



Bridgewater State University

Student Handbook 2024-2025

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The Student Code of Conduct applies to students and recognized student organization.

A. Jurisdiction of the University

1. Each student shall be responsible for their conduct from the time of admission through the actual awarding of a degree, even though conduct may occur before classes begin or after classes end, as well as during the academic year and during periods between terms of actual enrollment (and even if their conduct is not discovered until after a degree is awarded). The Student Code of Conduct shall apply to a student's conduct even if the student withdraws from the University while a Community Standards matter is pending.
2. Student organizations, as well as their members, other students, and guests, may be held collectively and/or individually responsible for violations.
3. Generally, University jurisdiction shall be limited to conduct that occurs on or about University premises or in connection with University-sponsored, University-supervised or University-affiliated events, programs, and activities (including students involved with off-campus internships, study abroad programs, and recognized student organizations). However, the University may apply The Student Code of Conduct to students and student organizations, whose misconduct may have an adverse impact on the University, members of the University community, and/or the pursuit of University objectives regardless of where such conduct may occur. Should the Director of Community Standards reasonably determine that a particular alleged act of off-campus misconduct falls within the jurisdiction of the University, the case will be referred to the Community Standards process.
4. The Community Standards process may be instituted when alleged conduct potentially violates both criminal law and The Student Code of Conduct. Proceedings under The Student Code of Conduct may be carried out prior to or simultaneously with civil or criminal proceedings at the discretion of the Director of Community Standards. The University cooperates with law enforcement, or other agencies, in the enforcement of laws on campus regarding its students. This includes providing information requested by subpoena or as otherwise permitted or required by law. Determinations made or sanctions imposed under The Student Code of Conduct shall not be subject to change because criminal charges arising out of the same facts giving rise to violation of University rules were dismissed, reduced, or resolved in favor of or against the criminal law defendant.
5. Academic integrity matters are managed through the [Academic Integrity Policy](#) as outlined in the Academic Catalog. If there is a jurisdictional issue between the Academic Integrity Policy and The Student Code of Conduct, the Director of Community Standards and the Dean of Undergraduate Studies will make the determination as to the applicable policy.
6. Sexual harassment, including sexual violence, and discrimination and discriminatory harassment are prohibited under the [Equal Opportunity, Nondiscrimination and Title IX Plan](#)  and may be adjudicated under the Investigation and Resolution Procedures outlined in the EO Plan.
7. Matters involving potential violations of both the [Equal Opportunity, Nondiscrimination and Title IX Plan](#)  and The Student Code of Conduct may be co-investigated by both offices. Issues involving alleged discrimination, discriminatory harassment, sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, and retaliation that do not meet the definitions outlined in the Equal Opportunity, Diversity and Affirmative Action Plan may be addressed separately under The Student Code of Conduct.

8. Student Organizations

- a. Student organizations may be held accountable under The Student Code of Conduct for the student organization's misconduct and/or for the misconduct of any one or more of its leaders, members, guests, or other representatives.
- b. The president of the student organization will serve as the representative unless the Director of Community Standards receives written notice of a different representative within three (3) days of the organization being sent notice of the conduct matter. The student organization representative will represent the student organization during the Community Standards process.
- c. Student organizations are prohibited from conducting their own disciplinary proceedings prior to the resolution of alleged violations of The Student Code of Conduct. Nothing in The Student Code of Conduct shall preclude holding students who are members of a student organization responsible for their individual violations of The Student Code of Conduct committed in the context of or in association with the student organization's alleged violation of The Student Code of Conduct. Both the student organization and individual students may be found responsible for violations of The Student Code of Conduct in connection with the same behavior.
- d. The student organization representative is required to notify their university Advisor of any alleged violations of The Student Code of Conduct and any sanctions imposed.

9. Parental Notification.

- a. As recommended by the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education and permitted under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the University may notify parents/guardians when students under the age of 21 have been found responsible for violating the University's alcohol or drug policies.

B. Conduct Rules and Regulations

Students and student organizations must adhere to and uphold The Student Code of Conduct and adhere to University policies, rules and procedures as well as federal, state, and local laws. The Director of Community Standards or designee shall make the final determination on what constitutes a potential violation of The Student Code of Conduct and shall establish the specific behavioral allegations(s) as appropriate.


Generally, the influence of drugs and/or alcohol on a student's judgment or behavior will not be accepted as a mitigating factor with respect to the resolution of alleged misconduct.

If a student is involved in more than one incident, the Director of Community Standards, or designee, in their discretion, may determine whether an Administrative Conference and/or Investigation concerning each incident will be conducted either separately or jointly.

In cases where more than one student is involved in an incident, Administrative Conferences or other meetings related to an Investigation will be held separately. Requests for joint Administrative Conferences with multiple students will not be permitted.

Amnesty Procedure




Students may be hesitant to report sexual violence, sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking or retaliation out of concern that they, or witnesses, might be alleged to have violated the University's alcohol and/or drug policies. While the University does not condone such behavior, a priority is placed on the need to address sexual violence and misconduct. Accordingly, University officials may elect not to initiate the Community Standards process against a student who, in good faith, reports, witnesses, or possesses personal knowledge of sexual violence, sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, or retaliation.

Similarly, the University recognizes that there may be alcohol or drug-related medical emergencies or other safety emergencies in which the potential for action under The Student Code of Conduct could act as a deterrent to students who want to seek assistance for themselves or others. When a student aids an intoxicated or impaired individual by contacting the Bridgewater State University Police or Residence Life and Housing staff, it is up to the discretion of the Director of Community Standards, or designee, to determine if any involved parties, student organizations will be subject to the Community Standards process. This does not preclude action regarding other violations of University standards such as causing or threatening physical harm, damage to property, harassment, hazing, or violations of the [Title IX Sexual Harassment Policy](#) .

Students who are transported to a local hospital, placed in protective custody, or evaluated as a result of the abuse of alcohol or other drugs will be contacted by a University official to meet to discuss the incident. Amnesty granted in accordance with The Student Code of Conduct does not prevent any independent action that may be taken by any law enforcement agency, including University police.

Prohibited Behaviors

The following list of behaviors is intended to represent the types of acts that constitute violations of The Student Code of Conduct. Although the list is extensive, it should not be regarded as all-inclusive. All community members are responsible for knowing and observing all University policies.

1. Acts of dishonesty including, but not limited to: furnishing false information; forgery, alteration, or misuse of any document (including but not limited to: student admission materials), record, or instrument of identification; or misrepresenting oneself.
2. Disruptive behavior which is defined as participating in or inciting others to participate in the disruption or obstruction of any University activity, including, but not limited to: teaching, research, events, administration, Community Standards proceedings, the living/learning environment, or other University activities, on or off-campus; or of other non-University activities.
3. Harming behavior, which includes, but is not limited to: the true threat of or actual physical force or abuse, act of bias, or bullying. Please Note: In determining whether an act constitutes bullying, the Office of Community Standards will consider the full context of any given incident, giving due consideration to the protection of the members of the University community, and the individual rights, freedom of speech, academic freedom, and advocacy required by law. Not every act that might be offensive to an individual or a group will necessarily be considered a violation of The Student Code of Conduct.
4. This item was removed effective August 1, 2021. Incidents involving discrimination and discriminatory harassment will be addressed under the resolution procedures outlined in the [Equal Opportunity, Nondiscrimination and Title IX Plan](#)  .
5. **Sexual or Gender-Based Misconduct**, which includes but is not limited to: nonconsensual conduct based on sex or gender that does not meet the definition of sexual harassment under the [Title IX Sexual Harassment Policy](#),  including off campus or international conduct. Consent, incapacitation, force, and coercion have the meanings ascribed to them under the Title IX Sexual Harassment Policy. All of the definitions included in this section apply regardless of sex or gender.
 - a. Sexual Harassment - The University prohibits conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following conditions:
 - i. An employee of the University conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the University on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct; or
 - ii. Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, or objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the University's education program or activity.

Additionally, the behaviors as outlined in subsections (b) through (e) of this section constitute sexual harassment under The Student Code of Conduct.

- b. Sexual Assault - Attempts to commit any of the following acts are also prohibited.
- i. Rape - Rape is the penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina, anus, or mouth with any body part of another person or by an object, without the consent of the victim (regardless of the role the victim has in the penetration). This includes attempts to commit the same. The act of oral sex or anal sex with another person, without that person's consent also constitutes rape. or (2) the mouth of a person by a sex organ of another person, without that person's consent. Sexual intercourse means penetration, no matter how slight, of a bodily orifice (vagina, anus, or mouth) by an object or by a body part, and/or non-consensual oral sex or anal sex.
 - ii. Fondling -The intentional touching of another person on an area of the body generally recognized as private, of the touching of any part of another person's body with the private part of one's own body or object, no matter how slight, without the consent of the victim.
 - iii. Non-consensual Sexual Touching - The intentional touching of another person's body with the intent of sexual gratification, without the consent of the victim.
 - iv. Statutory Rape - Statutory rape is sexual intercourse with a person who is under the statutory age of consent, which is 16 in Massachusetts. Attempts to commit statutory rape are also prohibited.
 - v. Incest - Incest is sexual intercourse between persons who are related to each other and whose marriage would be prohibited by law. Attempts to commit incest are also prohibited.
- c. Dating Violence - Any act of violence or threatened violence committed by a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim; the existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on a consideration of the following factors: (i) the length of the relationship, (ii) The type of relationship, and (iii) the frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship. This includes, but is not limited to, sexual, emotional or physical abuse, or the threat of such abuse.
- d. Domestic Violence - Includes felony or misdemeanor crimes of violence committed by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim, by a person with whom the victim shares a child in common, by a person who is cohabitating with or has cohabitated with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner, by a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction receiving grant monies, or by any other person against an adult or youth victim who is protected from that person's acts under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction.
- e. Stalking - Engaging in a course of conduct directed (directly, indirectly, through a third party or other means) at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to fear for their safety or the safety of others; or suffer substantial emotional distress.
- f. Sexual Exploitation - Sexual exploitation is taking sexual advantage of another person for one's own benefit or the benefit of anyone other than that person without that person's consent, including but not limited to:
- recording images (e.g., video, photograph) or audio of another person's sexual activity, intimate body parts, or nakedness without that person's consent;
 - distributing through social media, text, email or other media images (e.g., video, photograph) or audio of another person's sexual activity, intimate body parts, or nakedness, if the individual distributing the images or audio knows or should have known that the person depicted in the images or audio did not consent to such disclosure and objects to such disclosure;
 - viewing child pornography;
 - and viewing another person's sexual activity, intimate body parts, or nakedness in a place where that person would have a reasonable expectation of privacy, without that person's consent.
- g. Aiding in the Commission of Sexual Harassment or Sexual Exploitation - The aiding of assisting in the commission of an act(s) of sexual harassment or sexual exploitation is prohibited. Examples of aiding in the commission of sexual harassment or sexual exploitation include, but is not limited to:
- Videotaping a person having sex with another person who is passed out drunk at a party.
 - Helping the person drug the victim's drink.
 - Encouraging students to engage in sexual activity when one knows those students to be incapacitated. Failure to comply with Supportive Measures, Protective Measures, and Emergency Removals.
- h. Failure to comply with Supportive Measures, Protective Measures, and Emergency Removals.
6. **Endangering behavior** which includes, but is not limited to, conduct that threatens or endangers the health or safety of any person including one's self.
7. **Failure to abide by the [Hazing Policy](#).**
8. **Failure to abide by the [Alcohol Policy](#).** Notwithstanding the Alcohol Policy, specific violations include
- a. Being under the age of 21, not engaged in an employment or other permissive activity, in the presence of alcohol.
 - b. Possession, or use, of alcohol under the age of 21.
 - c. Serving, distributing, or obtaining alcohol for, or allowing consumption by, any individual who is under 21 years of age.
 - d. Unauthorized manufacture, distribution, dispensing, or sale of alcohol, or attempts to commit the same.
 - e. Use of an alcohol container (including, but not limited to empty beer cans or bottles, etc.) as a room decoration, vase, or storage item.
 - f. Possession of alcohol at Bridgewater State University is limited to those who are 21 years of age and older. Possession of alcohol in a residence hall is limited to residents of the Great Hill Apartments who are 21 years of age or older who may possess alcohol in their rooms subject to the following limits: either (A) 72 oz. of beer or wine cooler or (B) 200 ml of hard alcohol (80 proof or under), or (C) 750 ml of wine (limits apply to full, partially full, or empty alcoholic beverage containers).
 - g. Commercial delivery of alcoholic beverages to the campus is prohibited.
 - h. Drinking games and paraphernalia used to administer drinking games or assist the user in ingesting alcohol at a fast rate are a violation of The Student Code of Conduct. This includes, but is not limited to, funnels and beer pong. Such


- paraphernalia may not be maintained on University property and will be confiscated if discovered. Please note that games that are traditionally considered to be drinking games, such as beer pong, are not permitted even if no alcohol is present.
- i. Common source containers containing alcohol including, but is not limited to kegs, beer balls, and/or punch bowls being used to serve alcohol are not permitted.
- j. Public intoxication, either on campus or off campus.
- k. Consumption of alcoholic beverages, or possession of an open container of alcohol, in an area not authorized by University officials.
- l. Operation of a vehicle which contains alcohol, by a student under the age of 21, regardless of the age of any passenger.
- m. Operation of a vehicle under the influence of alcohol on campus or off-campus.
- n. Use of alcoholic beverages to render another person physical or emotionally incapacitated.

9. **Failure to abide by the [Drug Free Policy](#).** Notwithstanding the Drug Free Policy, specific violations include:

- a. The possession, use, cultivation, manufacture, participation in a conspiracy, or distribution of illegal drugs, narcotics or controlled substances, or attempts to commit the same. This includes the use or possession of legally prescribed drugs which fall outside the parameters of the medical prescription.
- b. Being under the influence of illegal drugs.
- c. Being in the presence of illegal drugs.
- d. The use of drugs to render another person physically or emotionally incapacitated.
- e. The possession, use, sale or distribution of drug paraphernalia.
- f. Operating a vehicle while under the influence of drugs on-campus or off-campus, excepting the use of medication prescribed by a doctor in accordance with a prescription.

While Massachusetts state law permits the use of marijuana, federal law requires the University to prohibit marijuana use, possession, distribution, and/or cultivation at educational institutions. Therefore, the use, possession, distribution or cultivation of marijuana for personal or medical purposes is not allowed in any Bridgewater State University residence hall or on any other Bridgewater State University premises; nor is it allowed at any University-sponsored event or activity off campus or any student organization event or activity. Anyone who possesses or uses marijuana at any University premises may be subject to civil citation, state or federal prosecution, and a referral to Community Standards.

In addition, no accommodations will be made for any student in possession of a medical marijuana registration card except that Bridgewater State University may release students from their Residence Hall License Agreement if approved as a reasonable accommodation for a documented disability.

- 10. **Violation of the [Smoke and Tobacco-Free Policy](#).** The smoking or other use of tobacco or other smoking products is prohibited in all buildings, grounds, and vehicles owned or leased by Bridgewater State University, regardless of location. No tobacco products or smoking paraphernalia of any kind shall be possessed, used, sold, or distributed as samples in any campus buildings, grounds, or vehicles owned or leased by Bridgewater State University, regardless of location.
- 11. **Violation of the Prohibition of [Weapons Policy](#).** No one may possess, carry, use, transport, store, or otherwise have in their custody or control - however temporary - any weapon while on University owned or controlled property or at any University sanctioned event, wherever situated. Weapons include firearms, explosives, dangerous chemicals, or any object that can be used to threaten harm, or any other destructive device or instrument that may be used to do bodily injury. This prohibition applies even to those with a government-issued license to have a firearm, as well as to some weapons that are legal to possess.
- 12. **Uncooperative behavior** which includes, but is not limited to, uncooperative behavior and/or failure to comply with the directions of, providing false information to, and/or failure to identify oneself to University officials or law enforcement officers acting in the performance of their duties.
- 13. **Fire Safety** - Creating a fire hazard or any other situation that endangers others such as the willful or malicious burning of property; the unauthorized or improper possession, use, removal or disabling of fire safety equipment and warning devices; failure to follow fire safety procedures or instructions; or interference with firefighting equipment or personnel.
- 14. **False reporting** of fire, bombs, or other emergency situations.
- 15. **Assisting another person or a student organization in the commission, or attempted commission, of a violation of The Student Code of Conduct.**
- 16. **Conduct that is disorderly** such as public urination, public defecation, streaking, stripping, solicitation of a stripper, and/or participation in acts of a sexual nature publicly or in the presence of others that do not rise to the level of a violation of the [Equal Opportunity, Nondiscrimination and Title IX Plan](#) .
- 17. **Violations of campus guest regulations.** Student hosts and Student Organizations are responsible for their guests' actions.
- 18. **Violation of any published University policies** or rules whether or not specifically listed in The Student Code of Conduct.
- 19. Violation of the Residence Hall License Agreement or published [Residence Hall Policies and Procedures](#):
 - a. Alteration of Premises - Residents shall not make any changes, alterations or improvements to an apartment or room.
 - b. Pets - except fish, and those permitted under the Americans with Disabilities Act or other legislation. All animals falling under such legislation must be approved in accordance with University procedures.
 - c. Cleaning and Care of Rooms - Residents are required to maintain cleanliness, reasonable sanitation and safety standards in all residential spaces.
 - d. Room Inspection Procedures - Rooms may be inspected for health, safety and security reasons on a periodic basis and prior to each vacation period, by a Residence Life and Housing staff member, with or without notice or the presence of residents.
 - e. Hall Sports - Any type of sports or sports-related activity (such as bouncing a basketball) is prohibited at all times.
 - f. Furniture - All furniture and furnishings brought into a residential facility are subject to approval by a Residence Life and Housing staff member. All personal furniture must be removed at the end of the occupancy period. No personal upholstered

furniture is allowed in the residence halls. University supplied furniture cannot be removed from the room without the approval of a Residence Life and Housing staff member. Additional University supplied furniture, based on availability, may be provided upon request. The furniture in lounges and recreational areas is for the use of all the residents of the building and may not be moved into resident rooms or apartments.

- g. Room Decorations - Pictures, posters and other decorations may be hung on the walls with tape that will not mar the wall surface. Nails, tacks, pins, screws, scotch tape and duct tape are damaging, and their use may lead to damage charges. No more than a third of the room door should be covered with decorations. No items should be posted on or suspended from the ceiling, smoke detector or sprinkler head
 - h. Guest Policy - As found in the [Residence Hall Policies and Procedures](#).
 - i. Prohibited Items - As found in the [Residence Hall Policies and Procedures](#).
 - j. Quiet Hours - Quiet Hours are observed in the residence halls from 9:00 PM to 8:00 AM Sunday night through Friday morning and from 12:00 AM to 10:00 AM Friday evening through Sunday morning.
20. **Theft**, which includes, but is not limited to, attempted or actual theft or unauthorized use or possession of property, resources, or services.
21. **Unauthorized entry and/or presence** in buildings or property or attempts to commit the same.
22. **Damage or misuse of property** which includes, but is not limited to, attempted or actual damage to or misuse of University property or other personal or public property as well as actions which obstruct, disrupt, or physically interfere with the use of University equipment (including safety and security equipment) or premises.
23. **Unauthorized possession, duplication, or misuse of University property** or other personal or public property, including but not limited to records, electronic files, telecommunications systems, forms of identification, and keys.
24. **Violation of federal, state, or local law**, or conduct that would violate the legal rights of others.
25. **Failure to abide by the [Gambling and Bookmaking policy](#).**
26. **Failure to abide by the [Solicitation Policy](#).**
27. **Failure to abide by the Responsible Use of Information Technology Policy.**
28. **Unauthorized use of the University name, logo, mascot, or other symbol.**
29. **Abuse of the University Community Standards system**, including, but not limited to:
- a. Disruption or interference with the orderly conduct of a Community Standards proceeding.
 - b. Falsification, distortion, or misrepresentation of information to a Case Resolution Coordinator or Administrative Review Committee.
 - c. Influencing or attempting to influence another person to commit an abuse of the Community Standards system.
 - d. Attempting to discourage an individual's proper participation in, or use of, the Community Standards system.
 - e. Attempting to intimidate or retaliate against a member of a review body, a complainant, referring party, respondent or witness, prior to, during, and/or after a Community Standards proceeding.
 - f. Institution of a Community Standards code proceeding in bad faith.
 - g. Failure to comply with the sanction(s) imposed under The Student Code of Conduct.
30. **Attempted use or actual use of electronic devices that invade a person's privacy.** This includes but is not limited to taking photographs, audio, or visual recordings of another person without their consent.
31. **Retaliation against any University community member** for raising a good faith concern or issue regarding another community member.
32. **Violating university requirements or public health orders in place to reduce the risk of spreading infectious disease.**
33. **Failure to abide by the [Connect Card Agreement](#).**

Reviewed and Updated 8/2024 by Peter Wiernicki, Office of Community Standards