

Community

Community Standards Policy



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At Carleton College we celebrate both individuality and a strong sense of shared community values. Students who enter this academic and social community make a commitment to healthy exchanges of ideas and acknowledge that living in a community requires tolerance, compromise, and sensitivity to others. It is important to treat others with respect, dignity and understanding in order to create a community where civility is valued. At times each student will have to renegotiate personal boundaries and fit individual freedoms into the broader context of responsibility to the student community and the values of the College. In addition, Carleton College is not an isolated sanctuary apart from the rest of society. Consequently, all students are subject to local, state, and federal law, as are other residents of Northfield, MN.

The values, policies and procedures described below have been developed through participatory governance, including the approval of College Council and the Carleton College Board of Trustees. They reflect the continuing, actively renewed consensus of the College community.

I. Carleton's Values

A. Student Development

Students are recognized as adults and therefore should receive the respect and assume the responsibilities that come with this status. The journey from late adolescence to adulthood is not a linear progression. It is an exciting, confusing, and stressful developmental process unique to each individual. The mission of the College is “to liberate individuals from the constraints imposed by ignorance or complacency and prepare them broadly to lead rewarding, creative, and useful lives.” In that spirit, students are routinely challenged in the classroom and in their daily lives to test boundaries, take risks, and stretch themselves. Over time, all students engage in a wide range of developmental tasks, including:

- Enhancing academic skills.
- Defining and re-defining educational and career goals.
- Formulating personal identity.
- Adjusting to community/group living.
- Developing appropriate self-management, health, and wellness skills.
- Analyzing, forming or confirming values.
- Developing a mature style of relating to others and exploring interpersonal relationships.
- Accepting the consequences of one’s actions.
- Understanding and developing appreciation for cultural and lifestyle differences.
- Developing a sense of fairness and compromise.
- Developing skills to work effectively in groups and participate in an enterprise larger than oneself.

B. Self-Governance and Personal Freedom

Fundamental to a Carleton experience is the value of self-governance. Most students come directly from home and secondary school environments that are much more structured than life at Carleton. Personal

freedom is both an opportunity and a challenge. In the exercise of personal choices, students assume certain responsibilities:

- Taking ownership of their actions and expressions of opinion.
- Insuring that their actions or the actions of others do not infringe upon the rights of others or the fundamental integrity of the living and learning environment.
- Respecting the rights of others to the same freedom of expression claimed for themselves.

The College does not police its students nor act in *loco parentis*. We do, however, observe and respond to student behavior, and offer guidance, advice, and counsel to assist students in making good decisions for themselves and for the community. We expect students to comply with the community values, standards, and expectations set forth in this policy. At times we intervene in the lives of students to assist in setting boundaries, especially for those who are unable or unwilling to exercise personal freedom responsibly.

C. A Safe and Healthy Living-Learning Community

Carleton College has a deep commitment to providing a safe and secure environment, in which students can live, learn, work and pursue their interests. Threats to personal safety, compromises of the learning environment, and disruptions of students' rights to live with a reasonable degree of peace are cause for concern and intervention.

D. Academic Freedom

As an institution dedicated to learning and teaching, Carleton College is committed to the principle of free expression and exploration of ideas in an atmosphere of civility and mutual respect. The College therefore also embraces the related principle that all members of its community shall have access to its educational facilities, activities, information resources, and employment without regard to race, color, creed, religion, sex, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, status with regard to public assistance, age, or disability. These principles guide the College's relationships with individuals and should guide the interaction of all members of the community.

1. Open Discourse

A diverse student body, faculty, and staff participating in a learning community of civil and open discourse provide the most productive environment for genuine liberal learning. Carleton recognizes and affirms the desirability for individuals to have the support of others who share their backgrounds or values, as well as the concomitant necessity for each person to take the risks, and accept the challenges inherent in engaging in genuinely open conversation with others who are different from oneself.

2. The Educational Process

Although the College attempts through its policies to limit or eliminate certain behaviors and actions that may be hurtful to others, Carleton cannot guarantee that the environment will always be comfortable for all members of the community. Often, the educational process is disturbing and unsettling. When one's ideas are under attack and one's values are being challenged, the effect may be simultaneously painful and highly educational. Thus, behavior that is disturbing or unsettling to an individual or group is

not necessarily discriminatory. In this regard, it is imperative that teachers and students be able to take controversial positions without fear, in accordance with the principle of academic freedom.

3. Civility

All discourse, as well as treatment of individuals—in offices, classrooms, residences, or any other setting or mode of communication—should be respectful of the individual, whether or not there is disagreement on matters of substance, taste, politics, or evidence. Creating and sustaining a climate of civility in an institution of voluntary membership is the responsibility of each individual.

4. Freedom from Discrimination

While the nature of an academic community is to provide a milieu for the expression, criticism and discussion of the widest range of opinions, it does not provide license for bigotry in the form of demeaning, discriminatory speech or actions. Thus, the presentation of a reasoned or evidenced claim about a societal group that offends members of that group is to be distinguished from a gratuitous denigrating claim about, or addressed to, an individual or group. The former is bona fide academic behavior while the latter may demean, degrade or victimize in a discriminatory manner and, if so, undermines the above principles.

Discriminatory speech and actions are especially abhorrent when they are made anonymously, for anonymity precludes the possibility of an exchange and exploration of ideas; moreover, such an anonymous message—by the very nature of its delivery—is a threat to the recipient. Discrimination by one person against another is also particularly abhorrent when the first person is in a position of power with respect to the second, whether in the academic, administrative, political, or social hierarchy on the campus.

II. Student Conduct: Expectations, Rules, and Regulations

Carleton accords students the opportunity to learn about life, to challenge their own values and the ideas and values of others, and, in so doing, to become responsible members of the College community. While the College imposes no specific moral standard or creed on its students, each student is responsible for living up to the values cited above and the policies, rules, and regulations detailed below. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

The expectations, rules and regulations for Carleton College students and the policies detailed below pertain to students on and off campus, while participating in College programs and activities, domestic or international. Student behavior occurring anywhere other than on property owned or rented by Carleton will be of concern to the College if, in the judgment of the Dean of Students, there is sufficient information to determine that the behavior alleged would adversely and seriously affect the student's suitability as a member of the College community.

When any violation of College policy, rule or regulation is motivated by intolerance or hate directed toward an individual or group based on characteristics such as race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, or political or religious belief, the sanction administered by the appropriate administrative officer or hearing board will be increased in severity and may include separation from the College.

A. Academic Honesty and Personal Integrity

We expect students to do their own academic work and to be honest and truthful in their interactions with College officials. The following actions are prohibited:

- 1.** Cheating, plagiarism, accessing unauthorized materials, sharing information on any exam with others before the end of all final exams, abuse of library or other

instructional materials, misuse of library privileges, and unlawful duplication and/or distribution of copyrighted materials.

2. Knowingly furnishing false information to the College with intent to deceive or defraud.
3. Forgery; alteration or misuse of documents, records or identification.

B. Responsibilities to the College

We expect students to conduct themselves reasonably and appropriately, on and off-campus. This includes respectful responses to College officials, appropriate use of College facilities, and compliance with sanctions applied through established judicial procedures. The following conduct is prohibited:

- Intentional obstruction or disruption of teaching, research, administration, disciplinary proceedings or other College activities.
- Disorderly, overly aggressive, or obscene conduct, or breach of peace on College-owned or leased property or at College-sponsored or supervised functions.
- Refusal to comply with the directions of a College official or hindering an official acting in the performance of his/her duties.
- Unauthorized use of college facilities, including but not limited to:
 1. Unauthorized access to or use of buildings and other facilities such as tunnels, roofs, the water tower, construction zones, and other prohibited areas.
 2. Improper possession, use, or duplication of keys or keycards; abuse of the card access system.
 3. Unauthorized access to computers, computer systems or computer accounts; deliberately attempting to disrupt the performance of a computer system/network; infringement of copyrights or license agreements; forging e-mails; illegal copying of software; breaking in or attempting to break into the College's or another person's system; stealing passwords or using the computing system to harass others.

- Attempted or actual theft or damage to College property.
- Misappropriation of College or student organization funds; tampering with a student government election or selection process.
- Failure to observe sanctions applied through established judicial process.
- Conduct which adversely and seriously affects the student's suitability as a member of the College community

C. Respect for Individuals and Personal Property

We expect students to treat all members of the College community with care, respect and dignity. The following conduct is prohibited:

- Physical, verbal or psychological abuse, harassment, intimidation or other conduct (whether willful or negligent) that threatens or endangers the health, well being, or safety of oneself or of any person on College-owned or leased property, or at College-sponsored or supervised functions.
- Sexual misconduct, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, or sexually inappropriate behavior. (See Policies Against Sexual Misconduct)
- Hazing, defined as an act which endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student, or which destroys or removes public or private property, for the purpose of initiation, admission into, affiliation with, or as a condition for continued membership in a group or an organization.
- Attempted or actual theft of or damage to personal property.

D. Health, Safety, and the Law

Students are expected to make sound decisions regarding the health and safety of themselves and others and to comply with laws applicable to all residents of Northfield. The following conduct is prohibited:

- Alcohol: The use of alcohol except as permitted by law; the abuse of alcohol by any student whether of legal age or not. (See the College Alcohol and Drug Policy.)
- Drugs: The use, possession, sale, transfer, distribution, manufacture or cultivation of any controlled substance, except prescription drugs used by the person for whom and for the purpose for which they were prescribed.
- Dangerous implements or materials: The use or possession of explosives, firecrackers, firearms, BB guns, explosive materials, or knives with blades in excess of four inches on campus property. (The Dean of Students may permit a student to have a firearm on campus for hunting season, but such permission is discretionary with the Dean of Students. If permission is given, the firearm must be kept secured in the Security Office.)
- Safety and Security: Misusing or tampering with fire alarm systems, fire extinguishers, or other security equipment, or compromising any College security system. (See also Fire Safety in the Housing and Residential Living section.)

E. Compliance with College Policies

Many programs and facilities have established policies and procedures that govern student behavior. Students are expected to comply with all written policies of the College, which include but are not limited to:

- Motor vehicle policy.
- Residential life policies.

- Computing and telecommunications policies.
- Library policies.
- Policies governing the use of recreational facilities and activities.
- Policies governing student organizations and club sports.
- Dining hall and meal plan policies.
- Smoking policy.
- Student records policy.

III. Responses to Alleged Violations of College Policy

A. Executive Authority

The President of the College (or his/her designee) has the obligation to attempt to assure the safety of individuals, the protection of property, the continuity of the educational process, or the preservation of the legal status of the College. In executing these obligations, the President (or his/her designee) is specifically empowered to determine the status of any student at any time. The President (or his/her designee) may remove individuals from campus or prohibit individuals from being on campus and expel, suspend, or otherwise take action with respect to such individuals. If a student is expelled, suspended, withdrawn, or placed on leave of absence as a result of the exercise of executive authority, the terms upon which resumption of normal student status will be permitted, if any, will be stated at the time of the decision. In any case, no student will be expelled without the specific consent of the President of the College.

B. Informal Response

The system of response to allegations of student misconduct is an educational one. The very nature of a residential college creates opportunities and challenges for young adults living in community, some for the first time. It is not unusual for young adults in this situation to, on occasion, exercise poor judgments, act insensitively or without thinking, or engage in inappropriate behaviors. Consequently, many minor incidents (e.g., excessive noise, roommate conflicts) are handled informally through conflict resolution, mediation, or simple agreements that the parties involved will cease and desist a certain conduct. Many minor incidents are resolved with the assistance of peer counselors or Student Life staff. Such cases usually do not result in official disciplinary records or sanctions, but may be introduced at a later date if patterns of unacceptable behavior emerge.

C. Formal Disciplinary Action

When it is neither possible nor appropriate to resolve a conflict or disciplinary matter informally, the alleged violation is forwarded to the Dean of Students Office for action by peer counselors (e.g., Resident Assistant) or Student Life staff (e.g., Area Director, Security, Class Dean). There are three major categories of violations, each with a separate and distinct method of resolution: social misconduct, academic honesty and personal integrity, and sexual misconduct.

1. Reports and Investigations of Alleged Violations

Any member of the Carleton College community may file a complaint. Incident reports are sent and complaints made to the Dean of Students Office or the appropriate office within Student Life. As part of the investigation the staff member determines whether the alleged violation is an act of academic honesty and personal integrity, sexual misconduct, or social misconduct.

2. Administrative Resolution

Once an investigation is complete, the investigative report is forwarded for action to one of three judicial authorities:

- a. Academic Dishonesty: The Subcommittee of the Academic Standing Committee (an Associate Dean of Students and an Associate Dean of the College).
- b. Sexual Misconduct: The Community Board on Sexual Misconduct (CBSM). For more information about the CBSM and the hearing process, see the Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response website ([//apps.carleton.edu/dos/sexual_misconduct/](https://apps.carleton.edu/dos/sexual_misconduct/)).
- c. Social Misconduct: A designated member of Student Life staff (e.g., a member of the Residential Life staff).

The appropriate judicial authority determines whether a violation of college policy has occurred, based on a preponderance of evidence (i.e., whether it is more likely than not that a violation occurred). If a violation is found, sanctions are assigned (See III.C.5. below).

3. Appeal Procedures

Students found in violation through administrative resolution may appeal the finding of a violation or the sanctions assigned, or both, to the appropriate appeal authority, as described below, within seven (7) days of receipt of the original disciplinary decision:

a. For Academic Dishonesty

The Academic Standing Committee (<https://apps.carleton.edu/governance/asc/>) (ASC) hears appeals of decisions by the Subcommittee of ASC. The respondent may appeal the finding of a violation, sanction(s), or both.

b. For Sexual Misconduct

Appeal information is included in the Policy Against Sexual Misconduct (<https://www.carleton.edu/handbook/community/?policy=323>).

c. For Social Misconduct

The Judicial Hearing Board (JHB) hears appeals of decisions by the Dean of Students or his/her delegate. The respondent may appeal the finding or sanction(s), or both.

1. Composition: Two students, appointed by the CSA; two faculty members appointed by the FAC (one of whom serves as the Hearing Officer); one staff member, appointed by the President. The Hearing Officer votes only to break a tie. Alternates: One Hearing Officer, two students, one faculty member, one staff member (appointed as above). An Associate Dean of Students serves as the Chair (non-voting member) of the JHB to ensure proper procedure is followed.
2. Appeals of decisions by the JHB. The respondent may appeal decisions of the JHB only on the basis of procedural error or new information. The Dean of Students and the Hearing Officer determine whether the JHB re-hears the case.

4. Hearing Process

Each hearing board described above has written guidelines of hearing procedures, available from the Dean of Students Office. All parties are given a copy of the guidelines prior to a hearing. For information about the sexual misconduct complaint process and hearing procedures, see the *Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response* (http://apps.carleton.edu/dos/sexual_misconduct/reporting/complaint_process/#hearing)

a. Coordination of the Hearing

The Dean of Students Office coordinates all hearings. The Dean of Students (or his/her delegate) will:

1. Prepare a formal charge on behalf of the College and provide written notification to the respondent of the charge.

2. Inform all parties of the time and location of the hearing. A hearing is scheduled within one week after the student has been notified of the charge or whenever is reasonable, given the availability of all parties and hearing board members. The Dean of Students will notify the respondent if the case cannot be heard within a week of receipt of the charge letter. The respondent must attend the hearing.
3. Answer any questions and resolve issues regarding the hearing process.
4. Confirm the participation of hearing board members, including determining if any hearing board member has a conflict of interest or cannot otherwise attend the hearing. In such cases, alternates will be notified. The Judicial Hearing Board and the Community Board on Sexual Misconduct share board members to ensure proper and appropriate panelist availability, experience, and impartiality. It is up to the discretion of the Chair of the CBSM and/or the JHB to select panelists from either pool.
5. Attend to all organizational matters pertaining to the hearing, including providing copies of all written statements for participants and hearing board members.
6. Present the charge on behalf of the College.
7. Provide written notification to the respondent of the outcome of the hearing and of rights to appeal.
8. Oversee compliance with any sanctions.
9. Maintain student disciplinary records.

b. Purpose of the Hearing

To determine, based upon a preponderance of evidence, whether a violation of College policy occurred; and if so, to assign sanctions (see III.C.5 below). Preponderance of the evidence means it is more likely than not that a violation occurred. All procedural questions are subject to the final decision of the

Hearing Officer. In hearings involving more than one accused student, the Dean of Students and the Hearing Officer will determine whether hearings are scheduled jointly or separately.

c. Rights and Responsibilities of the Respondent

1. To respond to allegations and offer testimony on the incident in question.
2. To call witnesses who can offer material testimony.
3. To present evidence pertinent to the case.
4. To question witnesses and challenge evidence.

d. Advisors

The respondent has the right to have in attendance at a hearing two advisors of his/her choosing. The role of advisors is to offer support and limited assistance in the hearing. The respondent is responsible for presenting his/her own case. Advisors may consult with and assist the respondent in doing so, but are not permitted to speak for or present the case on behalf of the student he/she is there to support.

In cases where the complainant is another student, the complainant has the right to advisors, as described above.

In cases of sexual misconduct, students will be provided with a trained Sexual Misconduct Support (SMS) Advisor. For more information, see the *Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response* ([//apps.carleton.edu/dos/sexual_misconduct/support/people/](http://apps.carleton.edu/dos/sexual_misconduct/support/people/)) website.

e. Hearing Board Decisions

Once all testimony has been heard, the hearing is closed to all participants. The hearing board then deliberates to determine whether a violation has occurred, and, if so, to determine sanctions. The Hearing Officer presides. The determination shall be made on the basis of a preponderance of evidence. Hearing board decisions are reached by a majority vote. Decisions are

communicated to the respondent at the conclusion of the deliberations. Written notification is provided as soon as possible. The decisions of hearing boards are final.

f. Privacy and Confidentiality

All hearings are private and confidential. Admission of any person to the hearing shall be at the discretion of the Hearing Officer.

5. Findings and Sanctions

The hearing officer or hearing board determines whether the respondent has violated a College policy. If there is a finding of a violation, sanctions are determined. Sanctions are meant to assign accountability and, ideally, to provide an opportunity for learning from mistakes. The following is a non-exhaustive list of possible sanctions, listed from minimum to maximum. In most cases first offenses of a minor nature will receive lesser sanctions than more serious violations and/or repeated offenses. The hearing officer or hearing board may modify or combine any of the options listed below, or determine its sanctions.

Disciplinary sanctions may be imposed upon groups and organizations as well as individuals. More than one sanction may be imposed at one time.

a. Disciplinary Sanctions

- 1. Censure and Warning:** Written notification that the student's behavior is unacceptable and that continuation or repetition of such conduct may result in more severe disciplinary action.
- 2. Residential Probation:** Students are put on residential probation after repetitive violations or blatant disregard for the broader residential community.
- 3. Disciplinary Probation:** A written reprimand including a statement that any further violation of College policy may result in suspension or expulsion.

4. Interim Suspension: Immediate separation from the College for a period defined by the Dean of Students to:
 - a. ensure safety and well-being of people and property; or
 - b. prevent disruption or interference of normal operations of the College.
5. Suspension: Termination of a student's enrollment at the College for a specified period of time. This may also include restricting access to campus or College events during the suspension.
6. Expulsion: Permanent termination of enrollment, including no further access to campus or any College events without written approval from the Dean of Students.

b. Additional Sanctions

1. Restitution: Reimbursement for damage to or misappropriation of property. At the discretion of Student Life staff, this may take the form of work, community service, or other compensation such as service to the College community.
2. Life Safety Fines: Any violations of community standards that could pose a threat to individual's lives. Fines will be assessed based on the severity of the violation.
3. Chemical Health Assessment: Performed by a qualified chemical dependency counselor for the purpose of determining possible patterns of abuse. The student is encouraged to follow the treatment recommendation(s) provided by the counselor.
4. Revocation of Privileges: Exclusion from college housing, lose right to host events/gatherings in residence hall spaces, participation in extracurricular college activities or removal from other activities (e.g., participation in an off-campus program).
5. Other: Student Life staff may choose to administer a sanction not mentioned above, in line with the student conduct philosophy.

IV. Disciplinary Records

DISCIPLINARY RECORD RETENTION

Records of disciplinary action are maintained in the confidential Dean's Disciplinary File in the Office of the Dean of Students. Disciplinary records are part of the student's education record and are therefore subject to privacy protections under the College's Student Records Policy, as required by The Family Education and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Disciplinary actions may be taken by members of the Student Life staff or one of the judicial boards (Academic Standing Committee, The Judicial Hearing Board, The Sexual Misconduct Review Board.). These written citations include a description of the specific violation of College policy and the resulting sanctions, which range from warnings to expulsion.

- Records of disciplinary status up to and including disciplinary probation are maintained in the Dean's Disciplinary File until graduation or until two years after withdrawal from the College. These records are not noted on the student's transcript.
- Records of disciplinary suspensions are maintained for five years after the student's separation from the College. Suspensions are coded "withdrew" on the academic transcript.
- Records of expulsion are maintained in the Dean's Disciplinary File for ten years after the student's separation from the College and recorded permanently on the student's academic transcript as "disciplinary dismissal."

Students have access to their own disciplinary records. The Dean of Students and staff have access on a "need-to-know" basis. Otherwise, records may be released to third parties only with written consent of the student.* For further detail on the maintenance and disclosure of student records, see Student Records Policy.

*In sexual misconduct cases, the complainant is also informed of the decision.

V. Parental Notification

Though parental notification is permitted under law in most cases, the College prefers to communicate directly with students as adults. Customarily, the Dean of Students Office does not notify parents concerning policy violations that do not involve suspension or expulsion from the College. However, should a student receive a sanction that suggests that any future violation may lead to suspension, the Dean of Students has discretion to determine whether the student or a college official should notify parents about the student's status or other serious concerns.

Approved by Board of Trustees Executive Committee on June 20, 2002.

Student Development: Approved on April 8, 2003.

Self-Governance and Personal Freedom: Approved on April 8, 2003.

A Safe and Healthy Living-Learning Community: Approved on April 8, 2003.

Open Discourse: Approved on April 8, 2003.

The Educational Process: Approved on April 8, 2003.

Civility: Approved on April 8, 2003.

Freedom from Discrimination: Approved on April 8, 2003.

Academic Freedom: Approved on April 8, 2003.

Carleton's Values: Approved on April 8, 2003.

Academic Honesty and Personal Integrity: Approved on April 8, 2003.

Responsibilities to the College: Approved on April 8, 2003.

Respect for Individuals and Personal Property: Approved on April 8, 2003.

Health, Safety, and the Law: Approved on April 8, 2003.

Compliance with College Policies: Approved on April 8, 2003.

Student Conduct: Expectations, Rules, and Regulations: Approved on April 8, 2003.

Executive Authority: Approved on April 8, 2003.

Informal Response: Approved on April 8, 2003.

Reports and Investigations of Alleged Violations: Approved on April 8, 2003.

Administrative Resolution: Approved on April 8, 2003.

For Academic Dishonesty: Approved on April 8, 2003.

For Sexual Misconduct: Approved on April 8, 2003.

For Social Misconduct: Approved on April 8, 2003.

Appeal Procedures: Approved on April 8, 2003.

Coordination of the Hearing: Approved on April 8, 2003.

Purpose of the Hearing: Approved on April 8, 2003.

Rights and Responsibilities of the Respondent: Approved on April 8, 2003.

Advisors: Approved on April 8, 2003.

Hearing Board Decisions: Approved on April 8, 2003.

Privacy and Confidentiality: Approved on April 8, 2003.

Hearing Process: Approved on April 8, 2003.

Disciplinary Sanctions: Approved on April 8, 2003.

Additional Sanctions: Approved on April 8, 2003.

Findings and Sanctions: Approved on April 8, 2003.

Formal Disciplinary Action: Approved on April 8, 2003.

Responses to Alleged Violations of College Policy: Approved on April 8, 2003.

Disciplinary Records: Approved on April 8, 2003.

Parental Notification: Approved on April 8, 2003.

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Last Reviewed: August 29, 2023

Maintained by: Dean of Students Office

Previous: [Common Time \(/handbook/community/?a=student&policy=351\)](/handbook/community/?a=student&policy=351)

Next: [Contributing to Landscape Improvements and Maintenance \(/handbook/community/?a=student&policy=212\)](/handbook/community/?a=student&policy=212)

[List all Policies & Guidelines for Community \(/handbook/community/?a=student\)](/handbook/community/?a=student)

Campus Handbook

The Campus Handbook is the one place to find all official Carleton College policies and guidelines. It contains the [Student](/handbook/?a=student) (</handbook/?a=student>), [Faculty](/handbook/?a=faculty) (</handbook/?a=faculty>), and [Staff](/handbook/?a=staff) (</handbook/?a=staff>) handbooks. These policies and guidelines are subject to change.

[Campus Handbook Archive](/handbook/archive/)

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[Tools for Policy/Guideline](/handbook/maintainers/)

[Maintainers](/handbook/maintainers/)

[\(/handbook/maintainers/\)](/handbook/maintainers/)

Email: campus-handbook.group@carleton.edu (<mailto:campus-handbook.group@carleton.edu>)

Campus Handbook pages maintained by [the Web Team](mailto:web@carleton.edu) (<mailto:web@carleton.edu>)

This page was last updated on 16 November 2022