

Student Handbook



I. Welcome

II. Important Information for All Students

III. Undergraduate Student Procedures and Policies

IV. Graduate Students

V. Services for Undergraduate and Graduate Students

VI. Student Rights and Responsibilities

VII. University Writing Standards

VIII. University Policies

IX. Directory of Information

Student Rights and Responsibilities

Preamble

Academic institutions exist for the transmission of knowledge, the pursuit of truth, the development of students, and the promotion of the general well being of society. Free inquiry and free expression are indispensable to the attainment of these goals. As members of this academic community, students are encouraged to develop the capacity for critical judgment and to engage in a sustained and independent search for truth.

I. Access

Montclair State is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action institution and does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, creed, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, handicap, or Vietnam-era veteran status in providing access to the University's benefits, services, and employment opportunities in compliance with relevant federal and state legislation.

The University is open to all students who are qualified according to its admission standards, within the limits of its funding and facilities.

II. Classroom

The professor in the classroom and in conference should encourage free discussion, inquiry, and expression. Student performance will be evaluated solely on an appropriate basis, not on opinions or conduct in matters unrelated to academic standards. Students shall be made aware of the standards by which they are to be evaluated and that procedures exist by which the standards are reviewed and evaluated. Faculty bear responsibility to inform students of their grading standards and procedures.

A. Protection of Freedom of Expression

Students are free to take exception, in a reasonable manner, to the data or views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion. They are, nonetheless, responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled. The instructor will judge the extent to which the student has met this requirement.

Discussion and expression of all views relevant to the subject matter are recognized as necessary to the educational process, but students have no right to restrict the freedom of professors to teach or of the right of other students to learn. If a student persists in disruptive behavior in class after the professor has explained the unacceptability of such conduct, the professor may dismiss the student from the class and may refer the matter to appropriate personnel for disciplinary proceedings.

B. Protection Against Improper Disclosure

Information about student views, beliefs, life styles, and political associations, which professors acquire in the course of their work as teachers, advisors, and counselors, is considered confidential. Protection of students against improper disclosure is a serious professional obligation and is mandated by the Federal Family Rights and Privacy Act of 1974.

III. Student Records

A. Permanent Educational Records

Montclair State has a carefully considered policy as to the information which should be a part of a student's permanent educational records and the conditions of access to each are set forth in an explicit policy statement.

Transcripts of academic records contain only information about academic status. Information from disciplinary or counseling files is not available to unauthorized persons on campus, or to any persons off campus without the express consent of the student involved except by court order or in cases where the safety of persons or property is involved. Provisions are also made for periodic routine destruction of non-current disciplinary records and counseling files. Administrative

staff and faculty member should respect confidential information about students, which they acquire in the course of their work. A policy statement pertaining to this matter may be obtained from the Office of the Vice President for Student Development and Campus Life.

B. Directory Information

Under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), Montclair State may provide information of a directory nature to those who request it without the consent of the student. However, students are entitled to know what is classified as directory information and have the right to request that it not be disclosed by contacting the Office of the Dean of Students within the first two weeks of each semester. See "Student Records Policy/Directory Information, pg. 6."

IV. Student Development & Campus Life

In Student Development and Campus Life, certain standards are maintained to preserve the freedom of students.

A. Freedom of Association

Students bring to the campus a variety of interests previously acquired and develop many new interests as members of the college community. They should be free to organize and join associations to promote their common interests.

1. Membership, policies, and actions of student organizations will be determined by vote of only those persons who hold bona fide student membership in the college.
2. Affiliation with an extramural organization will not itself disqualify a student organization from institutional recognition.
3. Campus advisors are required, but each organization is free to choose its own advisor. Campus advisors advise organizations according to each individual constitution. They do not have the authority to control the policies of such organizations.
4. Student organizations are required by the Student Government Association (SGA) to submit a statement of purpose, criteria for membership, rules of procedure, and a current list of officers to the President of the Student Government Association.
5. Campus organizations, including those affiliated with an extramural organization, shall have no policies or procedures, which violate university policy or applicable rules.

B. Demonstration/Outdoor Assembly Regulations

Montclair State University recognizes the rights of members of the University community to freedom of assembly and speech, and strongly believes in fostering discourse and the free exchange of ideas at the University. However, as a matter of law and University policy, these rights and interests are restricted, and must be exercised on University property in a manner consistent with the mission and operation of the University and the rights of other members of the University community.

To ensure that the business of the University is carried out without disruption, the institution maintains the right to designate the areas for expressions of opinion and to determine the time and manner in which the expression occurs. Nevertheless, members as well as non-members of the University community may not exceed the bounds of appropriate expression during the course of demonstrations, by interfering with the educational activities and business of the University or with the rights of others. It is therefore desirable to re-affirm the importance of appropriate time, place and manner restrictions on demonstrations. Accordingly, and in order to provide further consistency in the application of University policies to on-campus demonstrations, the Office of the Vice President for Student Development and Campus Life is issuing the following guidelines for demonstrations on University property.

The University shall routinely and consistently apply the provisions of the student code of conduct and other relevant laws, regulations, policies and procedures to on-campus demonstrations and assemblies of persons.

The University shall take steps through appropriate procedures to hold demonstrators and other individuals accountable for actions which violate applicable laws, regulations and University policies and procedures. Such improper actions include but are not limited to:

- Material disruption of or interference with instructional activities, other University business and campus events;
- Actual or threats of physical violence, other forms of harassment, or destruction of University, other public or private property;
- Interference with entry to or exit from University facilities and unimpeded movement by individuals; and
- Interference with the rights of other members of the University community to freedom of speech and assembly, and other rights.

Demonstrations and other assemblies are limited to appropriate public forums, which do not include, among other locations, faculty and administrative offices, classrooms and other instructional facilities. Such public forums are locations, which by tradition or policy are available for public assembly and speech, such as where students have traditionally gathered to debate issues. To the extent that a public forum exists within a University building, any demonstrations within that forum shall take place during the building's normal operating hours and within established guidelines for the facility.

Outdoor assemblies and any event requiring amplification are limited to areas not

adjacent to academic classroom facilities and unless specially directed to another location, will take place on the Student Center patio. Registered University organizations approved for flag raising ceremonies may hold events adjacent to the Student Center flag pole. In addition such assemblies will occur during the hours of the University free period, Wednesday from 2:30 to 5:00 PM. All other facilities and locations are strictly reserved for University sponsored events.

Where appropriate, the University will endeavor to maintain open lines of communication with demonstrators and other parties in order to provide opportunities for discussion of matters in dispute, provided that the individuals act in a manner consistent with University policy and the rights of others. However, as a general rule the University shall not negotiate with individuals who occupy any University facility, or with associated demonstrators, while any such occupation continues, and the University shall never negotiate within an occupied facility.

These guidelines are intended to support, not supplant, existing University policy. They apply to all members of the University community, including undergraduates, graduate students and employees, as well as to guests and visitors. The guidelines will be implemented as consistently as possible, recognizing that special circumstances may on rare occasions require limited and judicious deviation from the guidelines.

No student, or authorized visitor shall be subject to any limitation or penalty solely for the expression of his views or for having assembled with others for such purpose. Peaceful picketing and other orderly demonstrations in public areas of grounds and buildings will be permitted within the bounds of established guidelines. Those involved in picketing, public assemblies and/or demonstrations may not, however, engage in specific conduct in violation of the provisions of the preceding section.

Members as well as non-members of the Montclair State University must adhere to the following guidelines prior to an on-campus demonstration and/or open-air presentation or assembly:

- All parties must, on behalf of themselves and/or the organization they represent, obtain two documents from the Dean of Students office:
- Request for Demonstration/open presentation Form
- Demonstration/Open Presentation Policies and Procedures document
- The request form must be completed in its entirety, signed and submitted to the Associate Director of the Student Center, whose office is located in the Student Center room 400, at least 48 hours before the date and time of the proposed event. The form must include all required information including:
 - The requested date(s) and time(s) of the event.
 - The planned objective of the demonstration/presentation
 - The materials that will be used to conduct such an event
 - The party requesting authorization for the event must schedule an appointment with the Associate Director to discuss any requirements for the event and accompanying University procedures.
- When the request is approved, the requesting party will be notified and given written approval which must be present upon request from any University official.

[Click here for a demonstration request form \(.pdf\)](#)

C. Freedom of Inquiry and Expression

1. Students and student organizations are free to examine and to discuss all questions of interest to them, and to express opinions publicly and privately. They are also free to support causes by orderly means, which do not disrupt the regular and essential operations of Montclair State. It should be made clear to the academic and the larger community that in their public expressions or demonstrations, students or student organizations speak only for themselves.

2. Duly organized student groups are encouraged to invite and to hear any person of their own choosing. Routine procedures required by MSU before a guest speaker is invited to appear on campus are designed only to insure that there is orderly scheduling of facilities and adequate preparation for the event, that the occasion is conducted in a manner appropriate to an academic community, and does not infringe on the rights of others. Institutional control of campus facilities is not used as a device of censorship. It should be made clear to the academic and larger community that sponsorship of guest speakers does not necessarily imply approval or endorsement of the views expressed, either by the sponsoring group or the university.

D. Student Participation in Institutional Government

As constituents of the university community, students should be free, individually and collectively, to express their views on issues of institutional policy and on matters of general interest to the student body. The student body should have clearly defined processes to participate with the Administration in the formation and application of institutional policy affecting academic and student affairs. The role of the Student Government and both its general and specific responsibilities should be made explicit, and the actions of the Student Government within the areas of its jurisdiction should be reviewed only through orderly and prescribed procedures as delineated by the Board of Trustees of Montclair State University through the constitution of the Student Government Association. The role of the Student Government Association is to serve as the official student voice for students on matters of all university policy and concern.

E. Student Publications

Student publications and the student press are a valuable aid in establishing and maintaining an atmosphere of free and responsible discussion and of intellectual exploration on the campus. They are a means of bringing student concerns to the attention of the faculty and institutional authorities, and of formulating student opinions on various issues on the campus and in the world at large.

Montclair State provides editorial freedom and financial autonomy for the student publications to maintain their integrity of purpose as vehicles for free inquiry and free expression in an academic community. Institutional authorities, in consultation with students and faculty, have a responsibility to provide written clarification of the role of the student publications, the standards to be used in their evaluation, and the limitations on external control of the operation. At the same time, the editorial freedom of student editors and student managers entails corollary responsibilities to be governed by the canons of responsible journalism, such as the avoidance of libel, indecency, undocumented allegations, attacks on personal integrity, and the techniques of harassment and innuendo. The following provisions protect the editorial freedom of student publications.

1. The student press should be free of censorship and advance approval of copy, and its editors and managers should be free to develop their own editorial policies and news coverage.
2. Editors and managers of student publications should be protected from arbitrary suspension and removal because of student, faculty, administrative, or public disapproval of editorial policy or content. Only for proper and stated causes should editors and managers be subject to removal and then by orderly and prescribed procedures. The agency responsible for the appointment of editors and managers should be the agency responsible for their removal.
3. All student publications should explicitly state on the editorial page that the opinions therein expressed are not necessarily those of the university or student body.

V. Off-Campus Freedom of Students

A. Exercise of Rights of Citizenship

Students are both citizens and members of the university community. As citizens students enjoy the same freedoms of speech, peaceful assembly, and right of petition that other citizens enjoy and, as members of the university community, they are subject to the obligations, which accrue to them by virtue of this voluntary membership. Institutional powers shall not be employed to inhibit such intellectual and personal development of students as is often promoted by their exercise of the rights of citizenship off campus.

B. University's Interest

Students who violate the law may incur penalties prescribed by statutes and civil authorities. Montclair State's interest as an academic community may be involved by violation of law and may provide a basis for disciplinary action.

Students who violate the law may incur penalties prescribed by civil authorities, but institutional authority will not be used to merely duplicate the function of general laws. Only where the institution's interest as an academic community is distinct and clearly involved shall the special authority of the university be asserted.

VI. Student Rights Within the Instructional Context

In the interest of enhancing the quality of student life and of maintaining and improving excellent relationships between students and faculty, the Student Affairs Council of the Faculty Senate has adopted the following list of student rights within the instructional context:

1. During the first two weeks of classes students should receive a course outline describing all required assignments and evaluation procedures and clearly spelling out the attendance and make-up policies. If subsequent modification becomes necessary, changes should be made by the professor as soon as possible, but in no case after the final date for withdrawal from a course without academic penalty. (See also #7.)
2. Students may expect to receive (on a regular basis throughout the semester) a full course of instruction. Class periods, labs and studios should be held for the prescribed length of time.
3. Books and other materials ordered by faculty for purchase by students should be available. Faculty should consider cost factors along with pedagogical ones and take into account the amount of material that can reasonably be covered in a single semester.
4. Students should receive instruction from an appropriate and qualified instructor on a regular basis. In all cases of faculty absence, students should be notified as early as possible. It is recommended that instructors devise a way of communicating with their students if the absence will be more than one day.
5. Faculty members shall post and maintain three (3) scheduled office

hours per week at different hours and on each day corresponding to the faculty member's teaching schedule. The number of days on which office hours are maintained need not exceed three (3). Faculty members shall inform students of these hours and of their availability by appointment at other reasonable times.

6. Students may expect that the substance and scope of all courses conform generally to the course descriptions in the university catalog or other written documents concerning curriculum content. This is urgent when the course is part of a sequence or required as part of a major.

7. Faculty are obligated to provide either a mid-term or alternative evaluative procedure graded and returned at least several days before the last date for official withdrawal without academic penalty. So that students may know the basis of grading, the course syllabus should contain information regarding the methods and dates of such evaluation.

8. Students may expect assessments, written and oral, to be evaluated in writing within a reasonable period of time.

9. Final exams will be administered at the time and place specified in the **SCHEDULE OF COURSES BOOKLET** for the semester. Even if there is no final exam, the class is required to meet for a final evaluation.

10. Students have the right to expect just and unbiased evaluations of all assignments and exams and to be assigned a final grade by the administrative deadline as posted in the Academic Calendar.

11. Students have the right to be treated in the classroom and on campus in a dignified and respectful manner that is wholly free from discrimination based on race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, creed, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, handicap, or Vietnam-era veteran status.

12. Students may feel free to bring to the attention of the appropriate college personnel (e.g., the faculty member involved, Chairpersons, School Deans, Administrative Supervisors or University Ombudsperson) situations in which it is believed there are violations of any of these rights, following established college procedures.

VII. Student Right to Know

1. [Student Right-to-Know](#) - December 1, 1995 - Part V pp. 61775-88 (34 CFR Part 668.46). These regulations implement remaining provisions of the [Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act](#). Text of the Jeanne M. Clery Disclosure of Campus Security is available on the web at <http://www.montclair.edu/police/jeanneclery.html>

2. [Equity in Athletics](#) - November 29, 1995 - Part V pp. 61423-42 (34 CFR Part 668). These regulations implement the Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act, which requires the disclosure information on men and women's intercollegiate athletic programs

Montclair State University
Student Development and Campus Life
Montclair, New Jersey, 07043 USA - (973) 655-4000
[Webmaster](#) | [Search](#)