

Student Rights and Responsibilities

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Preamble

Clear expectations and standards can equip students to avoid mistakes, misunderstandings, and serious problems during their time at the University of Alberta. This document is meant to serve as a guide for undergraduate and graduate students, and create clarity about the authoritative resources that explain their rights and responsibilities. Within the scope of the University of Alberta's authority, its diverse policies and procedures are the authoritative resources that affirm students' rights and responsibilities. As those rights and responsibilities are spread throughout many policy documents, this document will serve as a *proactive* resource to help students avoid problems, and a *reactive* resource to help them navigate appeals and disciplinary processes in ways that produce the fairest possible results. Students should also find valuable insights into University policy through the [Office of the Student Ombuds](#).

This document was inspired by the [Student Rights and Responsibilities](#) resource at McGill University.

Procedural Fairness

- Procedural fairness encompasses a broad envelope of standards and best practices, including but not limited to accessibility, clear notice of rights and options, presumption of innocence, protection against intimidation, the right to prepare a full defense, the right to know what is at stake or what potential consequences might be, and lack of bias on the part of the decision-maker. Principles of procedural fairness apply to many decision-making processes that students encounter.
- Many principles of procedural fairness are outlined in section 30.1.1 of the [Code of Student Behaviour](#). The University also affirms the right to procedural fairness in the [Sexual Violence Policy](#) and the [Ethical Conduct and Safe Disclosure Procedure](#).
- The [Office of the Student Ombuds](#) is a key resource on how procedural fairness applies to the rights and responsibilities in this document.

Academic Rights and Responsibilities

- Section 30.3.2 of the [Code of Student Behaviour](#) outlines standards around plagiarism and cheating.
- Rights involving the structure of courses and grading expectations can be found in the [University Calendar Academic Regulations](#) under 'Course Requirements, Evaluation Procedures and Grading.' The [Assessment and Grading Policy](#) and its procedures lay out binding principles for fair, consistent assessment and grading.
- The right to appeal marks, grades, and decisions affecting academic standing is found in the [University Calendar Academic Regulations](#), under 'Academic Appeals' and 'Grievances Concerning Grades.'
- The [Discrimination, Harassment and Duty to Accommodate Policy](#) and the [Research Policy](#) extend the right of academic freedom to all members of the University community, including students.
- The [Student Concerns and Complaints Policy](#) addresses the extent and limits of a student's right to privacy when submitting a complaint against a staff member or instructor.
- Further rights and responsibilities specific to academically employed graduate students can be found in the [Graduate Student Assistantship Collective Agreement](#).

Personal Rights and Responsibilities

- The [Code of Student Behaviour](#) both outlines the University's binding behavioural standards and protects students from others' inappropriate behaviour.
- Students' rights of free speech and expression, in keeping with the [Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms](#), are explained in the Principles on Free Expression. [link TBD]
- The [Posting Announcements, Notices and Banners Procedure](#) further affirms students' right of free expression: "Where a posting is lawful and compliant with University policies and procedures, content will not be a factor in determining approval of posting announcements, notices, and banners."

Students who wish to post these materials are responsible for complying with the Procedure and associated guidelines.

- The [Discrimination, Harassment and Duty to Accommodate Policy](#) explains students' rights to a dignified, respectful learning and working environment; their options for reporting and recourse; and their right to accommodation based on protected grounds (e.g. race, religion, gender expression, disability, or political beliefs). It also provides thorough guidance on what constitutes discrimination or harassment.
- While not an absolute right, the [Registrar's Office](#) affirms that students have the option to use their preferred name and change their gender designation.
- The [Alcohol Policy](#) and its procedures deal with safe alcohol consumption, event safety, and alcohol consumption at student group events. Students and groups are responsible for safe consumption practices. The [Student Groups Procedure](#) details responsibility around prohibited or risky conduct in the context of student groups and events.
- All students involved in non-academic misconduct complaints, either as complainants or accused, have a right to due process. The University enshrines the right to due process in, among other places, the [Ethical Conduct and Safe Disclosure Procedure](#).
- The [Access to Information and Privacy Policy](#) and its procedures outline how the University will protect and use students' personal information, and how students can access information about themselves.
- The [Canvassing and Solicitation Policy](#), sections 30.3.4-5 of the [Code of Student Behaviour](#), and the [Student Groups Procedure](#) explain students' ability to campaign and approach others on campus. They also detail the rules that students can rely on when facing unwanted solicitation.