

Stanford

Office of Community Standards



The Fundamental Standard

[More About The Fundamental Standard](#) [See More](#) ▼

The Fundamental Standard has set the standard of conduct for students at Stanford since it was articulated in 1896.

It states: *Students at Stanford are expected to show both within and without the University such respect for order, morality, personal honor, and the rights of others as is demanded of good citizens. Failure to do this will be sufficient cause for removal from the University.*

Updated: September 16, 2024

More About The Fundamental Standard

The Fundamental Standard is an aspirational statement of Stanford's ideal community. Consistent with our mission of the creation and dissemination of knowledge, we aspire to an environment of openness, curiosity, and respect in which all members of our campus community can participate fully. Violations of the Fundamental Standard can be subject to disciplinary action. Examples of violations of the Fundamental Standard that have been subject to discipline include assault, theft, vandalism, and driving while intoxicated. However, as noted previously, under California's Leonard Law, students at Stanford cannot be disciplined for speech that is protected by the First Amendment. See Cal. Educ. Code § 94367. And the First Amendment protects a great deal of speech that does not align with the Fundamental Standard. In those instances, the Fundamental Standard provides moral guidance for our response. To paraphrase Justice Louis Brandeis' seminal concurrence in *Whitney v. California* (1927), the appropriate intervention to abhorrent speech "is more speech, not enforced silence." [↗](#)

Many programs on campus are designed to foster the vigorous yet constructive exchange of ideas and conversations where every student's voice is heard. We encourage you to take advantage of them.



Fundamental Standard (Up to May 1, 2023)

Access the previous iteration of The Fundamental Standard.

[Explore The Fundamental Standard \(Up to May 1, 2023\) Here](#)

[Return to Top >](#)

