

# Graduate Student Handbook 2015–16

# Graduate Student Handbook Terms and Updates 2015–16

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By enrolling in graduate courses at Seattle Pacific University, you agree to comply with the expectations, policies and procedures in this Graduate Student Handbook, as amended from time to time. The University reserves the right to make changes of any nature to the expectations, policies, procedures, and other information in this handbook at its sole discretion, with or without prior notice. Furthermore, the handbook provisions are subject to interpretation by the University.

If you have any questions concerning current policies and practices, or if you would like a printed copy of the handbook, contact the [Office of Student Life](#).

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# Behavioral Expectations

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Seattle Pacific University has established a set of behavioral expectations for graduate students. Behaviors for which graduate students or graduate student organizations are subject to disciplinary action include, but are not limited to the following:

- Actions that constitute violations of municipal, state, or federal law. The University reserves the right to follow its normal conduct processes whenever a student is accused of a criminal act, regardless of the location of its occurrence and regardless of whether civil or criminal proceedings have been instituted against the student.
- Actions that interfere with the educational process or the administration of the University, including those that obstruct or disrupt the use of University premises, buildings, rooms or passages, or which incite a disturbance on or off campus.
- The possession, use, distribution, or sale of alcohol, marijuana, or illegal drugs on University property or as part of any SPU activities. The illicit use of prescription drugs on University property or as part of any SPU activities is also prohibited.
- Dishonesty such as cheating or plagiarism; knowingly furnishing false information; alteration or unauthorized use of University documents, records or property; or misuse of student identification.
- Participation in any actions that involve discrimination or harassment based on race, color, national origin, religion, disability, or gender.
- Any form of coercive or unwelcome sexual behavior, including sexual assault, rape, indecent liberties, or related actions.
- Activities that cause or threaten emotional, mental, or physical harm or suffering; that demean the dignity of any individual; or that interfere with any individual's academic process. Examples of such actions are verbal threats or abuse, harassment, intimidation, threatened or actual physical assault, or consistent disregard for the rights and welfare of any individual.
- Conduct or activities that are lewd, indecent, or obscene, whether demonstrative, visual, verbal, written, or electronic (see the [SPU User Policies](#)).
- Failure to comply with the directions of authorized University officials in the performance of their duties, including the failure to comply with the terms of disciplinary sanction. This also includes the failure to identify oneself when requested to do so.
- False reporting or warning of an impending fire, bombing, crime or other emergency situation, or tampering with safety equipment.
- Unauthorized possession of, or damage to, University property or services, or property belonging to others. Unauthorized presence in, or unauthorized use of or duplication of keys to, University premises or property.
- Possession, use, or display on University property of any firearms, weapons, fireworks, live ammunition, incendiary devices, explosives, flammable liquids, or other items that are potentially hazardous to members of the campus community.
- Activities that may cause damage, constitute a safety or health hazard, or interfere with the academic process. Such activities include, but are not limited to, entering or exiting buildings through the windows; throwing, projecting, or dropping items that may cause injury or damage; and pranks that create safety and health hazards for others and/or cause damage to University or personal property.

# Seattle Pacific University Nondiscrimination Policy and Complaint Procedures

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Seattle Pacific University holds that all persons are created in the image of God and possess intrinsic dignity and worth.

It is the policy of Seattle Pacific University not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability in its programs or activities, as required by applicable laws and regulations.

As a Christian educational institution affiliated with the Free Methodist Church of North America, Seattle Pacific University is permitted and reserves the right to prefer employees or prospective employees on the basis of religion.

If you have any questions regarding this policy, contact either of the following persons:

## **Vice President for Student Life**

Campus Location: Room 209, Student Union Building  
Seattle Pacific University  
3307 Third Avenue West, Suite 212  
Seattle, Washington 98119-1950  
206-281-2481

## **Director of Human Resources/Title IX Coordinator**

Campus Location: 330 West Nickerson Street  
Seattle Pacific University  
3307 Third Avenue West, Suite 302  
Seattle, Washington 98119-1957  
206-281-2809

If you believe you may have been discriminated against in violation of this policy, please immediately contact one of the individuals designated above. For complaints regarding discrimination, refer to the [University's Nondiscrimination Complaint Procedures](#) (located in the Undergraduate Student Handbook). If you have a question regarding the application of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and its implementing regulations, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs and activities, you may contact the University's Title IX Coordinator or the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights. For complaints regarding sexual harassment, sexual assault, or other sexual misconduct, refer to the University's [Sexual Misconduct Policy](#).

# Administrative Structure

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## Vice President for Student Life

The vice president for student life serves as a liaison between academic work under the provost and various student life programs. In addition to managing all the units that comprise the Office of Student Life (OSL), the vice president for student life (or designee) acts as ombudsperson to all students to assist in resolving problems in the matter of community standards and expectations, discipline issues, and appeals.

## Ombudsperson

Students may request the services of the University ombudsperson as a neutral party who can assist in resolving problems that arise with respect to academic and student life policies. The ombudsperson will help students understand procedures, including both their rights and responsibilities as students, and the rights and responsibilities of University officials. The ombudsperson role does not substitute for the University judicial and appeal channel, but may assist students in understanding and navigating processes. Students wishing the services of a University ombudsperson should contact the vice president for student life by calling 206-281-2481. While the vice president for student life is typically the University ombudsperson, a designee may be appointed in certain situations (e.g., if there is a potential conflict of interest).

To resolve problems related to enrollment services, such as admissions, financial aid, student accounts, or registration and records policies, students may contact the Office of the Vice President for Enrollment Management and Marketing by calling 206-281-2650. To appeal a decision to the vice president, a student must first complete the office or area process of appeal. This process is typically a written appeal to the department head. If the student is not satisfied that his or her interests were properly served by the area appeal process, an appeal may be directed to the vice president for enrollment management and marketing. The appeal should include all information that was submitted through the area appeal process.

## Disciplinary Appeals

Students have the opportunity for a self-initiated appeal of a disciplinary action. Appeals may be addressed in writing to the appropriate University official within 48 hours of receipt by the student of the written notice of disciplinary action. The University attempts to provide ample information about community structures, expectations, and practices to all members, especially to those who are new each year. If you would like more information about behavioral standards or the disciplinary process, contact the Office of the Vice President for Student Life.

## Other Appeals

All academic and service appeals begin with and are resolved by the graduate program coordinator and/or director who work directly with respective departments. If further assistance is desired, you may contact the academic dean of the school or college.

Depending on the situation, you may also wish to contact one or more of the organizations listed below to seek resolution of your concern (however, please note that in many cases you will be expected to first exhaust all internal University processes):

## Washington State Office of the Attorney General

1125 Washington Street Southeast  
P.O. Box 40100  
Olympia, Washington 98504-0100  
360-753-6200  
[atg.wa.gov](http://atg.wa.gov)

**Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities  
(NWCCU)**

8060 165th Avenue Northeast, Suite 100  
Redmond, Washington 98052  
425-558-4224 (Voice)  
425-376-0596 (Fax)

[nwccu.org](http://nwccu.org)

**Washington Student Achievement Council**

P.O. Box 43430  
Olympia, Washington 98504-3430  
360-753-7800

[info@wsac.wa.gov](mailto:info@wsac.wa.gov)

**Professional Educator Standards Board**

P.O. Box 47236  
Olympia, Washington 98504-7236  
360-725-6275

[PESB@k12.wa.us](mailto:PESB@k12.wa.us)

**Washington State Department of Health  
(Nursing Commission)**

HSQA Complaint Intake  
P.O. Box 47857  
Olympia, Washington 98504-7857  
360-236-4700

[HSQAComplaintIntake@doh.wa.gov](mailto:HSQAComplaintIntake@doh.wa.gov)

# Sexual Misconduct Policy

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Seattle Pacific University is committed to maintaining an environment free of sexual harassment, sexual assault, and other forms of sexual misconduct. The University has established a [Sexual Misconduct Policy](#) (located in the Undergraduate Student Handbook) that applies to both undergraduate and graduate students. This policy is intended to educate students and provide an equitable means of recourse for those who believe they have been a victim of sexual misconduct. Sexual misconduct is a violation of University policy and may also be illegal. The University will promptly investigate and pursue the resolution of any complaint of sexual misconduct. The University reserves the right to respond with whatever measures it deems appropriate to prevent sexual misconduct and preserve the safety and well-being of its students, faculty, staff, and visitors.

Please see the [Sexual Misconduct Policy](#) for definitions of terms, resources, and procedures. Complaints of sex-based discrimination that do not involve sexual misconduct as defined in the Sexual Misconduct Policy will be handled pursuant to the [Nondiscrimination Complaint Procedures](#). Additional information about the University's compliance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, which is a federal law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs and activities, can be found on the University's [Title IX website](#).



# Drug-Free Workplace and Drug-Free Schools and Communities

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SPU is subject to the requirements of the federal Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 and the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989. The University strongly supports the 1988 and 1989 acts and consistently ensures compliance with them. SPU annually distributes information regarding the restrictions and consequences of violations of each act. Any student who has not received copies of the statements may contact the Office of Student Life in the [Student Union Building \(SUB\)](#), second floor, or [Human Resources](#) at 330 West Nickerson.

The purpose of [SPU's Alcohol, Tobacco, and Drug Use Policy](#) is to support the educational mission of the University with standards of personal health, moral integrity, and social consciousness. The policy is also intended to provide guidelines for members of the University community who are sensitive to the varieties of Christian perspectives represented on campus, the Free Methodist Church, and the community at large.

For some, this represents an area of personal liberty, but for others it is a stumbling block. In keeping with our heritage, we expect undergraduate and graduate students of legal age who choose to consume alcohol off-campus, to do so responsibly and to refrain from drunkenness (intoxication) at all times, and to not involve themselves in situations where excessive consumption and/or irresponsible behavior is taking place.

Illegal, underage consumption and/or possession of alcohol will not be permitted either on or off campus. Students who host or in any way assist or promote a gathering (on or off campus) that includes alcohol given to underage persons, underage consumption of alcohol, illegal drug usage, or any drunkenness (intoxication) will be subject to the disciplinary process, up to and including dismissal. Those living at the location where a party is hosted may be held responsible as hosts regardless of who provides the alcohol.

The use of alcohol, tobacco, or illegal use/possession of drugs on campus or at any of SPU's activities will be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. A student who is found on campus, or at any university activity, to be exhibiting behaviors that indicate that she or he may be under the influence of alcohol or other drugs, can expect to be confronted, challenged, and disciplinary action may be taken.

If the abnormal behavior resulted from prescription drug use in compliance with a physician's instructions, then the policy may be waived. If the behavior is a result of drug abuse or alcohol use, the student will be subject to further disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal and referral for prosecution. If the behavior results in a conviction of a violation of criminal drug or alcohol laws, the disciplinary actions will be dictated by the Drug-Free Workplace regulations.

If a student is required to complete a drug treatment and rehabilitation program as part of the disciplinary action resulting from a violation of this policy, official records of the diagnosis or treatment will be kept for three years in the student's records. The file will be held in the strictest confidence and will be used only as evidence to governmental and granting agencies that the University did in fact take steps toward correcting the problem.

# On-Campus Services

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## Center for Career and Calling

Although the [Center for Career and Calling's \(CCC\)](#) primary mission is to serve undergraduate students, many online career resources are available that may be helpful to graduate students seeking positions. Visit both the "[students](#)" and "[alumni](#)" sections of its website.

## Disability Support Services

Staff in [Disability Support Services \(DSS\)](#) in SPU's [Center for Learning](#) coordinates services for all students with learning, psychological, medical, and physical disabilities to promote curricular and co-curricular program support and accommodations.

Students with disabilities who wish to receive services and accommodations should do the following:

- Provide the DSS program coordinator with current documentation prepared by a qualified professional in the relevant field. (For specific guidelines for each disability, check the DSS website or contact the DSS program coordinator at [dss@spu.edu](mailto:dss@spu.edu).)
- Meet with the DSS program coordinator to discuss particular needs and appropriate accommodations.
- For housing accommodations, students with disabilities should contact the DSS program coordinator by April 1 if they are returning students and want consideration during the Spring sign-up process, or by June 1 if they are new students applying for Autumn Quarter housing. Students applying for housing beginning Winter or Spring quarters should contact the coordinator at least six weeks before the start of the quarter.
- For information or to schedule an intake appointment, contact the DSS program coordinator at [dss@spu.edu](mailto:dss@spu.edu) or 206-281-2272.

## Student Counseling Center

[The Student Counseling Center \(SCC\)](#) provides SPU graduate students professional referrals to various community-based services, therapists, or organizations. Listed on the SCC website, many of the mental health professionals to whom we refer are committed to reducing their fees for all enrolled SPU students. SCC staff will work with graduate students to help them attain the most appropriate referrals for any mental health, couple, marital, or family related challenge.

# Requirements for F-1 International Students

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## International Student Services

SPU welcomes and encourages enrollment of F-1 international students. Special educational and social programs are designed to enhance a student's cross-cultural experiences. Counseling assistance is also provided for academic achievement, cultural adaptations, and financial and legal concerns.

[The coordinator for international student records](#) serves as liaison with U.S. Department of Citizenship and Immigration Services regarding international students' travel outside of the United States, permission to transfer, employment eligibility, or practical training options, and maintaining status before, during and after graduation.

If you are a new international student, whether a recent arrival to the United States or a transfer student from another educational institution, you are required to have an interview with the coordinator during your first week of attendance at Seattle Pacific University. Call 206-281-2031 for an interview appointment.

## Requirements for F-1 International Students

F-1 non-immigrant status carries responsibilities as well as privileges. Failure to comply with requirements is considered a violation of U.S. law that invalidates F-1 status and cancels privileges. Seattle Pacific is required by law to make regular reports about F-1 students' status to the U.S. government.

All international and visa-holding students and their dependents are required to carry health insurance while in attendance at SPU. This includes Summer Sessions and academic-year quarters in which the student may not be registered, or registered full-time (for non-F-1 students). Please see Health Insurance Plan for International Students for more information.

[The coordinator for international student records](#), in Student Academic Services, provides services to assist international students in complying with the terms of their visa status, applying for benefits, and attempting to correct status violations when necessary. However, the student's status is always considered his or her own responsibility, not that of SPU.

## To maintain good F-1 status, you must:

1. **Participate in an entry interview.** You must attend the required New International Student Orientation. If you are unable, for a valid reason, to attend this required orientation, it is your responsibility to contact the [coordinator for international student records](#) no later than the fifth day of your first quarter.
2. **Be a full-time student.** Complete a full-time course load (12 credits for undergraduate students; 6 credits for graduate students) during every academic quarter (Summer Sessions may be an exception) and maintain satisfactory academic progress. If it is not possible to be enrolled full time, a Request for Reduced Enrollment form must be obtained from the coordinator, signed by your academic advisor, and submitted to the coordinator no later than the first day of the quarter. Reduced enrollment will be approved only under exceptional circumstances defined by F-1 regulations. Following the 10th day of a quarter, F-1 students enrolled part time without DSO approval will be reported "out-of-status."
3. **Do not work off-campus without authorization.** All F-1 students (in good status) are authorized to work on-campus at SPU up to 20 hours per week during academic sessions and up to 40 hours per week during vacation periods. Any off-campus employment (any type of work for any type of compensation) must be approved by the coordinator and is only allowed within strict F-1 regulations.
4. **Report any change of name or address.** The U.S. government requires notification within 10 days of any

- SPU — using a Change of Directory Information form or the [Banner Information System](#) “Personal Directory Information/Directory Preferences” menu.
1. Obey the laws of the United States of America.
  2. Participate in an exit interview (in the event of departure): Schedule an appointment with the [coordinator](#) if you will be graduating or otherwise ending your studies at SPU for any reason.

## Chapels, Lectures, and Workshops

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Graduate students are encouraged to attend chapels and assemblies and to use these opportunities to hear outstanding leaders in religion, education, and other professions. For a schedule, call [University Ministries](#) at 206-281-2966 or visit the [online UM Calendar](#).

Commencement is a time-honored ceremony at Seattle Pacific that recognizes the scholarship, service, and Christian growth of graduating students. It is a celebratory service where students, faculty, staff, parents, relatives, and friends congratulate the graduates on their “new beginning.”

Master’s degree and doctoral degree students are recognized by the academic leadership for completion of their advanced degree and are hooded by their school dean and the graduate faculty. Degrees are awarded to graduates who have successfully completed the requirements to obtain their graduate diplomas.

# Graduate Commencement

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Commencement is a time-honored ceremony at Seattle Pacific that recognizes the scholarship, service, and Christian growth of graduating students. It is a celebratory service where students, faculty, staff, parents, relatives, and friends congratulate the graduates on their “new beginning.”

Master’s degree and doctoral degree students are recognized by the academic leadership for completion of their advanced degree and are hooded by their school dean and the graduate faculty. Degrees are awarded to graduates who have successfully completed the requirements to obtain their graduate diplomas.

# Motor Vehicles and Parking

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The Office of Safety and Security manages campus parking. SPU is located in a residential area with limited street parking. Campus parking is available to both residential and commuter students. Parking applications are available online to all registered students through the [Banner Information System](#). A quarterly fee is charged to use campus parking facilities. See below for additional information, and go to [spu.edu/security](http://spu.edu/security) for full information about parking on campus.

## Parking Assignments

Any on-campus resident is eligible to apply for a space in the general commuter parking areas, including the Dravus lot, which is located next to the Library. Level 2 of the Dravus Lot is designated as assigned residential and carpool parking. Levels 1, 3, 4 and 5 are designated for commuter students, faculty, and staff. Commuting students may also apply for a parking permit that allows them to park in any of the designated commuter parking lots. These spaces are available on a first-come, first-served basis. A quarterly fee is charged to the student's account when an assignment is made. Students who do not receive a parking space in a lot will be put on the waiting list for the lot they prefer.

Each lot has at its entry points a sign stating which decal designation is allowed to park within it. Vehicles of students who have received a residence hall lot assignment are designated "Resident" on their parking decals. For other students a "Commuter" designated decal will determine which parking lot may be used.

During evenings after 4 p.m., on weekends, school breaks, and during the summer, parking permits are not required. Parking is allowed in any of the available spaces that are not numbered or reserved, with the exception of the small administrative lot next to Demaray Hall.

## Parking Regulations

Anyone operating a motor vehicle on campus is required to be familiar with the University parking regulations. Review the parking policies and regulations from the Office of Safety and Security website.

## Vehicle Registration

Every motorized vehicle brought to campus, either for temporary or for yearlong use, must be registered with the Office of Safety and Security.

## Students

Students may register their vehicle by applying online via their Banner account, or in person at the [Office of Safety and Security](#).

## Visitors

Visitors may obtain daily guest parking permits at the Office of Safety and Security. A guest-parking permit allows a visitor to park in any commuter lot.

## Towing and Ticketing

Students parking in a space not assigned to them are subject to immediate towing or ticketing by Safety and Security patrols. Complaints by assigned owners of parking spaces should be directed to the Office of Safety and Security at 206-281-2922.

The Seattle Police Department tickets/tows all cars violating city regulations, including cars parked on restricted parking strips or too near driveways.

**Traffic Fines**

The owner of a vehicle brought to campus is accountable for the vehicle at all times, regardless of who is driving when a violation occurs. Traffic fines are automatically charged to a student's account. A schedule of fines can be found on the back side of the parking citation.

Should a vehicle owner wish to protest a traffic fine, a complete parking petition must be filed in the Office of Safety and Security within 10 days of the date and time the violation was cited. Petition forms are available in the Office of Safety and Security.

**Liability**

SPU does not assume liability or responsibility for motor vehicles parked on SPU property or adjacent streets, nor for the contents of these vehicles.