






Bridgewater State University

Student Handbook 2025-2026

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The following selected terms are defined to facilitate a more thorough understanding of *The Student Code of Conduct*. This list is not intended to be a complete list of all terms referenced that might require interpretation or clarification. When appropriate, additional definitions are provided when a term is first introduced. The Director of Community Standards, or designee, shall make the final determination on the definition of any term found in *The Student Code of Conduct*.

1. **"Administrative Conference"** is a meeting between a respondent and a Case Resolution Coordinator to review a referral, explain the community standards process, and review possible options for resolving the matter.
2. An **"Administrative Review"** is a live hearing during which alleged violations of *The Student Code of Conduct* are reviewed by the members of the Administrative Review Committee. During a review, parties will have the opportunity to address the conclusions reached in an investigation report, including the findings and any proposed sanctions.
3. **"Administrative Review Committee (ARC)"** means three university faculty, librarians, or staff members who are authorized to conduct an Administrative Review to determine the appropriate resolution of an alleged violation(s) of *The Student Code of Conduct*, and/or to impose sanctions or affect other remedies as appropriate. The Director of Community Standards authorizes and trains members of the Administrative Review Committee annually. Members may conduct reviews for any alleged violation of *The Student Code of Conduct*.
4. **"Administrative Review Committee (ARC) Advisor"** is a person designated by the Director of Community Standards to assist members of the Administrative Review Committee and answer procedural questions raised during Administrative Review Committee meetings.
5. **"Advisor"** is an individual who accompanies a respondent or a complainant to provide support and guidance during the Community Standards process. Advisors may include, but are not limited to, friends, parents, guardians, family members, university employees, or other support people. Advisors are not permitted to directly address the Administrative Review Committee, Case Resolution Coordinators, question witnesses, or otherwise actively participate in the process. Individuals alleged to be involved in the same incident may not serve as Advisors. Requests to reschedule meetings to accommodate an Advisor's availability are generally not granted.
6. **"Appellate body"** means any person or persons authorized by the Director of Community Standards, the Vice President for Student Life, or their designees to conduct a review of a decision reached by an Administrative Review Committee.
7. **"Bullying"** means the severe or repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal, or electronic expression, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at another individual that has the effect of: causing physical or emotional harm to the other student or damage to the other individual's property; placing the other individual in reasonable fear of personal harm or damage to personal property; creating a hostile environment at school for the other individual; infringing on the rights of other individuals in the University community or activities; materially and substantially altering the education process or the orderly operation of the University. If the bullying is directed at those associated, or perceived to be associated with a protected class may be considered a violation of [the Equal Opportunity, Nondiscrimination and Title IX Plan](#) . Such violations may be addressed under the Plan's Investigation and Resolution Procedures.
8. **"Business day"** means any day, Monday through Friday, from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM, when both the University and the Office of Community Standards are open.
9. **"Case Resolution Form"** means the final agreement regarding violations and/or sanctions between the Case Resolution Coordinator or the Administrative Review Committee and the respondent.
10. **"Case Resolution Coordinator"** means a university staff member who is authorized by the Director of Community Standards to determine the appropriate resolution of an alleged violation of *The Student Code of Conduct*, and/or to impose sanctions or affect other remedies as appropriate. A Case Resolution Coordinator has the ability to investigate alleged violations of *The Student Code of Conduct*, decline to pursue a referral; refer involved parties to mediation or other appropriate resources; establish alleged violations regarding a respondent; impose sanctions, execute a Case Resolution Form with a respondent; or conduct an investigation prior to an Administrative Review.
11. **"Community Standards file"** means the printed/written/electronic file which may include but is not limited to incident report(s), email and written correspondence, witness statements, and conduct history. Community Standards file records, including those resulting in a finding of "not responsible" for violations of *The Student Code of Conduct*, are maintained by the university for a period of at least seven years from the date that the student leaves the university. Records are subject to the protections and release provisions outlined by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974 as it may be amended from time-to-time.

12. **"Community Standards Hold"** means an administrative hold placed on a student's account or on a student organization's activities or privileges when the student or student organization representative does not respond to the request of a university official to attend an administrative conference, has not completed an assigned sanction, or, with respect to a student, has withdrawn from the university while a conduct matter is pending.
13. **"Community Standards Process"** means the process defined in *The Student Code of Conduct* to address behavioral concerns within the Bridgewater State University community involving students. Potential violations of the [Equal Opportunity, Nondiscrimination, and Title IX Plan](#)  are normally managed by the Office of Equal Opportunity under the procedures outlined in the EO Plan.
14. **"Complainant"** refers to any person who believes that they have been impacted by a student's misconduct. If the complainant is a Bridgewater State University student, that student will have the same rights under *The Student Code of Conduct* as are provided to the respondent, even if another member of the university community referred or reported the allegation itself.
15. **"Designee"** refers to an employee who is responsible for implementing the Community Standards process or administering the Community Standards system, in part or in whole, at the direction of the Vice President for Student Life, Director of Community Standards, or other university official.
16. **"Director of Community Standards"** refers to that person in the Division for Student Life who is responsible for the overall coordination of the university Community Standards system, including the development of policies, procedures, and education and training programs. The Director of Community Standards may serve as an Administrative Review Committee member, a Case Resolution Coordinator, and/or a member of an appellate body.
17. **"Discriminatory Harassment"** has the meaning set forth in the [Equal Opportunity, Nondiscrimination and Title IX Plan](#) .
18. **"Equal Opportunity, Diversity, and Affirmative Plan" or "EO Plan"** addresses issues of discrimination and harassment and includes the Policy Against Discrimination, Discriminatory Harassment and Retaliation and the [Title IX Sexual Harassment Policy](#).  Definitions related to sexual harassment, sexual assault, and harassment may be found in the EO Plan. Additional information regarding these policies and procedures may be found in the [Equal Opportunity, Nondiscrimination and Title IX Plan](#) .
19. **"May"** is used in the permissive sense.
20. **"Member of the university community"** includes any person who is a student, instructor, or university employee; any person who works directly or indirectly (e.g., a vendor), resides, or receives services on university premises or in connection with its programs or activities; and may include neighbors or visitors to university premises. A person's status in a particular situation shall be determined by the Director of Community Standards.
21. **"Policy"** is defined as any written policy, procedure, standard, regulation, rule, or Community Standards expectation adopted by the university, as may be amended, modified or replaced from time to time.
22. **"Preponderance of the Evidence"** is the standard of evidence used in determining whether or not the student violated *The Student Code of Conduct*. A preponderance of the evidence means it is more likely than not that the alleged violation occurred.
23. **"Reporting party"** means any person or student organization who submits an allegation that a student violated *The Student Code of Conduct*.
24. **"Respondent"** means a student or student organization alleged to have violated *The Student Code of Conduct*.
25. **"Shall," "Will," and "Must"** are used in the imperative sense.
26. **"Sanction"** means a requirement a respondent must abide by or complete when found responsible for violating *The Student Code of Conduct*. Failure to complete assigned sanctions will result in the application of a Community Standards hold on a student's account, which may impact a student's ability to register for courses or for university housing. Student organizations that fail to complete assigned sanctions will face additional charges under *The Student Code of Conduct* or any other applicable university policies.
27. **"Student"** means any person who has been admitted to, registered or enrolled in, or attends the university, any university course, or university conducted program. This includes any university-sponsored academic program which provides individuals with any access to the university, its programs, or facilities.
28. **"Student Organization"** means an association or group of persons, including, but not limited to, any student organization, team or club, that has complied with the formal requirements for university recognition and/or are recognized by the university.
29. **"Student Organization Representative"** means the president or designee representing the student organization in the Community Standards process.
30. **"University"** means Bridgewater State University.
31. **"University official"** includes any person authorized by the university to perform administrative, instructional, or professional duties.
32. **"University premises"** includes all land, buildings, facilities, and other property in the possession of or owned, used, or controlled by the university, either solely or in conjunction with another entity or person.
33. **"Witness"** means any person with knowledge pertaining to an alleged violation of *The Student Code of Conduct*.

Reviewed and Updated 12/2025 by Peter Wiernicki, Office of Community Standards