

# POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

---

## Preamble

Bennington College was founded on the principle that intellectual development cannot and should not be isolated from the development of the whole person, and that as much as possible, the general College arrangements, especially individual guidance, should give proper weight to physical, emotional, moral, and aesthetic, as well as to intellectual factors in personal growth. To be engaged, to be disciplined, and to be responsible is to possess self-knowledge or to be educated.

The following rules and regulations, and all other provisions of this handbook, supersede any previous rules and regulations and provisions. By enrolling in Bennington College, all students automatically accept its regulations and acknowledge the right of the College to take disciplinary action.

Please note: In addition to the powers exercised in the ways described elsewhere in this section and in this handbook, the College reserves the right to suspend or expel any student when, in the opinion of the College, his or her behavior threatens, disrupts, or endangers the health, safety, or well-being of the College community or of any person; and also reserves the right to impose penalties, which may include but are not limited to fines, suspension, and expulsion, upon any student whose behavior is deemed a threat to the health, safety, or well-being of the campus or whose behavior results in damage to, or destruction of, College property, and/or violates College policy.

## Student Self-Governance

Under normal circumstances, students at Bennington College govern themselves. Two House Chairs, selected to act respectfully and to ensure that the life of the house proceeds smoothly, manage each student house. On occasions when House Chairs find themselves unable to maintain a comfortable living environment in their houses, or when members of the College community learn of significant infractions against the order or the property of the College, they have the obligation as well as the right to present information about these difficulties to the appropriate authorities of the College for investigation and possible disciplinary action.

## Source and Lines of Authority

The Trustees of Bennington College have authority for the structure and operation of the disciplinary system at the College. The Trustees have delegated this authority to the President of the College, who normally exercises this authority through the following offices:

- For academic or classroom activities, the Provost and Dean and the faculty of the College.
- In all other areas, the senior administrators of the College, who are responsible for formulating and enforcing appropriate procedures, for regulations concerning student behavior, for the judicial consideration of violations, and for the imposition of sanctions.

## Student Conduct

The following actions by students violate College standards of conduct, as do attempts to commit any of these acts on or off the Bennington College campus. Violation of these standards or any other College rule or policy may result in student disciplinary action. These definitions are to be construed broadly. Specific examples are intended to be illustrative, not exhaustive or exclusive.

1. **Violence.** Causing physical harm or the reasonable apprehension of harm to another person on or off campus.
2. **Harassment, abuse, coercion, injurious conduct.** Physical or verbal abuse and threatening and intimidating behavior of any sort, including not only direct threats of any kind, but also psychological and sexual harassment. Examples of such conduct include, but are not limited to:
  - a. Threats, intimidation, physical abuse, verbal harassment, or derogatory statements directed toward other students, visitors, or College employees.
  - b. Abusive, obscene, vulgar, loud, or disruptive language or conduct directed toward and offensive to a member of or a visitor to the College community.
  - c. Discriminatory behavior with regard to age, actual or perceived sex, creed, disability, race, color, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, or any other legally protected category.

*Complaints involving sexual harassment/sexual assault must be made in accordance with the College's Sexual Harassment Policy on page 94.*

3. **Disruptive conduct.** Behavior that, in the opinion of the College or any of its disciplinary officers or agencies, is disruptive to the processes or operations of the College, including, but not limited to: disrupting a class, lecture, meeting, ceremony, performance, event, or other function; interfering with College faculty or staff when performing their duties; failure to abide by College policies; or creating excessive or chronic noise. Also, the use of skateboards, roller skates, rollerblades, bicycles, and unicycles is prohibited in any College building.
4. **Unauthorized entry.** Unauthorized entry into a private room, office, studio, or other College space without having gained proper permission in advance. This also includes the unauthorized possession, duplication, or use of College keys, or tampering with College locks.
5. **Theft or attempted theft.** Actual or attempted theft of or misappropriation of property and/or services of another person or of the College. This includes, but is not limited to: property taken electronically via computer systems or the Internet; acts of fraud or attempted fraud committed by forgery, alteration, or use of College documents, records, identification cards, or by other means; misuse of the Bennington name, which includes, but is not limited to,

contractual agreements made in the Bennington College name or unauthorized use of the College name or letterhead in advertising or media or correspondence.

6. **Malicious mischief/vandalism.** The intentional or negligent destruction, defacement, or alteration of property belonging to the College or another person. This also includes property stored electronically (e.g., in computer memory or on electronic, optical, or other storage media).

7. **Endangering behavior.** Behavior that, in the opinion of the College or any of its disciplinary officers or agencies, endangers the health and safety of oneself or others.

Examples of endangering behavior include, but are not limited to: public intoxication; use or possession of any controlled substance or illegal drug; possession of drug paraphernalia including but not limited to pipes, water pipes, hookahs, bongos, or any other device used to facilitate the consumption of drugs, whether or not drugs are present; providing alcohol to an underage person; providing illegal drugs to anyone; tampering with or misuse of fire or life safety equipment; tampering with electrical, computer, or telecommunications systems; unauthorized climbing on College buildings or other structures; the possession, use, or storage of weapons including but not limited to guns, airguns, bb guns, paintball guns, and ammunition of any kind; the possession and/or misuse of potentially harmful or explosive materials.

8. **Unauthorized recording.** The recording or photographing of an individual or group's proceedings, performances, classes, lectures, programs, workshops, or other similar events without the specific authorization of the sponsoring individual, organization, faculty member, speaker, or other party related to the event.

9. **Violation of law.** Violation of local, state, or federal law. Violation of the law may subject an individual to separate disciplinary action at the College.

Disciplinary action at the College will normally proceed during pending criminal proceedings and will not be subject to challenge on the grounds that criminal or civil charges involving the same incident are pending or have been dismissed or reduced. The pending appeal of a conviction shall not affect the application of this rule.

10. **False information.** Providing false, inaccurate, or misleading information to a College faculty member or official. This includes College-issued IDs where the picture and/or date of birth has been altered or obscured.

11. **Failure to respond.** Failure to respond to or comply with an instruction or request from a College official, faculty member, Campus Safety Officer, or any other staff member acting in accordance with his or her duties. This includes, but is not limited to: failure to respond to or meet with the Provost and Dean or the Provost's designee or any other College official; failure to appear as requested before the Judicial, Administrative Review, or Sexual Harassment Committees, or to comply with a request to provide information in connection with an investigation by any of these committees or a person designated to investigate a charge; or failure to respond to a reasonable request from a Campus Safety Officer, faculty member, or any other College official while performing his or her duties.

12. **Failure to comply.** Failure to comply with any College policy or rule.

13. **Violation of sanction.** Violation of, or failure to fulfill or comply with, any sanction imposed by the College.

14. **Other College policies/rules.** Violations of any other College policy or rule, including, but not limited to those referenced below:

- a. Residential Policies
- b. Guest Policy
- c. Facilities Management and Policies
- d. Campus Safety: Fire and Life Safety Policies
- e. College Policy on Alcohol and Drugs
- f. Sexual Misconduct Policy
- g. Nondiscrimination Policy
- h. Information Technology Policy
- i. FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) Annual Notice
- j. HIV/AIDS Policy

## Residential Policies

**Residency requirement.** All Bennington College students enrolled in classes full time are required to live on campus, in College housing, unless the student has been suspended or expelled from College housing.

**Exception to the residency requirement.** The College recognizes that a few students may need an exception to the residency requirement. We grant exceptions for an enrolled student who is:

- Married or in a civil-union recognized by the state of Vermont.
- A parent or legal guardian of a child. (Bennington does not provide family housing for students.)
- 24 years old or older when the student begins study at the College.
- Living at his or her parents' home, within a 25-mile radius of the College.

The Dean of Students will consider all other requests on a case-by-case basis. Requests must be in writing, be received on or before July 1 for the fall term and by December 1 for the spring term in order to be considered. The Dean of Student's decisions on these matters is final.

**Right to assign.** The Dean of Students reserves the right to assign any vacancy in College housing at any time, and to reassign any student's College housing at any time.

**Occupancy.** Students are allowed to occupy their assigned rooms and to use the common space in their houses and other College facilities when the College is in session. Students are required to vacate College housing between terms and cannot access College facilities without permission from Campus Safety or the Dean of Students.

Information about dates and times that College residences open and close are published in the academic calendar found in this *Student Handbook*. The End-of-Term Announcements notice is sent out from the Student Life Office to all students at the end of each term. Students are expected to arrive and depart