

To report a code of conduct complaint against an employee of Students United, please contact Executive Director Thomas Anderson at [tanderson@studentsunited.org](mailto:tanderson@studentsunited.org). To report a complaint against anyone else, please contact our State Chair at [statechair@studentsunited.org](mailto:statechair@studentsunited.org).

## ARTICLE 10: STUDENTS UNITED CODE OF CONDUCT

Students United events, conferences, meetings, and activities are subject to an organization Conduct Code. All students involved with or attending Students United events, conferences, meetings, or activities are subject to the expectations of their campus conduct codes in addition to the Students United Conduct Code. Officers and Board members are subject to additional expectations in their Board Policies and Board Agreement.

Every student participating in Students United events, meetings, activities, and conferences must adhere to the Students United Code of Conduct:

It is the policy of Students United (or “the association”) that all students representing the association in any capacity (i.e. officers, board members, and delegates) uphold the highest standards of ethical, professional behavior. To that end, all students representing Students United shall dedicate themselves to carrying out the mission of the association and *must*:

- Act in such a manner as to uphold and enhance the honor, integrity, and dignity of Students United;
- Demonstrate high standards of personal integrity, honesty, and impartiality in all Students United-related activities in order to inspire confidence and trust in such activities;
- Treat with respect and consideration all persons, regardless of race, color, ethnicity, national origin, religion or creed, citizenship, disability, sex, gender/gender identity/gender expression, sexual orientation, marital and/or family status, age, public assistance status, membership or activity in local human rights commission, recipient of workers compensation, participation in union activity, pregnancy status, or veteran status.
- Practice safety, non-coercion, and affirmative consent; strive to cause no harm or distress onto persons or spaces nor compromise the physical and/or mental safety of a Students United participant
- Act in a diplomatic, responsible, and respectful manner at all Students United conferences, activities, processes and functions so as to ensure a positive experience for all attendees; and
- Practice good stewardship of Students United funds by avoiding activity that causes an unnecessary or frivolous cost to the association.

### Section 1: Reporting

Anyone may make a formal complaint about a conduct code violation. For clarity, it is recommended that the State Chair and Executive Director be the primary contact for conduct reports. If a person believes there has been a violation of the conduct code, they should take the following steps:

1. If the subject of the complaint is an employee, discuss the matter with the Executive Director who will follow the process in the Employee Handbook

2. If the subject of the complaint is the Executive Director, discuss the matter with the State Chair
3. All other complaints may be brought to either the Executive Director or the State Chair
4. If both the Executive Director and the State Chair are not available or the subject of the complaint, the matter should be brought to another board member

Students United will investigate and attempt to resolve these complaints promptly. If, for any reason, a person believes an investigation has not occurred within a reasonable time, the person should talk to the State Chair of Students United and/or the Executive Director of Students United.

Students United will make every effort to guarantee as much confidentiality and privacy as possible. In the event that a board member, officer, or employee is the subject of a code of conduct investigation, that individual will not be a part of the decision-making process and decision-makers will continue to make every effort to preserve confidentiality and privacy.

### **Section 2: Disciplinary Action and Power of Determination**

If a student involved with or attending Students United events, conferences, meetings, or activities fails to uphold any of the standards of conduct enumerated in the Students United Code of Conduct, they may be subject to immediate disciplinary action. Such disciplinary action may include:

- Exclusion or removal from Students United functions, activities, and processes,
- A conduct complaint to the students' campus,
- In the event that a member's substandard behavior leads to a financial cost to the association, it is the responsibility of the individual to compensate Students United for lost funds, and/or
- Any other disciplinary action deemed appropriate by the Students United Board of Directors.

Interpretation of the Students United Conduct Code and whether or not an individual violates the Students United Code of Conduct within Board Policies and Procedures is solely the determination of the Students United Board of Directors or an authorized committee thereof following a period of reasonable inquiry. In the event a Students United Board member is the subject of the code of conduct inquiry, the non-interested board members should authorize a committee of the board to conduct the inquiry and make a decision as to whether disciplinary action is appropriate. The Board of Directors will consider restorative justice in its handling of conduct matters. Restorative justice is defined as a discipline or justice whereby rehabilitation, learning, and reconciliation are prioritized in order to move towards growth and healing.

### **Section 3: Enforcement Procedure and Review Process**

When an individual fails to uphold the Students United Code of Conduct (in a manner that does not require immediate removal from an event or function) and the Students United Board of Directors chooses to implement disciplinary action, the following procedure shall occur:

1. The Students United Board of Directors shall issue a written notice to:
  - a. the subject of the code of conduct inquiry if contact information is available,
  - b. the Students United Executive Director, and
  - c. all Students United Officers.
2. The written notice issued by the Students United Board of Directors must contain:

- a. a clear explanation of the nature of the conduct violation,
  - b. a clear description of the disciplinary action to be implemented, and
  - c. a clearly defined time period for the disciplinary action (e.g. one specific event, one calendar year, all future Students United events and functions, etc.).
3. The subject of the code of conduct allegation will be given notice of the code of conduct allegation not fewer than fifteen (15) days prior to the imposition of any disciplinary action, unless the board determines that action requires immediate imposition to protect safety.

The Students United Board's decision regarding the imposition of disciplinary action is final.

#### **Section 4: Immediate Removal from an Event or Function**

If a participant in a Students United event or function engages in behavior of a particularly egregious or unlawful nature as a participant in a Students United event or function (e.g. assault, harassment, illicit drug use, public disturbance, damage to property, etc.), they are subject to immediate removal and/or exclusion from the event or function. In such a situation, the procedure outlined in Section 3 of this Article does not apply. The authority to immediately remove lies with the Executive Director, in consultation with the State Chair. In the absence of the Executive Director, authority lies with the State Chair, in consultation with other available officers. The Executive Director and/or State Chair should inform the Board of Directors of the decision when able.

#### **Section 5: Procedure Regarding Costs of Inquiry**

If and when the subject of the code of conduct inquiry is found to be responsible for compensating Students United for lost funds the following shall occur:

1. The Students United staff shall draft an invoice reflecting the charges,
2. The Students United staff shall send the invoice directly to the subject of the code of conduct inquiry,
3. The individual shall pay the amount in question in a timely manner.

#### **Section 6: Notice**

Students United students are effectively on notice of the contents of this document upon its posting on the Students United website and are bound by the contents herein upon the date of posting. A short, verbal presentation will also be given at the opening of Students United conferences and events in order to remind those in attendance about the standard of conduct to which they are bound.

#### **Section 7: Retaliation**

Students United shall not tolerate any retaliation or intimidation against anyone who makes a complaint. Any student who engages in retaliatory or intimidating behavior shall be subject to disciplinary proceedings pursuant to the Code of Conduct. Students United shall also file a written complaint with the college or university the student attends. Any employee of Students United who engages in retaliatory or intimidating behavior toward a student shall be subject to the disciplinary process outlined in the Students United employee handbook.

Students United will make every effort to guarantee confidentiality and privacy in conduct code situations.