

GW CODE OF CONDUCT

PROTEST ACTIVITIES

[GW] is committed to the protection of free speech, the freedom of assembly, and the safeguarding of the right of lawful protest at the university, including virtual, online and digital settings. Therefore, student organizations and individual students shall have the right . . . [of] conducting orderly demonstrations . . ."

Statement on Student Rights and Responsibilities

This guide is intended to be a brief outline of key points for students and student organizations to consider regarding student conduct and engagement with protest activities, demonstrations, and other similar events. Every case is evaluated based on its specifics, so students are encouraged to reach out to Student Rights and Responsibilities and GWPD as they plan actions. This open communication will increase everyone's safety and promote informed decisions, including regarding civil disobedience.

Key policies for student protest engagement, summarized including examples:

Disorderly Conduct

(i) Verbally abusing university officials acting in performance of their duties

Example: Cursing at or close-proximity yelling at a university official. Chanting, in and of itself, is not necessarily a violation, depending upon the content and volume. Threatening or harassing in chants, along with volume, may create a violation where one would not have otherwise existed.

(iii) Disrupting, obstructing, or interfering with the activities of others

Example: Interrupting a speaker in a manner that makes the speaker's presentation inaccessible for the audience.

Community Disturbance

Making excessive noise either inside or outside a building

Example: Amplified sound or chanting that is sufficient to disrupt university events.

Interfering with University Events

Interfering with any normal university or university-sponsored events

Example: Blocking access to a facility so that it cannot reasonably be used for its intended purpose.

Non-compliance

Failure to comply with reasonable directions of university officials...acting in the performance of their duties.

Example: Failing to vacate a space or provide an ID after having been so directed.

Trespass

Entering or remaining on or in any part of any university premises without proper authorization.

Example: Entering a university facility where one is not generally permitted and does not have permission to be.

The Code of Student Conduct applies off-campus, thus students may be held accountable for policy violations that occur away from GW. For a more complete listing of applicable policies, please review the [Code of Student Conduct](#).

Consequences to Consider

Study abroad and other university privileges

Students found in violation of the Code of Student Conduct may lose privileges like study abroad, living on-campus, student organization involvement. These consequences are more typical for repeated violations, but can be implemented for serious first-time cases.

Financial aid

In general, unless a student is suspended or expelled, financial aid is not affected by student conduct outcomes. Suspension and expulsion are very rare outcomes, most typically applied for incidents involving physical violence or drug distribution or repeated violations. That said, private scholarships can set any designations they wish, so it may be wise to review your financial aid to determine if arrest or conduct violations could disrupt it.

