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Statement of rights and responsibilities of students

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The Statement on the Rights and Responsibilities of Students at Lafayette College and Code of Conduct set forth the philosophical basis for the governing of student conduct at Lafayette and specify certain regulations agreed upon by students, faculty, administrative officers, and trustees for the general welfare of the community. They also delineate areas of responsibility for the students. In all matters of personal conduct, whether in academic work or social life, students are expected to be responsible members of the College community and to contribute to the best development of other students and the College as a whole.

Statement of rights and responsibilities of students

The Statement on Rights and Responsibilities of Students was written by a committee appointed especially for that purpose. Before its adoption, it was reviewed by the Student Council and the faculty. These two groups approved the statement and, on May 31, 1968, the Board of Trustees adopted it as the official College Statement on Student Rights and Responsibilities. It was modified in 1973, 1978, 1983, and 2004 by concurrent action of the Student Government, the faculty, and the Board of Trustees.

Preamble

The chartered functions and the goals of Lafayette College include the transmission of knowledge, the pursuit of truth, and the creation of an atmosphere conducive to the development of students. The College recognizes that education takes place not only in the

classroom, but in the library, in meeting rooms, on the playing fields, and in residence halls.

Freedom of inquiry and freedom of expression are indispensable to the attainment of the goals of Lafayette College. All members of the College community share the responsibility to secure and to respect general conditions conducive to enjoyment of these freedoms. As members of this community, students are encouraged to develop the capacity for critical judgment and for the independent search for truth. They should exercise their freedom in such a way as to preserve the freedom of others and with regard for the good of the whole community.

FREEDOM OF ACCESS TO EDUCATION

Admission to Lafayette College is competitive. Admission policies are established by the faculty on recommendation of the Enrollment Planning Committee. Admission is offered to those applicants who are judged best able to benefit from a Lafayette education on the basis of high school record, examination scores, evidence of good character, leadership potential, and other personal qualities. The College prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, national origin, age, or disability. (Please refer to page 57 for grievance procedure.) By matriculating at Lafayette, the student signifies willingness to contribute to the learning of others, to promote the welfare of the College, and to adhere to the regulations established by the College. The facilities and services of the College are available to all Lafayette students.

IN THE CLASSROOM

At Lafayette, students are encouraged to engage in free discussion, inquiry, and expression. Student performance is evaluated solely on academic achievement, including adherence to the traditional canons of scholarly honesty and integrity, and not on unrelated opinions or conduct. While they are responsible for maintaining standards of academic performance established for each course in which they are enrolled, students have the right to be informed of the procedures or standards by which they are to be graded. Students who believe that they have been subjected to prejudice or capricious academic evaluation may ask a professor to explain any grade and, if they remain dissatisfied, may appeal for a review of their performance and grade to the head of the department in which the course is given.

If they are still dissatisfied, students may then appeal to the Student Affairs Committee (contact the Office of Advising and Co-Curricular Programs). In appealing, students may enlist the aid of any willing faculty member.

Students who cheat on examinations, plagiarize, or are otherwise dishonest, or who help others to do so, are subject to disciplinary action.

STUDENT AFFAIRS

FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION, INQUIRY, AND EXPRESSION

Students are free to organize and join associations to promote their common interests, and student organizations may be accorded use of College facilities and resources when available so long as such interests and use are compatible with the purposes and function of the College. Extracurricular organizations must be approved by student government, subject to faculty review. All extracurricular organizations are encouraged to seek the advice of faculty members, and student living groups must have faculty advisers elected by their members. All student organizations must have constitutions and must adhere to their stated purposes. If student organizations are affiliated with organizations outside Lafayette College, the relationships must not interfere with objectives and activities of the College. Any organization that recruits or selects students for its membership must not be operating in violation of any College policy, including the Policy Prohibiting On-Campus Student Participation in Unrecognized Greek Organizations.

No campus organization, including fraternities and sororities, may discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, national origin, age, or disability. Religious qualifications, however, may be required by organizations whose aims are primarily sectarian. Greek-letter organizations and athletic teams, by federal Title IX allowances, are exempt from the gender discrimination provision.

Students and student organizations are free to examine and to discuss all questions of interest to them and to express opinions publicly and privately. They are free to support causes by orderly means, including any means of peaceful assembly or advocacy, which do not interfere with or disrupt the operations of the College.

Actions by individuals or groups to prevent speakers invited to the campus from speaking, to disrupt the operations of the College, or to obstruct and restrain other members of the College community and campus visitors by physical force are destructive of the pursuit of learning and of a free society. All members of the Lafayette College community are under a strong obligation to protect its processes from these tactics.

Student organizations may invite speakers of their choosing.

They should consult with a responsible representative of the College, such as the dean or faculty adviser of the organization, to insure that there is orderly scheduling of the facilities and adequate preparation for the event, and that the occasion is conducted in a manner appropriate to the academic community. While students are expected to follow procedures prescribed by the College with respect to requesting facilities for their programs, the College shall not use its control of facilities as a device for censorship. The College has affirmed that faculty members and students shall enjoy freedom in their teaching, learning, and research. Speakers are brought to campus to allow consideration of a wide range of opinions in a forum of free inquiry; the appearance of a speaker on campus in no way indicates agreement with their views or endorsement of their position.

STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN INSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT

Students are free, as individuals and as groups, to express their views on matters of College policy and on other issues of interest to them. The Student Government, the campus newspaper, and other organizations provide forums for discussion and orderly means for the communication of opinion to the College authorities. Other avenues for expression and communication may be developed as the need arises.

STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Lafayette College regards student publications as valuable aids in establishing and maintaining an atmosphere of free and responsible discussion and of intellectual exploration on the campus. They are a means of bringing student concerns to the attention of the College community and of formulating student opinions on campus issues and world affairs.

Since Lafayette meets this commitment by providing funds and facilities for these activities, it may have to bear legal and financial responsibility for the content and operation of the publications. Within the limits imposed by this responsibility, Lafayette is committed to

freedom of expression in order that student publications may maintain their integrity of purpose.

The freedom of student editors and managers entails corollary responsibilities to be governed by the canons of responsible journalism, such as the avoidance of libel, slander, obscenity, undocumented allegations, and the techniques of harassment and innuendo. All student publications must explicitly state on the editorial page that the opinions there expressed are not necessarily those of the College or student body. For the protection of the editorial freedom of student publications, the College subscribes to the following safeguards:

The student press is free of censorship and advance approval of copy, and its editors and managers are free to develop their own editorial policies and news coverage.

Editors and managers of student publications are protected from arbitrary suspension and removal because of student, faculty, administrative, or public disapproval of editorial policy or content. Only for the aforementioned causes are editors and managers subject to removal and then by orderly procedure.

EXERCISE OF RIGHTS OF CITIZENSHIP: INSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY AND LEGAL PENALTIES

Lafayette College students are both citizens and members of the academic community. As citizens, they enjoy the same rights—for example, freedom of speech, peaceful assembly, and right of petition—and obligations that other citizens enjoy and, as members of the academic community, they are subject to the rights and obligations that accrue to them by virtue of this membership. College authority is not employed to inhibit the exercise of rights of citizenship either on or off campus, but neither do students have special rights with respect to the use of campus quarters and the employment of the College as sanctuary.

Actions of students may, upon occasion, result in violation of law and incur penalties prescribed by civil authorities. In such cases, College officials are prepared to apprise students of sources of legal counsel and may offer such other assistance as appropriate. The authority of the College will not be used merely to duplicate the function of general laws. There may be instances where violation of the public law by a student may affect adversely the interests of the College. Under such circumstances, the College may take disciplinary

action. When the authority of the College is so asserted, the student is entitled to the Procedural Standards in Disciplinary Proceedings described in the following sections. The student who, in the course of off-campus activity, incidentally violates institutional regulations such as those relating to class attendance will be subject to no greater penalty than normally would be imposed.

Students are representatives of Lafayette College, and conduct away from campus can reflect upon Lafayette as well as upon the individual. College action is independent of external pressure.

Process for Considering the College's Response to Matters of Grave Social or Moral Concern Raised by Members of the Lafayette Community:

The process below was approved by the Board of Trustees on Jan. 27, 2007.

When members of the Lafayette community believe that matters of grave moral or social concern exist that warrant an institutional response, they may bring these matters to the attention of the Board of Trustees pursuant to the following procedures.

Faculty members may bring such issues to the faculty through a designated faculty committee, or may ask for faculty action directly by calling for a vote of the full faculty (during a faculty meeting). Students may bring such issues forward through a process identified by Student Government. Administrators and staff members may bring such issues forward through a designated administrative officer. If the faculty, Student Government, or administrative officer concludes that the issue is of grave moral or social concern to warrant an institutional response, they shall forward such recommendation to the president who shall convene a College-wide ad hoc committee to consider the issue.

The College-wide committee shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, two faculty members identified in advance by the faculty to serve on this committee, the president of Student Government, the general counsel, the chaplain (or other members of the community to be identified as we refine this process). The committee will consider whether the issue presented meets the threshold of "grave moral or social concern that warrants an institutional response." If the committee concludes that the issue meets that threshold, the committee will forward its recommendation to the president.

Upon receiving the recommendation of the College-wide committee, the president will consider whether he/she believes that the concern at issue is sufficiently grave and is one that warrants an institutional response. The president will then forward his/her recommendation in writing to the Board of Trustees.

The chairman of the board may form an ad hoc committee of the Board of Trustees to determine whether the issue is sufficiently grave and is one that warrants an institutional response and, if so, to recommend to the Board of Trustees appropriate institutional action.

STUDENT RECORDS

The academic records of students are maintained in the Office of the Registrar. These records contain the chosen degree program, all course registrations, grades and credits received, transfers of academic credits from other institutions, academic honors and awards, dates of attendance, notations of voluntary or involuntary withdrawals and readmissions, and a statement of graduation.

The preceding data are displayed on academic transcripts. Records in the Office of Advising and Co-Curricular Programs include application for admission, copies of correspondence, records of interviews, and other materials that may be useful in advising a student. These elements of the records are protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

The deans, other administrative officers, and faculty members are asked from time to time to evaluate students and alumni in connection with applications for employment, admission to graduate and professional schools, or for other reasons. Persons who provide such statements are responsible to the recipient and to the subject equally, to be scrupulously honest and fair in their judgment. The listing of an office or officer of the College as a reference is regarded as authorization to furnish a full and frank evaluation.

Copies of midterm grade reports (D and F grades only) are available online, but are not part of the students' permanent record. Final grades are available online at the end of each term. Students wishing to obtain a printed copy of the report can request one from the Office of the Registrar prior to the end of the term.

College policies and procedures governing access to student records and the release of information contained therein are consistent with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

[For more details, see Appendix I, Policy on Student Records.]

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