

# **Expectations, Rights, and Responsibilities: The Widener Compact**

Widener University is a corporation, chartered by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the State of Delaware, with authority vested in its Board of Trustees. Appropriate authority, then, is specifically delegated by the board to the president of Widener University, and through the president to other members of the administration and faculty and to individuals and groups throughout the institution. The following policies and procedures articulate specific rights or privileges the university grants students and the expectations it has for them.

The Office of University Life will handle reports of violations of the Widener Compact directly by settlement or by referral to the appropriate hearing boards or administrator. At the discretion of the dean of University Life, parents of students will be notified of disciplinary action or potential problems. Officers and faculty advisors should note that the Office of University Life may withdraw university recognition from student groups or organizations for just cause.

## **A. The Right and Freedom to Learn**

Widener University is a comprehensive teaching institution. As members of our academic community, our students are encouraged to develop the capacity for critical judgment and to engage in sustained and independent study. Free inquiry and free expression in an environment of individual and group responsibility are essential to any community of scholars. The following guidelines have been developed to preserve and protect that community.

### **1. IN THE CLASSROOM**

- a) Students are responsible for thoroughly learning the content of any course of study, but they should be free to take reasonable exception to the data or items offered, and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion. Therefore, students should be evaluated by their professors solely on the basis of their academic performance.
- b) Widener University is prepared to protect a student through orderly procedures against prejudiced or capricious academic evaluation by a faculty member.
- c) Protection against improper disclosure of information concerning a student is a serious professional obligation of faculty members and administrative staff that must be balanced with their other obligations to the individual student, the university, and society.

### **2. OUT OF THE CLASSROOM**

- a) Campus organizations, including those affiliated with an extramural organization, must be open to all students without respect to sex, handicap, disability, race, age, color, religion, national or ethnic origin, marital status, or sexual or affectional preference.
- b) Students and student organizations of Widener are free to examine and discuss any issue and to express opinions publicly or privately, and are free to support causes by any orderly means that do not disrupt the regular and essential operation of the university. The participation by any student in any disruption or interference with the orderly programs, functions, or conduct of university activities of any kind is a serious offense that may involve suspension or expulsion.