

1. PURPOSE

The American University of Paris aims to provide a student-centered, transformative learning experience to its students. The University thus grants students the rights outlined in this policy, including the right to participate in student leadership. (Please see [AA013EN](#) – Freedom of Expression for the University's full policy on freedom of expression.)

2. WHO IS AFFECTED BY THIS POLICY

Undergraduate and Graduate students.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

I. The American University of Paris (AUP) Compact

The American University of Paris is an educational institution that exists for the transmission of knowledge, the pursuit of truth, and the development of its students as critical thinkers able to move across the cultural borders of the contemporary world with a sense of commitment to and responsibility for a world held in common.

The University promotes its educational goals and preserves the human rights of each of its members by supporting the following rights and safeguards for all of its students:

- A. Freedom of expression and freedom of inquiry for students and all members of the University community. At its core, a university is an environment of thoughtful and open inquiry. Through the exchange of ideas, we learn to withstand discomfort, sharpen our reasoning, and in some cases, change our minds. Free speech guards unpopular opinions against the enforcement of beliefs by a majority. See AA013EN – Freedom of Expression.
- B. Student right to participate in the shared governance of the University, including an opportunity to express concerns and affect change through the Student Government Association as well as student membership on appropriate committees and administrative bodies.
- C. Freedom from discrimination on the grounds of sex, race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity. These values are affirmed by French law and Article 10, which ban expressions that incite discrimination, propagate the idea of a superior race, and spread hatred against specific groups. (See also policy [HR014EN – Sexual & Moral Misconduct](#) and policy [BP023EN – Non-Discrimination](#).)
- D. The safety, welfare and property of all members of the University community, and the safety and property of the University itself. It is the responsibility of each member of the AUP community to support these standards of the AUP Compact.

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II. Rights on Campus

The University's campus in the 7th arrondissement of Paris brings together academic resources, offices, and public spaces in a unified, though distributed, architectural whole. While on this urban campus, students benefit from the following:

- A. **Representation by Student Government:** the Student Government Association (SGA) is an integral part of the University's model of shared governance. Each year a new student government, including an executive branch and

members of the student senate, is democratically elected by the student body. Graduate and undergraduate executives, the senate and SGA-mandated committees contribute actively to discussions about the community, including challenges and problems, and are free to propose projects and solutions directly to the faculty, administration and the Board of Trustees. The SGA is also responsible for allocating the University's student activities budget.

- B. **Access to student-led organizations:** official student-led organizations must first be approved by the Student Leadership Office; members are required to be currently registered students. Current students are allowed to start new organizations or to join already-established groups, and thus benefit from access to meeting rooms on campus, equipment available through the multimedia office, the use of student leadership spaces, the right to request funds through the student activities budget and other resources and support. Student groups that violate University policy may be disbanded or have certain rights listed here suspended. Students and student organizations may not sign Page 1 of 4 contracts in the name of the University and should refer to the Student Leadership Office for support with external vendors.
- C. **Right to assemble, promote causes and invite guest speakers:** the University's mission includes educating students to communicate effectively, to listen carefully and to think critically. As such, we recognize the right of protest, so long as it occurs in a spirit of thoughtful and open inquiry. Students are free to assemble on campus, voice opinions, distribute pamphlets and petitions, and invite guest speakers so long as their actions do not interfere with the normal processes of the University or infringe on the rights of others in accordance with French law and Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights. Students must comply with AUP's external speaker procedure as outlined below in this section. Posters displayed on the campus must first be approved by the Office of Student Leadership.
- D. **Right to free and autonomous student media organization:** The University's student-led media organizations are a co-curricular endeavors, providing hands-on educational experience for students interested in journalism, communication, social media and other fields. Student editors produce print, digital and video news and entertainment for the entire community. While student media is dependent on the Student Government Association for funding, the University provides sufficient editorial freedom for student publications to maintain their integrity as platforms of free inquiry and free expression.

Student editors are not required to submit advance copy to the administration for review and are free to challenge ideas about the campus, the University and the world at large. With this right, however, comes responsibility. Any student who contributes to student media at The American University of Paris is expected to adhere not only to the basic tenants of responsible journalism but also to the University's educational mission. This includes but is not limited to adequate research for all material before publication and properly quoted sources as well as avoidance of all forms of prejudice, libel, slander, undocumented allegations and attacks on personal integrity. All student publications are required to indicate on the proper editorial pages or in other appropriate formats that the opinions expressed are those of the publication and are not necessarily those of the University or the student body.

The Peacock Board represents the largest student-led media initiative at the University, providing an official voice to student editors. The board comprises a student editor, a deputy editor and a faculty advisor for each Peacock-mandated platform as well as a faculty advisor from the Global Communications Department and a staff advisor from the Office of Student Leadership. Student editors are appointed by a majority vote of the Board each semester. Faculty, staff and students collaborate on a weekly basis through the Peacock Board structure as well as via related student media classes. Student editors may be subject to suspension or removal from their positions by the Peacock Board if they do not adhere to the tenants of responsible journalism or if they are found in violation of the Code of Student Conduct.

III. Rights and Responsibilities off Campus and in Residential Living

All students studying at The American University of Paris, regardless of nationality, are bound by French legislation both on and off campus. Students are required to maintain proper legal resident status during their time as students in France. They are encouraged to explore the subtle and sometimes not so subtle differences between French culture and customs and other cultures and customs with which they might not be familiar. These differences are addressed at Orientation and throughout a student's studies at the University. Students should also familiarize themselves with all emergency and safety procedures relevant to the University campus as well as Paris, France and Europe. Full details are available in the AUP Student Handbook and online.

See [SS002EN – Residential Life](#).

IV. Right to Procedural Fairness in Disciplinary Cases

The University strives to protect the dignity, integrity and reputation of each and every student, while at the same time enforcing the Code of Student Conduct (see [SS008EN – Student Responsibilities](#)) and other University policies to maintain order, protect individuals and property and to fulfill our mission.

Dispute Procedure

- If students have complaints regarding the speech or actions of another student or member of staff, they may speak to Student Life or the Diversity Council.
- If students have complaints regarding the speech or actions of a professor, we encourage them to speak first to the professor. They may also speak to their academic advisor or to the department chair/program director. In addition, they may speak directly to Student Life staff or the Provost.
- At any point, students may feel free to seek guidance from Student Life staff.

Students accused of a breach of the Code of Student Conduct or of a violation of other University policies are guaranteed a disciplinary process free of excessive legalism and based on common sense. The Student Code of Conduct and details regarding possible sanctions, conduct board and the appeals process are detailed in SS008EN – Student Responsibilities. When students face sanctions that may include censure, probation, suspension, expulsion or eviction, they are guaranteed the following rights:

- Right to be informed of the charges brought against them within a reasonable timeframe
- Right to know prior to any hearing the names of any witnesses testifying against them;
- Right to know prior to any hearing the details of all accusations;
- Right to rebut any accusations and to produce witnesses on their own behalf; Right to choose one person to accompany them to any official proceedings or hearings;
- Right to appeal any decisions made by a conduct hearing officer or designated board;
- Right to maintain student status until all investigations are completed and a decision is reached by conduct hearing officers or designated board.

V. FERPA privacy rights

FERPA stands for The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act. It is the U.S. federal law that governs release and access to student educational records. The purpose of this law is to protect the rights of students and to ensure the privacy and accuracy of educational records. The act applies to all institutions that are recipients of federal aid administered by the U.S. Department of Education.

Students are protected by FERPA from the first day of classes at The American University of Paris and therefore have the following rights:

- The right to inspect and review academic records within 45 days after the University receives a request for access.
- The right to request an amendment to educational records if it is inaccurate or misleading.
- The right to consent to disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in academic records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.
- The right to file a complaint with the United States Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the University to comply with FERPA.

Parents' rights

Since all AUP students are “eligible students” under FERPA, a parent does not have free access to his or her child’s records—even if he or she is the financially responsible person. If the “grade release” record is set to “YES”, only parents who are listed as the financially responsible person will receive a grade summary and invoice every semester. However, they still must be authorized by their children to receive any supplementary information.

For more about FERPA, please see: <http://familypolicy.ed.gov/>

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Vice President for Student Life and Dean of Student Life & Community Standards are responsible for ensuring the smooth implementation of this policy.

5. DEFINITIONS

FERPA stands for The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act. It's the U.S. federal law that governs release and access to student educational records.

6. APPROVALS & HISTORY

Last review: June 2026

Next review: June 2028

7. ISSUING OFFICE AND CONTACT

Student Life Office

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Dean of Student Life & Community Standards