

COVID-19 Protocols

COVID-19 and Student Code of Conduct Briefing Document



July 9, 2020

COVID-19 and Student Code of Conduct Briefing Document

The authority for Acadia University's Judicial Process derives from the power granted to the Board of Governors by the Province of Nova Scotia under the *University's Act of Incorporation* in 1891. These powers are exercised on behalf of the Board of Governors by the Executive Director, Student Services or designate.

Acadia University, through a formal MOU agreement with the Town of Wolfville and Acadia Students' Union, will develop and implement a Student Code of Conduct for September 2020. The Code addresses on-campus and off-campus issues through a judicial process. It establishes policies and programs that enhance student sensitivity to the surrounding community.

The Student Code of Conduct will be Acadia's formal judicial process to ensure that a positive and productive learning environment exists, an environment in which there is fair treatment of individuals, respect for diversity, and respect for University resources and the property of individuals.

Discipline must be considered as a tool, used in conjunction with guidance, rather than a threat. Primarily, discipline should be re-educative and preventative. If certain restrictions or punitive responses aid in the attainment of these goals, then they should be employed. Punishment should never be levied for its own sake. Educational disciplinarians attempt to find out why behaviour occurs. After determining motive, we explain the reason the regulation or rules exist and why the actions were inappropriate. We appeal to a sense of reason and responsibility.

Discipline is used to re-educate, to help a person understand that further infractions are unnecessary, not because a person is afraid of the punitive consequences but because of the realization that such actions are not acceptable in that community. This is the basis of the disciplinary function.

The arrival of COVID-19 presents unique circumstances that require specific actions by all community members to respond to the Province of Nova Scotia emergency declaration and public health directives aimed at protecting the health and safety of everyone.

There will be value in creating stated addendum requirements to the residence agreement and judicial process (*Student Code of Conduct*) to educate and identify the responsibility of individual students to be aware of and follow the directives as implemented by Acadia University and the Town of Wolfville.

The addendum will take the form of a *Community Wellness Commitment*.

Students living in residence will sign the *Community Wellness Commitment* during check-in to residence.

Students living off-campus will be asked to review and sign the document and to confirm their off-campus address of residence to aid in contact tracing, should it become necessary.

Community Wellness Commitment

Students on and off-campus will be asked to review the access to campus procedure daily and to take the necessary steps to protect others by respecting the directives based on the self-assessment

The Community Wellness checklist will include:

- 1) Be Symptom-Free
Anyone accessing campus must be without the symptoms of COVID-19, as identified by the Province of Nova Scotia. Students will conduct a daily questionnaire (before coming to campus or leaving their residence room)
- 2) Practice Appropriate Hygiene
- 3) Ensure Personal Physical Distancing (PPD)
- 4) Prepare for Proximity Work when PPD is not possible.
- 5) Wear a Non-Medical Mask (NMM)
- 6) Limit interactions on-campus and off-campus.
- 7) Respect and care for yourself, your peers, and your community.

The *Student Code of Conduct* will govern the handling of violations of procedures covered in this access to campus plan for students and additional provisions that will be developed during the University's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The *Student Code of Conduct* will include the behavioural expectations of students related to communicable disease responses, specifically noting COVID-19 and the associated and public health directives, and a breach of those expectations as being an example of an offence of not adhering to the University's Code.

Any alleged violations to this section of the *Code of Conduct* will be investigated and adjudicated with procedural fairness as described in the Code. Disregard for these guidelines that endanger the health and safety of the community is taken seriously and considered a major violation of the *Student Code of Conduct*. Sanctions associated with serious offences with a finding of 'responsible' may result in outcomes up to residence dismissal or University suspension. It is further noted that in addition to sanctions imposed under the *Student Code of Conduct*, incidents of behavioural breaches may be forwarded to the RCMP for possible charges under the *Nova Scotia Health Protection Act Order* and provincial state of emergency directives.

Students will be required to agree to the following pledge:

As a member of the Acadia community, it is my responsibility to help protect those around me by "flattening the curve." During this critical time, to preserve medical resources and help protect those who are more vulnerable, I pledge to:

- *Adhere to all University and Nova Scotia public health directives;*
- *Practice physical-distancing of at least 2 metres whenever possible.*
- *Wear a non-medical mask when physical distancing cannot be guaranteed.*
- *Monitor my health daily and report any symptoms immediately to the Acadia Occupational Health Nurse.*
- *Practice these requirements, even if I do not feel sick.*
- *Practice these requirements at all times, whether I am on-campus or off-campus and including my place of residence.*

I acknowledge that by failing to follow this pledge, I put not only myself, but also those around me at risk, and I will be subject to discipline under the non-academic judicial process.