



CAMPUS SAFETY

Security Services

The role of security services on campus is to ensure the campus is safe and that the community feels secure. Security officers walk, bike, or drive around the campus in highly visible uniforms to ensure safety, respond to calls for assistance, and watch for any signs of suspicious activity.



Campus security are often trained in basic first aid and understand protocol for emergencies on campus including fires, earthquakes, etc. Often across campuses, there are phones or buttons that you can use to reach a member of the security team to help you walk across campus or escort you to your parked car at night.

It is important to know that campus security are not police officers therefore their roles are limited to the policies and descriptions set out by the university. Because campus security is limited in their scope of duty, you should contact the police if you have suffered a crime.

Campus security officers are there to help you. If you need direction, information, or simply need help getting somewhere on campus, campus security officers can assist you or direct you to the appropriate office.

Bullying and Exploitation in Peer Relationships

While you can certainly make friends at a post-secondary institution and should seek out every opportunity to do so, not everyone is so kind. Unfortunately, there are people who act with the intent to harm; whether physically, mentally or emotionally, and you should always be on the lookout for them.

Here are some ways bullying and exploitation can happen:

- Insults, threats and general degrading remarks. Even one instance of this, if brutal enough can damage a person's self esteem and discourage them from attending school and/or interacting socially with others; prolonged verbal abuse can lead to far more serious issues for the victim
- Physical abuse, ranging from acts of humiliation and irritation to outright violence. Like verbal abuse, the physical aspect of bullying can damage the self-esteem of a person, affect their academic and social lives and more seriously, leave them feeling scared, intimidated and powerless at the hands of the aggressor
- Relational abuse, where multiple people work together to exclude, ostracize and humiliate a single person. This can happen in person or over the social networks of the internet, where interactions between people are regularly taken out of context and are far more difficult to interpret. Given the number of people involved, this can be incredibly socially devastating for the victim
- Given that people on the spectrum have difficulty interpreting social situations and the messages others send to them, autistic students can be especially vulnerable to be exploited in this manner by others who are aware of their condition. If you feel as though you're being bullied or exploited, there's a number of ways to put an end to it.



Directly asking the person doing it to stop is possible, but risky and not always easy to do

Consider these methods:

- Talk to your family, first and foremost to let them know what's going on- they may be able to give you suggestions on how to handle the situation or contact whatever part of the administration is responsible for dealing with these matters to get it handled
- Speaking to a counsellor or disability services representative may be more convenient depending on your location and your family's understanding of your condition. They can let you know whether the behaviours you are encountering from others are abusive or exploitative, give you advice to help the situation and get the problem dealt with on an administrative leave
- Communicating with your professor about the problem is a straightforward way to address the issue; however they may not be able to give the same social guidance as a counsellor or parent might

Whichever you feel is the right method depends on your gut and your knowledge of self; something you should look into as soon as possible. However you choose to deal with it, don't be afraid to stand up for yourself!

Self-Regulation Skills

Being on the autism spectrum usually entails acting on the extremes in a number of different scenarios, and your emotional state is certainly one of them.

In fact, your emotions and mind state are the key pieces that affect all of your actions and behaviours, for better or worse. Therefore, it is crucial to learn about self-regulation so you can become aware of where you are mentally and emotionally at any particular moment, and, if you find you are not in a good place, act to correct it.

This is where the concept of self-regulation comes in. Self-regulation is defined as the ability to separate your emotional responses to a problem from the thinking you must use to solve it; put simply, it is the capacity to act rationally instead of irrationally.

At post-secondary institutions, students are held to the standards of young adults and are expected to act as such, so being able to contain yourself and act appropriately for a classroom setting is a crucial skill.

Dysregulation exists at two poles- **hypo-regulation** and **hyper-regulation**; in other words not being stimulated enough and being too stimulated. These states can come as a result of sleep and eating habits and a number of other factors. Not regulating yourself and acting disruptively and irrationally in academic and social settings has numerous negative repercussions, ranging from being removed from class to being shunned by your peers. Beyond post-secondary learning, dysregulation can affect you in even more negative ways for the rest of your life, from relationships to jobs, dieting and finances.



Knowing what dysregulation is and what causes it, here are some strategies to keep you regulated and balanced:

- Mindfulness exercises such as yoga, slow breathing and meditation. You can do these in your spare time outside of class (or in the case of slow breathing, in class as long as it's not disruptive) and if there are any mindfulness programs on or near campus, you should definitely look into those
- Getting exercise in-between classes and work periods, whether it be walking, biking, working out, being part of a campus sports club, etc.
- Setting out a diet/nutrition plan for yourself (a visual or written plan is best for this) and sticking to it to the best of your ability
- Appropriate forms of stimming (seeking stimulation). Not all forms of stimming are acceptable for academic and social settings, but things subtle as jiggling your foot or gripping your hands are okay as long as they aren't awkward and don't make noise
- There are countless ways you can regulate yourself that are freely listed on the internet. Based on your knowledge of self, find what strategies work for you, and when you feel dysregulated, apply these strategies where appropriate and use them as much as you can to not only regulate yourself but to stay regulated throughout the day

Online Security

Cyber security is an important part of colleges and universities given the number of online threats that they have endured and continue to endure. The risk of intellectual property theft, compromised payroll systems, password thefts, and ransomware attacks has risen over the years therefore colleges and universities have increased their online security to try to keep students, faculty, and staff's online information safe.

Because of the extra security measures, you will likely need to log in using your university password each time you access the university website or class pages. It may seem annoying but it is a necessary step in safety. As well, it is important that you refrain from sharing your passwords with anyone.

Your personal online safety is very important as well. If you have any questions or feel something isn't quite right with your college email account, reach out to the IT department by phone or email and discuss your concerns.

Social Media

Social media is a great way of connecting and communicating with other people who share the same interests as you do. It can also be a good way to stay in touch with fellow students in a class especially when you are working on projects together.

Most colleges and universities will have a social media policy to ensure the safety of everyone on their campuses. For example, if a post shares sensitive personal or confidential



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information about another person, or if a post incites criminal action against a person or group of people then the college or university will report it to the proper authorities.

Another thing to consider when participating in social media communications is how this will reflect on your reputation in the future when you are seeking employment.

Any negative post that you make on social media could have negative repercussions in the future if a company has occasion to see it. This includes the words that you say as well as the pictures that you post so consider your actions when sharing information on your social media platforms.

Campus Codes of Expectations

Post-secondary institutions have specific codes of conduct that students are expected to follow. This applies to both the social realm (e.g., proper standards of behaviour on campus) and the academic realm (e.g., how to avoid plagiarizing).

Plagiarism is defined as both intentional and unintentional copying of someone else's work. There are a number of ways you can engage in plagiarism and there are numerous consequences that can come as a result.

Some forms of plagiarism include:

- Using exact quotes without quotation marks or a citation
- Using many of the words of another document as a semi-direct quote
- Not crediting your source, even when paraphrasing a quote
- Allowing another student to copy your work

Plagiarism can have very serious consequences including:

- Receiving zero on the respective assignment
- Receiving a failing grade in the course
- Suspension or expulsion from the institution
- Having your plagiarism incident noted on your student transcript
- Having your degree retroactively revoked if charges of plagiarism are proven
- Having to take plagiarism training as an alternative to punishment; this can occur when plagiarism is done unintentionally

Professors have access to advanced software that can detect plagiarism, even if you are paraphrasing a sentence instead of quoting it directly. Post-secondary institutions usually instruct their staff to report any incidents of plagiarism so that a record of these offences can be kept.

If you plagiarize and are caught, it can be difficult for you to obtain a degree at that school or admittance at another institution in the future. The best way you can avoid plagiarism is simple; cite all your sources and use your own words instead of direct (uncited) quotes



throughout your work. Citation generators like OWL Purdue can help you quickly create proper references in the format required for the assignment.

What professors are looking for in their students is someone who, instead of copying what they read word-for-word can absorb information and put it into their own words and thoughts. Keep this in mind as you write your assignments.

Student codes of conduct also apply to social expectations. This area may be a more difficult area to navigate but includes avoiding discrimination or disrespect towards anyone based on part of their identity (gender, culture, ethnicity, etc.).

It is also important to remain calm and well regulated in any disagreement. Signs of agitation or anger may be perceived as threatening behaviour, which would violate the student code of conduct. Finally, there are usually strict regulations in place to prevent sexual harassment and assault.

Consent is crucial

It is best to obtain permission before entering someone's personal space, even if not for sexual contact (e.g., giving someone a hug or a high-five). This may seem silly, and admittedly neurotypical people rarely seek explicit consent for things like high-fives, but they are often better at reading the context and knowing when it is welcome.

Student Conduct – Social

Understanding and following social expectations and the student code of conduct can be difficult for students on the spectrum for a number of reasons including:

- Not fully understanding the student code of conduct
- Having difficulty with emotional self-regulation of emotions and communicating their needs to other people
- Understanding what is meant by consent and asking for consent

Students who are on the spectrum may be prone to experiencing autistic meltdowns and/or shutdowns that can make the process of adjudicating the codes of social expectations that exist in post-secondary school difficult to navigate.

Harassment and Stalking

Be cautious when seeking out social contact with people if it might be unwelcome. Sometimes people are non-confrontational and will not explicitly say they feel uncomfortable and/or threatened. But if you are trying to be friends with someone and they seem to be trying to avoid you, they may be interpreting your behaviour as harassment. The consequences for harassment or stalking can be serious, including expulsion.

Physical and Sexual Contact

Just because a person does not object does not mean that they are consenting to physical or sexual contact. Consent requires a positive yes. Also, be aware of reporting requirements: if you were assaulted, some staff on campus may not be able to discuss your experience confidentially and may be required to report anything you tell them.



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Unfortunately, disabled students may face some discrimination in these processes, whether or not people intend this.

- For example, autistic people's unusual social behaviour can sometimes be perceived as threatening behaviour or sexual harassment even when the autistic person intended nothing of the kind. People can jump towards the most negative interpretation of another person's unusual behaviour
- Autistic and disabled people can also face barriers when we are victims. For example, hate speech against disabled people is generally taken less seriously than hate speech against other groups (e.g., ethnic groups)
- Sufficiently serious social misconduct could also fall under criminal law
- In addition, students and the people who work with them have to know what to do and say to help students set clear boundaries and helping them know when and how to seek help if it is needed

