

# Student Bill of Academic Rights and Responsibilities

*This bill was drafted by the Student Senate, the Vice President for Student Affairs, and members of the Faculty Senate. It was passed in the spring of 1992. It was then updated by the Student Body President, Vice President for Academic Affairs, and passed by the Student Senate in the Fall of 2017 and Faculty Senate in the Spring of 2018 for adoption in the Undergraduate Student Handbook (<http://www.northeastern.edu/osccr/code-of-student-conduct/>) for the 2018–2019 academic year.*

We, the students of Northeastern University, believe that a quality education is the paramount goal of all students. In order to fulfill this goal, the university recognizes certain rights and responsibilities, which follow below.<sup>1</sup> Northeastern University students recognize and accept that redress of complaints arising from these rights is limited to the procedures specified in “Student Academic Appeals Procedures”.<sup>2</sup>

## **Course-Related Rights**

### **Article 1**

Students have the right to instructors who attend classes on time.

### **Article 2**

Students have the right to receive grades and feedback in a timely manner, particularly in the case of sequentially related assignments. At least one summative assessment should be given and returned a week prior to the end of the withdrawal period. Students also have the right to view work they submit to satisfy course requirements after it is graded and receive their instructor’s rationale for grades received on said work.

### **Article 3**

Students have the right to adequate access to instructors. This includes instructors replying to communications from students in a timely manner, suggested to be within two business days, with the exception of during university recesses, as well as maintaining consistent office hours for in-person courses, occurring at the same time at least once a week. Instructors may change office hours by notifying students in a timely manner, suggested to be within two business days, barring extenuating circumstances.

### **Article 4**

Students have the right to receive a course outline, which includes a fair and explicit grading policy, at the beginning of each course. Changes to the course outline that result in a deadline, assignment, major exam, or similar course event being introduced to or moved earlier in the schedule shall be communicated to students in a timely manner, suggested to be at least 10 business days prior to the new deadline.

### **Article 5**

Students have the right to instructors who communicate the material pertaining to the course effectively in the English language except in the case of foreign language instruction.

### **Article 6**

Students have the right to participate in and have access to Student Government Association teacher/course evaluations.

### **Article 7**

Students have the right to have a list of all course materials that must be purchased. Possible substitutions for said course materials, (i.e., acceptable previous editions of textbooks, digital versions, library owned resources, etc.) should be made available to students at least a week prior to the start of the academic term.

### **Article 8**

Students have the right to alternative grading arrangements if they are unable to attend a graded activity that takes place outside the scheduled class time.

## **Rights to University Academic Services**

### **Article 9**

Students have the right to adequate access to effective academic services, including academic and co-op advising, as described in the student handbook and other university publications, provided by the university.

### **Article 10**

Students have the right<sup>3</sup> to an environment conducive to learning and to faculty who respect students’ academic freedom<sup>4</sup> in the classroom. When exercising academic freedom, students are expected to comply with all applicable university ethics, anti-harassment, and nondiscrimination policies.

**Article 11**

Students have the right to access university health resources provided by University Health and Counseling Services (<https://www.northeastern.edu/uhcs/>) (UHCS), and in accordance to Massachusetts State Law, to have access to a medical plan that they can purchase (Northeastern University Student Health Plan (<http://www.northeastern.edu/nushp/>)).

**Article 12**

Students have the right to access university resources provided by the university's Disability Resource Center in accordance with the Policy on Equal Opportunity ([https://www.northeastern.edu/policies/pdfs/Policy\\_on\\_Equal\\_Opportunity.pdf](https://www.northeastern.edu/policies/pdfs/Policy_on_Equal_Opportunity.pdf)). Students have the right to pursue informal and formal grievances through the procedures outlined by the Disability Resource Center (<https://drc.sites.northeastern.edu/>).

**Scheduling Rights**

**Article 13**

Students have the right to final exam schedules in accordance with established university policy, including non-conflicting final exam schedules.

**Article 14**

Students have the right to attend any course session held prior to the end of the add/drop period so long as permission from the instructor is obtained in advance and all duly registered students have proper access to seating and other course resources.

**Article 15**

Students will not be penalized for excused absences, with the understanding that students may need to make up for the academic commitment from which they were excused. Reasons for an excused absence include religious, medical issues, jury duty, bereavement, and military service. See this catalog (<http://catalog.northeastern.edu/undergraduate/academic-policies-procedures/attendance-requirements/>) and other applicable policies ([http://gonu.com/sports/2013/7/15/SASS\\_0715134535.aspx?path=sass](http://gonu.com/sports/2013/7/15/SASS_0715134535.aspx?path=sass)) for the full attendance and excusal policy.

**General Academic Rights**

**Article 16**

Students have the right to be informed, in a timely fashion, of proposed action to be taken against them.

**Article 17**

Students have the right to the redress of academic grievances through the processes provided by the university.

**Article 18**

Students have the right to university support and resources, such as the Office of Global Services (<https://www.northeastern.edu/ogs/>), with regard to their visa status.

**Article 19**

In accordance with the Northeastern University's Nondiscrimination Policy ([https://www.northeastern.edu/policies/pdfs/Policy\\_on\\_Equal\\_Opportunity.pdf](https://www.northeastern.edu/policies/pdfs/Policy_on_Equal_Opportunity.pdf)), students have the right to a learning environment free of discrimination or harassment, including as provided for in Northeastern University's Title IX Policy (<http://www.northeastern.edu/titleix/title-ix-policy-2/>).

**Article 20**

Northeastern University's policy on student produced intellectual property can be found under *Copyrightable Materials* in the *Undergraduate Student Handbook*.

**Article 21**

Students have the right of access to their academic and financial aid records and maintenance of the privacy of these records, as provided by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

**Student Responsibilities**

**Article 1**

Contribute to a climate of open inquiry and honesty in all aspects of the university's academic life. This includes reviewing, and becoming familiar with, the Academic Integrity Policy on the OSCCR website.

**Article 2**

Commit sufficient time and effort for study and for use of library, studio, laboratory, and computational facilities, as appropriate for each course.

**Article 3**

Contribute to the classroom/laboratory/studio learning environment through discussion and active participation.

**Article 4**

Acquire the necessary prerequisites for full participation in each academic course.

**Article 5**

Attend scheduled classes regularly and on time, and arrive to class prepared, having completed all the readings and other assignments.

**Article 6**

Seek out faculty and teaching assistants outside of class time, to obtain help with problems encountered in a given course.

**Article 7**

Respect the academic freedom<sup>4</sup> of each faculty member and student.

**Article 8**

Assist the university in its various self-evaluations (e.g., TRACE, surveys) by responding honestly and conscientiously.

**Article 9**

Maintain effective communication with the university by providing permanent and local address information to the university through a system designated by the university, and by reading university email on a frequent and consistent basis.

**Article 10**

Act as positive representatives and genuine ambassadors of the university when studying and working in domestic and international settings associated with Northeastern University.

**Article 11**

Complete an entry (including itinerary, accommodation information, and contact information) using 'My Travel Plans,' located via the Student Hub (<https://me.northeastern.edu>) or other system as required by the university, prior to all university-sponsored travel outside of Massachusetts, including but not limited to: Study Abroad, Dialogues of Civilization, Foreign Exchange Programs like BSIB, Alternative Spring Break, Engineers without Borders, Co-op Placements outside of Massachusetts, etc.

**Article 12**

Complete all required activities prior to attending classes for their entrance date (including alcohol education, violence prevention programming, required reading, etc.).

**Article 13**

Have in their possession at all times the officially approved and properly validated photo identification card.

Students who fail to comply with these responsibilities could lose certain student privileges as well as face possible disciplinary sanctions under the Code of Student Conduct.

1

The student rights, through their representatives in the Student Government Association (SGA), described in these sections arise from faculty and staff employment responsibilities and obligations to the university. Northeastern University students recognize and accept that it is the sole prerogative of the university to enforce these obligations and responsibilities and to determine whether and to what extent they are being carried out or violated in specific instances. Northeastern University students recognize and accept that their ability to effect redress of complaints arising from these rights is limited to the procedures specified in the current *Undergraduate Student Handbook*.

2

The articles shall be interpreted by the Office of the Provost in conjunction with the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs, and shall be monitored by the Student Government Association. Further, should any student discover that they have been subject to any violation of the principles stated herein, the student should follow the appropriate complaint resolution procedure in the Undergraduate Student Handbook (<http://www.northeastern.edu/osccr/code-of-student-conduct/>). The Student Government Association, if requested by the student, will monitor the progress of any student academic grievances.

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Because the university operates on a twelve-month calendar in an urban environment, many construction, remodeling, renovation, and repair projects must take place while the university is in session, and other potential distractions from the learning process arise from the surrounding urban environment on which it is dependent but over which it exerts little or no control. Thus, though the university is committed to maintaining an appropriate learning environment for its students, Northeastern University students recognize and accept, as part of their relationship with the university, that the conditions described above may cause occasional disturbances to that environment.

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For more on academic freedom, please refer to the AAUP's definition (<https://www.aaup.org/report/1940-statement-principles-academic-freedom-and-tenure/>).