What’s the deal with…

FALSE IDENTIFICATION?

Justice Department officials call Identity Fraud “one of the fastest growing crimes in the United States.” And make no mistake, possession, manufacture, and distribution of fraudulent identification are all crimes under District of Columbia and federal law. Those offenses are also violations of University policy.

But what does that mean?

The vast majority of college students are underage - that is, they are not 21 years old and cannot legally purchase, possess, or consume alcohol. To get around the law, students sometimes purchase or make their own false IDs. But doing so can have serious consequences, including jail time. The University has a set of minimum expectations regarding student behavior that are encompassed in the “Code of Student Conduct,” which specifically prohibits “possession of any false, fraudulent, or otherwise illegal identification card or document” and the “manufacture, sale or distribution of local, state, or federal identification.”

How does that affect life at GW?

One of the greatest benefits to becoming a student at the George Washington University is the opportunity to live in Washington, D.C. But life in the District is often different than what many students are accustomed to. The Metropolitan Police Department works closely with other agencies, including the GWU Police Department, to enforce District and federal laws - all the laws. MPD officers routinely arrest students who possess a false identification card or use false identification to purchase/possess alcohol.

Foggy Bottom is in the heart of D.C., which means that in today’s climate of heightened security, any number of police organizations may stop and question suspicious persons - this includes GW students. The Secret Service, Park Police, FBI, and the Diplomatic Security Service have a presence near the GW campus, and they take fraudulent identification seriously.

What if I have a fake ID?

If you have a fake ID leave it at home or throw it out! There are several serious consequences under the law for possessing, distributing, or manufacturing false or fraudulent identification. In some instances, students are arrested. Subsequently, you may face a court process in addition to the disciplinary action taken by the University.

Additionally, there are serious ramifications under University policy. Students found to have a false ID may face disciplinary action by the University. The “Code of Student Conduct” lists a recommended minimum sanction of Disciplinary Probation for possession of false identification card, and Suspension or Expulsion for manufacturing or selling false IDs. Repeat violations for possession of a false ID may also lead to sanctions which include, but are not limited to, Loss of Housing, Suspension, or Expulsion.