

3359-42-01 Student rights and responsibilities.

(A) Preamble.

- (1) The university of Akron exists for the discovery, preservation, transmission and enlargement of knowledge, the pursuit of truth, the development of the intellect, character and personality of students, and the enhancement of the general well-being of society.
- (2) Freedom to teach and freedom to learn are inseparable facets of academic freedom. These freedoms depend upon appropriate opportunities and conditions in the classroom, on the campus and in the larger community. All members of the university community share the right and responsibility to secure and to respect general conditions conducive to enjoyment of these freedoms which are inalienable.
- (3) As members of the academic community, students in exercising their freedom have the responsibility of preserving the freedom of others and working for the good of the entire community. The following statement of student rights and responsibilities provides for standards of academic freedom which are essential to any community of scholars.

(B) Access to education. Within the limits of its facilities, the university of Akron shall be open to all applicants who meet its admission requirements. No applicant will be denied admission on the basis of age, race, creed, sex, national origin or political beliefs. The university of Akron and its colleges shall publish and make available their admission, enrollment, retention, transfer and degree requirements. By enrolling at the university of Akron, the student signifies willingness to adhere to university rules and regulations pertinent to the student's status as a student at the university. However, the student shall be as free as possible from imposed limitations that have no direct relevance to the student's education. The university has an obligation to promote the welfare of each of its students and each student has an obligation to promote the welfare of the university.

(C) Academic matters.

- (1) At the university of Akron students have both the right and the responsibility to engage in free inquiry and expression when relevant to the subject under discussion. Students are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled and they shall comport themselves in a mature responsible manner and shall be held responsible for maintaining established standards of academic performance. Such standards include avoiding plagiarizing the words or ideas of another and avoiding aiding or abetting the commission of plagiarism by another student.
- (2) Students have the right to expect effective instruction and to have their performance evaluated solely on an academic basis. Students should be informed by each instructor at the beginning of each course of the procedures and standards, including class attendance requirements, etc., by which they will be graded. Any student who believes unfair treatment has been received in the classroom has the right to seek and receive from the instructor the reason for the instructor's action. If the student still questions the fairness of the instructor's action, the student has the right to appeal in turn to the head of the department or division, the dean of the college in which the course is given, and the senior vice president and provost and chief operating officer.
- (3) The faculty have a responsibility to students that transcends the classroom. Students have a right to expect reasonable access to members of the faculty. Faculty members shall maintain office hours and establish alternate means of communication which are reasonable and convenient both for themselves and for the students whom they teach. Students shall be informed of these arrangements at the beginning of each course of study.
- (4) All students are entitled to sound academic advisement and should be provided with competent academic counseling whenever the need arises.
- (5) Academic advisement and counseling for the university college and Summit college students shall be conducted by trained counselors in the office of student services and the continuing education and public services/outreach office. Referral will be made to a faculty member for advice in the area of the student's

intended major when requested by the student or suggested by the advisor.

- (6) Each student in an upper college or the graduate school or a professional school has the right to have an academic advisor who is a faculty member of the department or school in which the student is enrolled. The student may, upon request, be assigned another advisor by the head of the department or by the dean of the college or school.
- (7) The student shall periodically confer with the advisor to review academic progress and to be informed of those courses which the student must complete in order to fulfill the collegiate or school degree requirements. The college or school shall publish and make available its specific requirements.
- (8) The advisor or department shall provide information about requirements for graduation and shall advise the student with regard to electives and number of credit hours carried per semester. With regard to free electives, not stipulated in the degree program, the student shall have freedom of choice.

(D) Student records.

- (1) The office of the university registrar maintains the official record of the student's academic performance. To minimize the risk of improper disclosure, academic and disciplinary records should be separate, and the conditions of access to each should be set forth in explicit policy statement. Transcripts of academic records shall contain only information about courses, grades and notations of academic status. These statements shall reflect only the student's academic performance and academic action taken by the university. Only when required by law shall a notation of nonacademic disciplinary action appear on the academic record. These academic records may be examined by the student in the office of the university registrar in the presence of an authorized official of the university.
- (2) Copies of the official and unofficial academic records may not be released to persons or organizations outside the university except upon written request of the student. Under exceptional

circumstances where the permission of the student cannot be secured, the appropriate university authorities may exercise their discretion in the release of this information.

- (3) Information from disciplinary records may be released only upon the written request of the student. Where there is clear and probable danger which might result in loss of life, personal injury or property damage, the appropriate university officers may release this information without the consent of the student. Provisions shall be made for the periodic destruction of disciplinary records.
- (4) Counseling and medical records in the divisions of the office of student affairs, in the offices of the academic deans and head of departments may contain applications for admission, records of interview and counseling sessions, psychological test results and evaluations, medical and psychiatric evaluations, copies of correspondence and other data necessary for effective counseling. These records are the property of the university and the information contained therein is held in confidence. No record of conviction in a court of law shall be noted in a student's file unless it is reasonably related to the purposes and necessities of the university.
- (5) Except in the case of membership in university-recognized student organizations, no written records shall be kept which reflect the political activities or beliefs of the student. Faculty members and university officials should treat as confidential the information about student views, beliefs and political associations acquired in the course of their work, unless otherwise directed by the student. Where there is a clear and probable danger which might result in loss of life, personal injury or property damage, the appropriate university officers may release this information without the consent of the student.
- (6) When faculty members or university officials are asked to evaluate students and alumni/ae in connection with application for employment, admission to graduate and professional schools and for other reasons, they are responsible to the recipient and to the student to be scrupulously honest and fair in their judgment. The listing by a student or alumnus/a of an office, officer or another

member of the university community as a reference is regarded as authorization to furnish a full and frank evaluation.

(E) Student affairs.

(1) Freedom of association, inquiry, and expression.

- (a) Students are free to organize and join associations to promote their common interest. A student organization which seeks university recognition shall petition the student affairs committee of university council, whose recommendation shall be voted upon by university council, by submitting a constitution, bylaws, a statement of purpose, and criteria for membership. Recognition may be granted by the university council; however, university recognition does not necessarily constitute an endorsement of the organization or of the expressions of the organization by the university. It should be noted that day undergraduate student organizations shall first petition the student senate of the associated student government.
- (b) The terms of recognition of a student organization shall include the following:
 - (i) The purpose, objectives, and activities of the proposed organization shall be consistent with the objectives, rules and regulations of the university and with municipal, state and federal law.
 - (ii) The organization shall not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, or national origin in the selection of its members or in its programs. Further, there shall not be any discrimination on the basis of sex or age unless some compelling reason related to the objective of the organization can be demonstrated.
 - (iii) Each organization shall manage its own finances but shall do so according to the rules and regulations of the university.

- (iv) The organization shall file a list of current officers with the dean of students. Membership lists shall not be required.
- (c) Upon receiving university recognition, the organization shall seek the consent of a full-time faculty member to serve as its advisor and shall recommend the appointment by the president of the university.
- (d) The university council may suspend or terminate its recognition of a student organization upon evidence of violation of the terms of its recognition, or upon failure of the student organization to adhere to its constitution or bylaws.
- (e) Students and student organizations are free to examine all questions of interest to them and to express opinion publicly and privately. They are free to support causes of their choosing by lawful and orderly means, including peaceful assembly and advocacy. In their public expressions and demonstrations, the students or student organizations have a responsibility to make it known that they do not necessarily speak for or act on behalf of the university. The university has the inherent right and responsibility to protect individuals and property and to assure the continuity of the educational process.
- (f) All student organizations may invite and hear speakers of their choosing. Students are expected to follow procedures prescribed by the university in requesting and using university facilities for their programs. These procedures shall be designed to insure that there is orderly scheduling of facilities and adequate preparation for the event. University authorities will not use their control of facilities as a device for censorship. The appearance of a speaker on campus in no way indicates agreement with the speaker's views or endorsement of the speaker's position by the university or the sponsoring student organization. The sponsoring group has the responsibility to make reasonable efforts to make this fact known to the academic and the larger community.

- (2) Student participation in university governance. Students are free individually and collectively to express in a peaceful and orderly manner their views on matters of university policy and on matters of general interest to the student body. Students shall be provided the opportunity to participate in the formulation and implementation of university policy, both academic and nonacademic, in accordance with the rules and regulations of the university council and the board of trustees.
- (3) Student publications.
 - (a) The university of Akron regards student publications, campus radio stations and other student news media as necessary aids in establishing and maintaining an atmosphere of free and responsible discussion and intellectual exploration on campus. They are a valuable means of providing campus communication, of bringing student concerns to the attention of the university community and of formulating student opinion on campus issues and on community and world affairs.
 - (b) If the university provides the funds or facilities or lends its name to the various news media, it may have to bear legal and financial responsibility for the content and operation of the publications and of the programs of the radio stations. Within the restrictions imposed by this responsibility, the university is committed to freedom of expression in accordance with the following statements of professional ethics: "Criteria of a Good Newspaper" -- "Associated Press Managing Editors Association," "Canons of Journalism" -- "American Society of Newspaper Publishers;" "Statement of Ethical Responsibilities" -- "International Conference of The Student Press," July 1963; "Radio, T.V. Code of Good Practices" -- "National Association of Broadcasters;" and by the rules and regulations of the federal communications commission which proscribe libel, slander, obscenity, undocumented allegations and the techniques of harassment and innuendo. WZIP and the radio/television workshop are governed by regulations imposed by the federal communications

commission. The radio/television workshop is also governed by the policies of WZIP when broadcasting over the station's facilities.

- (c) To ensure the editorial freedom of student publications and campus radio stations, the university to the extent that its legal obligations permit subscribes to the following safeguards:
 - (i) The media should be free of censorship, advance approval of copy and/or programs to be published or aired. The media managers should be free to develop their editorial policy and news coverage.
 - (ii) Editors and managers of student news media shall not be subject to arbitrary suspension and removal because of student, faculty, administration or public disapproval of their editorial policies or content. Only for proper and stated causes shall editors and managers be subject to removal and then only by orderly and prescribed procedures. These procedures shall be carried out by the appointing authority and include the right of appeal.
 - (d) All student news media must explicitly state that the opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the university or its student body.
- (F) Off-campus rights and responsibilities.
- (1) University students are both citizens and members of the university community. As citizens they enjoy the same rights such as freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and right of petition, and the same obligations as other citizens; and as members of the university community they are entitled to the privileges and subject to the responsibilities which accrue to them by virtue of this membership. University authority shall not be employed to inhibit the exercise of rights of citizenship, either on or off campus, but neither do students have special rights when in violation of the law. Students shall recognize that away from campus while

attending a university-associated event, their conduct may reflect upon the university as well as upon the individual.

- (2) Students who violate the law may incur penalties prescribed by civil authorities. While university authority should not be used merely to duplicate the function of general laws, the university may assert its disciplinary authority over students in situations where the students conduct off campus may be deemed by the university to affect the university or its students, faculty, academic officers, and staff. When the disciplinary authority of the university is so asserted, the student shall be provided with the procedural safeguards contained in the "Student Disciplinary Procedures," Chapter 3359-41 of the Administrative Code. The student who incidentally violates university regulations in the course of off-campus activity should be subject to no greater penalty than would normally be imposed had the action occurred on property owned, leased, or operated by the university. University action must be independent of community pressure.
- (G) Enactment and amendments. This statement of student rights and responsibilities is the instrument of the board of trustees of the university and is enacted pursuant to the sole and exclusive authority of the board of trustees to carry on the operation of the university. Nothing contained therein shall be construed to be a delegation of any authority vested in the board of trustees to do all things necessary for the continuous and successful operation of the university. The board may be approached with proposed changes and amendments to this instrument through channels outlined in its bylaws.

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Ted A. Mallo
Secretary
Board of Trustees

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