University for Peace

Declaration of UPEACE Student Rights and Responsibilities

Prepared by UPEACE students in September 2024

1. Definitions

1.1 Unless otherwise provided in this document or clearly defined by context, words are to be understood in their ordinary, customary sense.

1.2 "Student" means any person enrolled in an educational programme or individual class at the University for Peace. No distinction is made between students who pay their own tuition, those who fund their studies through third-party loans or scholarships, and those who receive financial assistance from the University for Peace.

1.3 "The University" means the University for Peace as established by United Nations General Assembly Resolution 33/55, including its headquarters in Costa Rica and any other campus location opened or operated under the substantial control of the University for Peace.

1.4 Where students are enrolled in a University for Peace programme administered by another university or offered on a campus under the substantial control of another organisation, the University for Peace will clearly specify the rights and responsibilities that apply to those students.

In all such cases, the University for Peace will make every effort to ensure that the rights listed below are treated as a minimum guarantee rather than an upper limit.

2. Student Rights

2.1 All students have the right to the opportunity to participate in and benefit from University for Peace programmes regardless of nationality, citizenship, ancestry, ethnicity, race, colour, creed, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, status as a parent or caregiver, pregnancy, disability, physical characteristics, medical condition (including cancer, genetic or immunological conditions and HIV/AIDS), economic circumstances, veteran status, detention or incarceration, or participation in a war.

2.2 Every student has the right to fair and reasonable treatment by other members of the University community.

2.3 Students have the right to regular, organised instruction consistent with the objectives of their programme and courses, recognising the trust the University places in its faculty and the risks and benefits this entails.

2.4 Students have the right to instruction from faculty qualified to teach effectively at the postgraduate level.

2.5 Students have the right to meet with their instructor for consultation or discussion of course material, or both.

2.5 Students have the right to timely information about their schedules, including coursework and additional course obligations. Where appropriate, they also have the right to discuss the scheduling of those additional obligations with the relevant members of their academic department.

2.6 Students have the right to have classes begin and end at the scheduled times. For classes lasting three hours or more, students are entitled to a reasonable break midway through the session.

2.7 Students have the right to a class schedule that corresponds to the number of credits assigned to the course. For this purpose, one class hour is 50 minutes and one course credit represents 15 class hours. These hours must never be reduced, although field trips and other events may increase the number of class hours.

2.8 Students have the right to access citation formats and materials on citation and plagiarism.

2.9 Students have the right to fair examination conditions regardless of whether they own a laptop. No student may be held to a different or lower standard of examination conditions simply because they do not own or have access to a laptop.

2.10 Students have the right to be assessed against the criteria set out in each course syllabus. Grades must be based solely on academic performance consistent with the course objectives and content. At the start of the course or in the syllabus, the instructor will identify the components that determine the grade, such as attendance, participation, essays, examinations, projects or presentations.

2.11 Students have the right to timely feedback and to have essays, tests and all other assessed submissions graded and returned within a reasonable time. For the purposes of this provision, three weeks is generally considered reasonable.

2.12 Students have the right to obtain or access electronically all readings and assignments a reasonable time before they are needed. Course materials will be available to students at least three working days before the start of any course.

2.13 Students have the right to reasonable confidentiality in their communications with faculty.

2.14 Students have the right to mentoring and academic guidance.

2.15 International students have the right to the University's full cooperation and assistance in applying for legal residence status, as distinct from tourist status, for the full duration of their enrolment and for any further period reasonably necessary to carry out required ancillary academic activities.

2.16 Senior University officials and authorities must be accessible and available to students:

- Departments and postgraduate programmes that wish to do so may include postgraduate programme representatives in decision-making, where appropriate.
- Where appropriate under shared governance guidelines, active campus committees may include student representatives with voting rights.

2.17 Students have the right to clearly defined and published formal grievance procedures at the departmental, institutional and campus-wide levels. These procedures must be appropriate to the nature of the case and proportionate to the severity of any potential disciplinary sanction. After a complaint has been filed, the student has the right to request a formal hearing that meets the following minimum standards of fairness:

- The opportunity, at the student's request, for a prompt and fair hearing at which the University bears the burden of proof and the student may present documents and witnesses and confront and question the University's witnesses. No inference may be drawn from the student's silence.
- A record of the hearing and a prompt written decision based on the preponderance of the evidence, including a written summary of the facts established.
- The opportunity to appeal the decision to the Rector's Office.

2.18 All students have the right to use the University's educational resources.

2.19 All students have the right to adequate indoor recreational space.

2.20 The University recognises that free inquiry and freedom of expression are essential to the aims of an academic community. Students, individually and collectively, have the right to freedom of expression, including the right to dissent, protest or raise reasoned objections to information and opinions presented in any course.

2.21 Financial support formally offered to and accepted by a student may be revoked only for serious cause after a hearing by an ad hoc Financial Assistance Committee. Students will be notified of and/or permitted to attend any hearing concerning their financial support.

2.22 Students have the right to timely and accurate information from the University about housing options.

3. Student Responsibilities

3.1 Each student is responsible for familiarising themselves with and complying with the UPEACE Student Handbook and all other applicable published University regulations and policies.

3.2 Each student is responsible for learning the content and developing the skills required for their courses.

3.3 Each student is responsible for acting honestly in every class. Students must not cheat on examinations, copy another student's work, plagiarise from secondary sources or other students, or engage in any other form of academic dishonesty.

3.4 Students are responsible for attending class, arriving on time and staying for the full session. They must notify the department coordinator and their instructors of prolonged absences due to illness or other permitted reasons. A student who knows they will be absent on a particular day must contact the instructor beforehand to obtain that day's assignments.

3.5 A student who misses a class is responsible for catching up by obtaining notes and handouts from classmates and submitting any outstanding assignments.

3.6 Students are responsible for arranging with the department head and/or their instructor any necessary adjustments to course requirements arising from individual needs, such as medical conditions or physical or learning disabilities. Students who require accommodations for a physical or learning disability must provide official documentation of their condition before accommodations are provided.

4. Student Life Committee

4.1 The Student Life Committee is the primary forum for dialogue and coordination among University units responsible for matters affecting student life.

4.2 The Committee consists of the Vice Rector, who serves as coordinator, the academic department heads, the Registrar's Office and the members of the UPEACE Student Council.

4.3 The Committee has the following responsibilities:

- Coordinate the work of the offices involved in student services.

- Coordinate academic administration matters that have not been resolved at the departmental level.
- Select the primary contact to manage and route communications between the Student Council, the Student Life Committee and other members of the University.
- Make recommendations to the Rector's Office on matters within the Committee's remit.
- Meet twice a month or as often as necessary to address the items on its agenda.

5. University for Peace Student Council

The Student Council is governed by the guidelines set out in the Rules for the Establishment and Operation of the Student Council of the University for Peace (UPEACE).

6. Student services

Transport

6.1 The University for Peace provides transport between the campus and Ciudad Colón in both directions, according to schedules issued during Orientation Week and updated throughout the year.

6.2 Current bus schedules and routes will be available at Reception and at the security post. Students are responsible for checking their official UPEACE email regularly for schedule changes.

6.3 Students must observe the published departure times. They are advised to arrive five minutes before the scheduled departure.

6.4 All buses will be identified by University for Peace logos. Students may use the UPEACE staff bus to San José only if:

- Their destination is outside the student bus route but on the established staff bus route.
- Seats are available.
- They notify the Head of Operations and General Services in advance.

6.5 Everyone using the service must observe the following rules:

- Only service animals are allowed on the buses, and they must be on a leash.
- Eating and drinking are prohibited on the bus.
- Alcohol, tobacco and drug use are prohibited on board.
- Avoid boarding the bus in soaking wet clothing or with mud or other debris on your clothing or shoes.

Cafeteria

6.6 A concessionaire operates the campus cafeteria. It is open during working hours, Monday to Friday, from 8:00 a.m. to 3:50 p.m.

6.7 The UPEACE cafeteria offers:

- Breakfast (served from 8:00 to 10:00 a.m.)
- Lunch (served from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.)

6.8 The cafeteria offers a daily menu from Monday to Friday. The menu may vary. Individual portions may be purchased at proportionate prices. Vegetarian and vegan options are also available. Students who would like a vegan meal must let the cafeteria staff know that morning.

6.9 Students must keep cafeteria utensils and dishes in the cafeteria.

6.10 For environmental reasons, students are encouraged to participate in the cafeteria's recycling programme.

6.11 Students who need a takeaway meal are encouraged to bring their own containers.