

The Dean of Students Office

Student Guide

Student Rights and Responsibilities

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INTRODUCTION

The University of Florida is an institution which encourages the intellectual and personal growth of its students as scholars and citizens. As an educational institution, the University recognizes that the transmission of knowledge, the pursuit of truth, and the development of individuals require the free exchange of ideas, self-expression, and the challenging of beliefs and customs. In order to maintain an environment where these goals can be achieved safely and equitably, the University promotes civility, respect, and integrity among all members of the community. As stated in the Standard of Ethical Conduct, students are expected to exhibit high standards of behavior and concern for others. The University strives to protect and guide the educational community by establishing a Student Code of Conduct and student judicial system, which promotes individual and social responsibility. Choosing to join the University of Florida community obligates each member to a code of civilized behavior. Individuals and student organizations are expected to observe the policies, rules, and regulations of the University of Florida and the State of Florida. University policies have been designed to protect individuals and the campus community and create an environment conducive to achieving the academic mission of the institution. The purpose of the Student Code of Conduct is to set forth the specific authority and responsibility of the University in maintaining social discipline, to establish guidelines which facilitate a just and civil campus community, and to outline the educational process for determining student and student organization responsibility for alleged violations of University regulations. This judicial process will follow established procedures for insuring fundamental fairness and an educational experience that facilitates the development of the individual and of the organization.

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STUDENT RIGHTS

- The right of respect for personal feelings, freedom from indignity, and to expect an education of the highest quality.
- The right to participate in self governing student bodies which provide channels of communication and means for using democratic processes to solve problems.
- The constitutional rights of freedom of expression and assembly.
- The right of freedom to hear and participate in dialogue and to examine diverse views and ideas.
- The right of freedom to write and distribute printed material for reasons that are not commercial without the exercise of prior restraint.
- The constitutional rights of freedom of the press for all student publications.
- The right of due process in disciplinary procedure in accordance with rules of procedures prescribed in the Student Code of Conduct.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- The responsibility of assuming the consequence of one's own actions. The responsibility for knowledge of and observance of established University policies presented in official University publications.
- The responsibility that free discussions represent the scholarly nature of an academic community.
- The responsibility for filing a statement of intent to make such distribution of printed material subject to the Student Code of Conduct, and all laws of the city, state, and nation governing such freedom of expression.
- The responsibility to exercise journalistic ethics. The responsibility to insure that no student organization, constitution or other organizational document includes discriminatory clauses pertaining to race, creed, religion, color, sex, national origin, disability or sexual orientation.
- The responsibility for becoming acquainted with the University Catalog, Student Guide and other publications.

Standard of Ethical Conduct

PREAMBLE

Honesty, integrity, and caring are essential qualities of an educational institution, and the concern for values and ethics is important to the whole educational experience. Individual students and faculty and staff members, as well as the University's formal organizations must assume responsibility for these qualities. The concern for values and ethics should be expressed in classes, seminars, laboratories, and, in fact, in all aspects of University life. By definition, the University community includes members of the faculty, staff, and administration as well as students.

Education at the University of Florida is not an ethically neutral experience. The University stands for, and seeks to inculcate, high standards. Moreover, the concern for values goes well beyond the observance of rules.

A university is a place where self-expression, voicing disagreement, and challenging outmoded customs and beliefs are prized and honored. However, all such expressions and challenges need to be civil, manifesting respect and concern for others.

As a major sector in the community, students are expected to follow the University's rules and regulations that, by

design, seek to promote an atmosphere of learning. The other sectors, faculty, staff, and administration, are expected to provide encouragement and leadership as well as example.

While the University seeks to educate and encourage, it also has a responsibility to restrict any behavior that adversely affects others or is contrary to the pursuit of knowledge. The purpose of this Standard of Ethical Conduct is to summarize what is expected of the members of the University community. Existing University documents address these concerns in greater detail.

Student Honor Code

In adopting this Honor Code, the students of the University of Florida recognize that academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Students who enroll at the University commit to holding themselves and their peers to the high standard of honor required by the Honor Code. Any individual who becomes aware of a violation of the Honor Code is bound by honor to take corrective action. A student-run Honor Court and faculty support are crucial to the success of the Honor Code. The quality of a University of Florida education is dependent upon the community acceptance and enforcement of the Honor Code.

THE HONOR CODE

We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.

On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied:

“On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.”

ACADEMIC HONESTY GUIDELINES

All students are required to abide by the Academic Honesty Guidelines which have been accepted by the University.

The academic community of students and faculty at the University of Florida strives to develop, sustain and protect an environment of honesty, trust and respect. Students are expected to pursue knowledge with integrity. Exhibiting honesty in academic pursuits and reporting violations of the Academic Honesty Guidelines will encourage others to act with integrity. Violations of the Academic Honesty Guidelines shall result in judicial action and a student being subject to the sanctions in paragraph XIV of the Student Code of Conduct. The conduct set forth hereinafter constitutes a violation of the Academic Honesty Guidelines (University of Florida Rule 6C1-4.017).

ACCOUNTABILITY TO ACADEMIC HONESTY

The University of Florida requires all members of its community to be honest in all their endeavors. Students are required to commit themselves to academic honesty by signing a prescribed basic statement, including the Student Honor Code, as part of the registration process. A fundamental principle is that the whole process of learning and pursuit of knowledge are diminished by cheating, plagiarism, and other acts of academic dishonesty. In addition, every dishonest act in the academic environment affects other students adversely, from the skewing of the grading curve to giving unfair advantage for honors or for professional or graduate school admission. Therefore, the University will take severe action against dishonest students. Similarly, measures will be taken against faculty, staff, and administration members who practice dishonest or demeaning behavior.

Student Responsibility

A commitment is made in writing at the time of admission to be honest in all academic work and abide by the Student Honor Code. In addition, students should report any condition that facilitates dishonesty to the class instructor, the department chairperson, the dean of the college, or Student Judicial Affairs.

Faculty Responsibility

Faculty members have a duty to promote honest behavior and to avoid practices and environments that foster cheating in their classes. Teachers should encourage students to bring negative conditions or incidents of dishonesty to their attention. In their own work, teachers should practice the same high standards they expect from their students.

Administration Responsibility

As highly visible members of our academic community, administrators should be ever vigilant to promote academic honesty and conduct their lives in an ethically exemplary manner.

ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

The use of alcohol and other drugs can have a negative impact on judgments and reaction, health and safety, and may lead to legal complications as well.

The University's Role

The University's principle role is to engage in education which leads toward high standards and respectful conduct. When those are compromised, it will take disciplinary action against individuals and organizations violating rules regarding alcohol and against individuals violating either the law or reasonable conduct in the use of alcohol. It must also provide help for students who are alcohol-dependent. The University will deal severely with students convicted of the illegal possession, use, or sale of drugs.

What the University Community Can Do to Prevent Alcohol Abuse and Drug Use. Students can help control substance abuse by declining to use or condone the use of drugs and by insisting that organizations and individuals use alcohol within the law and within the bounds of reasonable conduct. Students should make an effort to prevent persons who have abused alcohol or used drugs from harming themselves or others, especially in driving a motor vehicle, and should encourage those needing professional help to seek it. The same standards and regulations apply with equal force to members of the faculty, staff, and administration.

RELATIONS BETWEEN PEOPLE AND GROUPS

One of the major benefits of higher education and membership in the University community is greater knowledge of and respect for religious, racial, cultural and other groups. Indeed, genuine appreciation for individual differences and cultural diversity is essential to the environment of learning.

Another major aspect of the University's life involves sexual relationships. Sexual attitudes or actions which are intimidating, harassing, coercive, or abusive, or that invade the right to the privacy of the individual are not acceptable. Organizations or individuals that adversely upset the delicate balance of communal living will be subject to disciplinary action by the University. Only in an atmosphere of equality and respect can all members of the University community grow.

SERVICE TO OTHERS

An important outcome of a University of Florida education should be a commitment to serving other people. This sense of service should be encouraged throughout the institution by faculty, administration, staff, and students. Through experience in helping individuals and the community, students can put into practice the values they learn in the classroom.

Education at the University of Florida is not an ethically neutral experience. The entire University community should dedicate itself to realizing the vision that a center of learning is a beacon that, by directing itself to the highest values, guides and encourages the society to do the same.

(Final Report of the Task Force on Ethics, a committee of faculty and students at the University of Florida.
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