exceptional ability and promise who share in our commitment to excellence in teaching and scholarship, and who will bring a diversity of viewpoints and cultures. By incorporating a broad range of human experiences and a rich variety of human perspectives, we enlarge our capacity for learning, enrich the quality and texture of campus life, and better prepare for life and leadership in a pluralistic society.

As a community, we respect the dignity, individuality, and freedom of each member. At the same time, we strive to be a place where individuals and groups learn with and from each other. We aim to foster a sense of shared experience and common purpose, along with a collective responsibility for each other's well-being and for the well-being of the University as a whole.

Although we acknowledge the difficulties inherent in creating a community of individuals who are different from each other, we remain unwavering in our commitment to both diversity and community in a context of academic excellence. We seek to enable all members of this community to pursue their educational, scholarly, and career interests in an environment that recognizes both the distinctiveness of each person's experience and the common humanity that unites us all, and permits us to take full educational advantage of the variety of talents, backgrounds, and perspectives of those who live and work here.

1.1.5 Honesty and Cooperation in University Matters

All members of the University community are expected to be honest and straightforward in their dealings with University processes, policies, activities, and personnel. This obligation includes honoring contracts and agreements (including, but not limited to, Informal Resolution Agreements, as set forth in Appendices B of the Title IX Sexual Harassment policy and the University Sexual Misconduct policy (<https://sexualmisconduct.princeton.edu/policy>) and providing accurate information on official forms and documents as well as to official University personnel, offices, and committees. Deliberate violations of this provision will be considered serious offenses; subsequent violations, or systematic violations in the first instance, will be considered extremely serious.

Members of the University community are expected to cooperate fully in the disciplinary process, and anyone (whether a party or a witness) who refuses to cooperate may be subject to discipline. Failing to respond to multiple attempts by an administrator to contact or meet with a member of the University community may be considered a refusal to cooperate.

1.1.6 Confidentiality of Records

The University's Information Security Policy (<https://oit.princeton.edu/policies/information-security>) provides the general framework for protecting the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of information owned by or entrusted to Princeton University. Any willful violation of the provisions of section 2.7 ([/2023/students-and-university/27-student-privacy-rights-under-federal-law](https://2023/students-and-university/27-student-privacy-rights-under-federal-law)), "Student Privacy Rights under Federal Law," or the Information Security Policy (<https://oit.princeton.edu/policies/information-security>), will be regarded as an extremely serious offense.

1.1.7 Range of Penalties

For violations of University-wide rules of conduct, members of the community are subject to several kinds of penalties. The applicability and exact nature of each penalty vary for faculty, academic professionals, staff, and students.

For more information, faculty and academic professionals should consult:

Faculty:

<https://dof.princeton.edu/rules-and-procedures-faculty/chapter-iv-faculty> (<https://dof.princeton.edu/rules-and-procedures-faculty/chapter-iv-faculty>).

Professional Researchers and Professional Specialists:

<https://dof.princeton.edu/rules-and-procedures-professional-researchers-and-professional-specialists-princeton-university-and> [↗](#)
(<https://dof.princeton.edu/rules-and-procedures-professional-researchers-and-professional-specialists-princeton-university-and>)

Librarians:

<https://dof.princeton.edu/rules-and-procedures-librarians-princeton-university/relationship-between-librarians> [↗](#)
(<https://dof.princeton.edu/rules-and-procedures-librarians-princeton-university/relationship-between-librarians>)

Staff should consult Human Resources policies:

Disciplinary Procedure

<https://hr.princeton.edu/myhr/policies/disciplinary-procedure> [↗](#) (<https://hr.princeton.edu/myhr/policies/disciplinary-procedure>)

Termination for Failure to Comply with University Policy (Misconduct/Cause)

<https://hr.princeton.edu/myhr/policies/termination-failure-comply-university-policy-misconductcause> [↗](#)
(<https://hr.princeton.edu/myhr/policies/termination-failure-comply-university-policy-misconductcause>)

The penalties for students are listed below.

Informal Sanctions

Minor violations of rules of conduct may be met with informal responses.

1. **Dean's Warning.** An admonition that does not become part of an individual's permanent record, but that may be taken into account in judging the seriousness of any future violation.
2. **Reprimand.** Reprimand is a stronger admonition than a dean's warning, intended to signal that the student has committed a minor infraction, conveying that the student must be vigilant against future infractions, and providing a disincentive against future infractions in that a Reprimand will not become part of the student's permanent record unless there is a subsequent infraction, at which point the Reprimand will be formally recorded on the student's permanent record.

Both a Dean's Warning and a Reprimand may be considered in judging the seriousness of any future violation.

Formal Sanctions

More serious violations may be met with the following formal responses which are recorded on the student's permanent record and can be taken into account in judging the seriousness of subsequent infractions.

1. **Disciplinary Probation.** A more serious admonition assigned for a definite amount of time. It implies that any future violation, of *whatever kind*, especially but not exclusively during the specified probationary time, may be grounds for Suspension (Not Served), Suspension, Suspension with Conditions, Withholding of Degree, or, in especially serious cases, Expulsion from the University. Disciplinary Probation will be taken into account in judging the seriousness of any subsequent infraction even if the probationary period has expired.

Disciplinary Probation appears on an individual's permanent record at the University (but not on the transcript) and may be disclosed by the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Students or the Office of the Dean of the Graduate School in response to requests for which the student has given permission or as otherwise legally required.

2. **Withholding of Degree.** In cases involving seniors or graduate students, the University may withhold a student's Princeton degree for a specified period of time. This penalty is imposed instead of Suspension at the end of an undergraduate's senior year or at the end of a graduate student's program length where all other degree requirements have been met. A Withheld Degree is recorded on a student's transcript. Relevant information remains on the student's permanent record at the University and may be disclosed by the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Students or the Office of the Dean of the Graduate School in response to requests for which the student has given permission or as otherwise legally required.

3. **Suspension (Not Served).** Suspension (Not Served) is imposed in situations where conduct violations are otherwise serious enough to merit a one-semester Suspension, but where the appropriate disciplinary body determines that the immediate separation of the student from the University may not be warranted. Relevant factors that may be considered include, but are not limited to, the nature and seriousness of the violation, the nature and/or seriousness of any prior violation(s), or other circumstances that the body applying the sanction finds sufficient to permit Suspension (Not Served).

If a student is issued a Suspension (Not Served) as a sanction, they will not be separated from the University, provided that they are not found responsible for a subsequent significant policy violation. If a student is issued a Suspension (Not Served) as a sanction and they are found responsible for a subsequent significant policy violation, the student will be required to serve both the Suspension from the first infraction and the Suspension from the subsequent infraction; this would likely result in a separation of one or two years, or Expulsion.

A Suspension (Not Served) is recorded on a student's transcript even if the student does not have a subsequent infraction and therefore does not serve the Suspension (i.e., they are not separated from the University). Relevant information remains on the student's permanent record at the University and may be disclosed by the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Students or the Office of the Dean of the Graduate School in response to requests for which the student has given permission or as otherwise legally required.

4. Suspension. Removal from the University for a specified period of time. A Suspension is recorded on a student's transcript. Relevant information remains on the student's permanent record at the University and may be disclosed by the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Students or the Office of the Dean of the Graduate School in response to requests for which the student has given permission or as otherwise legally required. Any Suspension will be considered in judging the seriousness of any subsequent infraction.

5. Suspension with Conditions. Removal from the University for at least the period of time specified by the Suspension, to continue until certain conditions, stipulated by the body applying the sanction, have been fulfilled. These conditions may include, but are not limited to, restitution of damages, formal apology, or counseling. A Suspension with Conditions is recorded on a student's transcript and will be considered in judging the seriousness of any subsequent infraction. Relevant information remains on the student's permanent record at the University and may be disclosed by the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Students or the Office of the Dean of the Graduate School in response to requests for which the student has given permission or as otherwise legally required.

6. Expulsion. Permanent removal from the University, without the possibility of readmission. Expulsion is recorded on a student's transcript. Relevant information remains on the student's permanent record at the University and may be disclosed by the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Students or the Office of the Dean of the Graduate School in response to requests for which the student has given permission or as otherwise legally required.

The following may accompany any of the preceding penalties:

Censure. University censure can be added to any of the other penalties listed above, except a Dean's Warning and a Reprimand. Censure indicates the University's desire to underscore the seriousness of the violation and the absence of mitigating circumstances, and to convey that seriousness in response to future authorized inquiries about the given individual's conduct.

Campus Service. Campus service up to 10 hours per week may be added to a Reprimand, Disciplinary Probation, or Suspension. This penalty may be particularly appropriate in cases involving vandalism, disorderly conduct, and alcohol-related infractions.

University Housing. When appropriate to the infraction, particularly in instances involving antisocial behavior having a serious impact on the residential community, removal from University housing or relocation within University housing may be added to any of the other penalties listed above, except a Dean's Warning and Reprimand. In the case of a first-year or sophomore, removal from housing is not an option as all underclass students must reside in a residential college. Relocation within residential colleges will be imposed only after consultation with the head of the student's residential college.

Access to Space, Resources, and Activities. When appropriate in cases involving behavioral misconduct between members of the community, restrictions may be placed on access to space and/or resources or on participation in activities in order to limit opportunities for contact among the parties.

Educational Refresher Programs. In addition to any of the penalties listed above, a student may be required to participate in educational refresher programs appropriate to the infraction.

Restitution. The penalty for willful or reckless damage or vandalism will ordinarily include restitution for replacement or repair.

1.1.8 Circumstances Affecting Health or Safety

In circumstances seriously affecting the health or well-being of any person, or where physical safety is seriously threatened, or where the ability of the University to carry out its essential operations is seriously threatened or impaired, the president or a representative, authorized by the president, may summarily suspend, dismiss, or bar any person from the University. In all such cases, actions taken will be reviewed promptly, typically within one week, by the appropriate University authority.