

■ OTIS  
■ COLLEGE  
■ OF  
ART  
AND  
DESIGN



# 2024 Otis College Student Handbook

# President's and Provost's Welcome

We are pleased to welcome you to Otis College of Art and Design. Otis embraces both foundational skills and emerging technologies, always keeping an eye on the future, especially your future.

Our academic programs prepare Otis College graduates for careers in the creative economy. Your creative voice is part of what brought you to Otis College, and it will gain even more momentum as you connect with and find inspiration from other students and from our accomplished faculty. Otis College programs are rigorous, and the standards are high. We know you will be challenged as a thinker, a maker, and a professional, but you will also be supported.

Otis College is one of the most diverse art and design colleges in the country, with our student demographics representing many geographies, races, ethnicities, socioeconomic backgrounds, sexual orientations, gender expressions, and religious and spiritual identities. Varied perspectives represent the world we live in, and Otis is committed to fostering a community that is multi-faceted and inclusive, while also approaching our work with students through a lens of equity.

As you begin this academic year, be open to the many possibilities that lie in front of you. Get to know our faculty and staff in ways that further support your student experience. Be curious and ask questions, and most importantly, take creative risks and find your passion. You join a distinguished group who came before you who have proven that artists and designers can change the world.

Welcome to Otis College of Art and Design. We're so glad you're here during this extraordinary year.



**Charles Hirschhorn**  
President



**Colette Veasy-Cullors**  
Provost

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# Otis College Experience

Otis College of Art and Design educates a diverse community of students to become highly skilled, well-informed, and responsible professionals—empowering them to shape the world.

## About Otis College

Otis College of Art and Design was founded in 1918, when General Harrison Gray Otis, publisher of the Los Angeles Times, bequeathed his MacArthur Park property to the City of Los Angeles for “the advancement of the arts.” Originally named Otis Art Institute, the College became affiliated with New York’s Parsons School of Design in 1978 and was nicknamed Otis-Parsons. In 1991, it became an independent institution and was soon renamed Otis College of Art and Design. The College remained in its historic Westlake home until 1997, when the main campus was moved to L.A.’s Westside, just north of the Los Angeles International Airport and a few miles from the beach. Satellite locations were established in downtown Los Angeles and the nearby beach community of El Segundo.

Today, Otis College is one of the world’s foremost professional schools of art and design, a recognized leader in academic excellence, learning technologies, community engagement, and professional preparation. The College’s reputation attracts students from 40 states and 28 countries, making it one of the most diverse private art colleges in the U.S. The College’s diversity is one of Otis’ great strengths; it prepares students to imagine what lies ahead and benefits employers who know the value of creativity. The College offers an interdisciplinary education for over 1,300 full-time students, awarding Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) degrees in Animation, Communication Arts, Digital Media, Fashion Design, Fine Arts, Game and Entertainment Design, Graphic Design, Illustration, Product Design, and Toy Design; and Master of Fine Arts (MFA) degrees in Fine Arts and Graphic Design. Extension offers certificate programs as well as personal and professional development courses.

Otis College has trained generations of artists who have been in the vanguard of cultural and entrepreneurial life. The College’s alumni are well represented at leading museums and prestigious collecting institutions including the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Museum of Modern Art, and The Guggenheim Museum in New York; the Art Institute of Chicago; the Museum of Contemporary Art Los Angeles; the Centre Pompidou in Paris; and many others. Otis-educated designers shape the visual world, from the products people use to the built environments they live in, and from the clothes people wear to the toys children play with. Otis College alumni are cultural leaders working around the world in companies like Mattel, Sony Pictures, Nike, Gap, Pixar, and Disney. Imagine the Oscar ceremonies without its golden statuette, The Sound of Music without its costumes, The Lord of the Rings without its visual effects, Avatar without its trademark blue alien skin, or the Getty without its famed garden, and you will have a sense of the world without Otis alumni. Since 1918, Otis graduates have made unique, positive, and lasting marks on the world.

## Accreditation

Otis College of Art and Design, a private, nonprofit institution of higher learning, is accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), 985 Atlantic Avenue, Suite 100, Alameda, CA 94501. (510) 748-9001, and the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD). Otis College is a member of the Association of Independent Colleges of Art and Design (AICAD). Additionally, the Student Health and Wellness Center at

Otis College is fully accredited by the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care (AAAHC), providing the highest level of quality care within a college health center.

## **Campus**

Otis College is located in Los Angeles, a magnet for artists, dreamers, and innovators from around the world. The region's sunny climate, frontier history, and open landscape encourage new ideas, diversity, and creativity. The five-acre Elaine and Bram Goldsmith Campus on the Westside of Los Angeles houses Otis College's undergraduate programs and graduate programs, along with the Millard Sheets Library, and state-of-the-art labs and shops. The Goldsmith Campus is anchored by Ahmanson Hall— the converted 1963 futurist IBM Aerospace building, famous for its computer punch card window design—and the neomodernist Galef Center for Fine Arts.

## **Enrollment Retention and Graduation Rates**

The most recent six-year graduation rate, based on first-time, full-time students who entered in Fall 2017 and completed their degree within six years, is 61%. Visit <https://www.otis.edu/student-outcomes/retention-graduation-rates> for more information about retention and graduation rates.

## **Helen Bolsky Gallery**

The Bolsky Gallery is dedicated to showing student work from the undergraduate and graduate Fine Arts programs in the Fall and Spring semesters.

## **Millard Sheets Library**

The Millard Sheets Library provides support for all academic disciplines at Otis College. The Library contains over 35,000 volumes and 250,000 electronic books focused on fine arts, fashion, architecture, design, photography, film, art history, and critical studies. Subscriptions to more than 100 periodicals are kept current, and back issues of influential magazines and journals are available in bound volumes. The Library also subscribes to several online bibliographic and full-text databases. The Library has more than 45,000 images in a Digital Image Database (OtisDID), 2,400 artists' books, a materials collection, and 3,000 DVDs.

# **Equal Opportunity Policy**

## **Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination Policy**

Otis College of Art and Design is an equal opportunity employer and educator, firmly committed to providing an environment in which people respect the rights of others to live, work, and learn in peace and dignity, and to have equal opportunity to realize their full potential as individuals and members of society. Otis College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religious creed, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions), sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, family care status, veteran status, age, disability, medical condition, national or ethnic origin, or any other protected category under state or federal law in the administration of its student admissions, employment, access to programs, or administration of educational policies. The College prohibits harassment, discrimination and/or retaliation based on the perception that anyone has any of these characteristics or is associated with a person who has or is perceived as having any of these characteristics.

Otis College will make reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with known disabilities unless doing so would result in an undue hardship or fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program, or activity.

This prohibition against discrimination, harassment and/or retaliation includes engaging in behavior that may:

- Threaten the physical safety of any member of the community;
- Create an educational environment hostile to any member;
- Discriminate against another person or persons; or
- Inflict physical, emotional, or mental injury to, or provoke a violent response from, a reasonable person.

Students with questions regarding this policy or believed instances of discrimination or harassment on the basis of these criteria should be brought to any of the following individuals: Dean of Student Affairs or designee, Title IX Coordinator, or file a formal student grievance at [www.otis.edu/complaint-procedure](http://www.otis.edu/complaint-procedure). The College will not retaliate against anyone for filing a complaint made in good faith and will not knowingly permit retaliation by management, faculty, staff, or students.

## **Otis's Ten Points: Standing Up For Equity**

1. We do not tolerate racism or any other form of violence or discrimination from anyone.
2. We expect all Otis community members to work toward dismantling systems of oppression.
3. We recognize the College's historical struggles around equity and the ways those reflect struggles in U.S. culture and beyond.
4. We recognize diversity as a reality, a responsibility, and a resource.
5. We commit to treating every person's identity with dignity and respect.
6. We commit to practicing institutional responsibility to redress unjust histories.
7. We commit to an ongoing systemic and structural approach in correcting inequities: this work is collective, not individual.
8. We commit to hold ourselves and one another accountable to our collective effort to create an inclusive campus invigorated by difference.
9. We commit to honesty, vulnerability, and openness as we dialogue across differences.
10. We commit to an intersectional and justice-oriented approach.

Review the full DEIB Statement at [www.otis.edu/dei-statement](http://www.otis.edu/dei-statement)

## **Academic Freedom Statement**

The College is committed to creating an atmosphere of freedom for faculty and students to pursue and advance truth. Accordingly, the Executive Committee of the Otis College Board of Trustees has affirmed the general principles of academic freedom in teaching and research expressed in the 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP).

## **Educational Philosophy**

An Otis College education is both rigorous and rewarding. Students are welcomed into a warm, collegial community that supports and promotes their development as artists and designers. Through curricular and co-curricular development, students are empowered to live a fulfilling life at Otis College and beyond. The College inspires students to become lifelong learners, to sustain lifelong friendships, and to change the world through their lives as artists and designers.



# Academic Life

## Undergraduate Study

Otis College's interdisciplinary curriculum combines longtime strengths in fine arts and design with new technologies and emerging disciplines. For undergraduates, the first year of study is known as Foundation Year. In studio courses, Foundation students learn fundamental, transferable skills in the visual arts that allow them to become adept, well-informed makers; in Liberal and Sciences courses, they enhance their ability to think critically and construct meaning using the formal elements of art and design. At the end of the first year, having developed both a creative vocabulary and a grounding in the liberal arts, students select one of eight studio majors. Several majors have areas of emphasis from which students may choose. The major allows students to delve deeply into their chosen art and design field, advancing their work and professional preparation through a careful sequence of courses and educational experiences.

### Majors & Area of Emphasis

- Animation
- Fashion Design
- Fine Arts
  - Painting
  - Photography
  - Sculpture/New Genres
- Graphic Design
- Game and Entertainment Design
- Illustration
- Product Design
- Toy Design

### Minors

Eligible students in select majors may choose to extend and complement their study by pursuing an academic minor—a defined course sequence that explores a specific theme or topic:

- Art and Design Education
- Art History
- Concept Art
- Contemporary Clay
- Creative Writing
- Digital Media
- Entrepreneurship
- Graphic Design
- Illustration
- Motion Design
- Painting
- Photography
- Product Design
- Sculpture/New Genres
- Sustainability

Throughout the four years, students' programs of study are enriched by Liberal Arts and Sciences courses, which emphasize critical thinking in writing, visual literacy, the sciences, and art history, and Creative Action courses, through which students from different majors work in teams to solve design problems posed by a community partner. Each student meets approximately once a semester with an Academic Mentor, whose role is to foster student reflection about individual educational and career path issues. Students also have opportunities to study at other institutions or abroad, either through short-term



faculty-led trips or on exchange programs. The undergraduate experience culminates in a senior Capstone course, in which students critically reflect on their work at Otis College, the Annual Scholarship Benefit and Fashion Show (for Fashion Design majors), and the Annual Exhibition.

## **Graduate Study**

Otis Colleges' graduate programs provide rigorous, practice-based studies with distinguished faculty. The college offers Masters of Fine Arts (MFA) degrees in Fine Arts and Graphic Design. The graduate programs emphasize an interdisciplinary approach to developing artistic vision and encourage students to find themselves as emerging professionals within the regional, national, and international scenes of art, design, and creative writing. Interested students are given additional preparation to make their way in professions that increasingly involve teaching or other institutional affiliations (for example, museums, publishing, and arts organizations). The proximity of art museums, studios, galleries, and other cultural institutions allows students to experience some of the most significant work currently being made. Visiting artists and writers who visit Otis College to give guest lectures, studio visits, and readings enrich students' practices.

### **Graduate Programs**

- Fine Arts
- Graphic Design

## **Student Affairs and Campus Diversity & Inclusion**

Student Affairs and Campus Diversity & Inclusion at Otis College is about providing meaningful experiences that allow students to create a life that enriches their overall experience. A student's first year at Otis College begins with O-Week, which transitions students into the Otis College community by providing multiple opportunities to engage with peers, continuing students, faculty, and staff. To ensure a successful first year, all students are provided an opportunity to select a Peer Mentor in addition to an Academic Mentor. Mentors provide students with support, referrals, and guidance throughout their Otis College journey.

Residence Life and Housing at Otis College invites over 400 students to immerse themselves in a living and learning environment that not only empowers them to grow and develop within a diverse community of artists, but also to realize their full potential and make friends that will last a lifetime. With a staff of highly trained student Resident Assistants and under the supervision of the Director, and two Assistant Directors, the Residence Life staff provides an abundance of events and services that bring students together within a community that honors human diversity and values artistic identity.

Professional development and career counseling, offered through Career Services, plays an integral part in a student's journey, from self-assessment and resume and portfolio review, to networking, internship experience, and job search strategies.

A successful Otis College student is one who overcomes obstacles and challenges, which is why Student Affairs and Campus Diversity and Inclusion at Otis College includes comprehensive health services, counseling and psychological services, and wellness support. Over 450 students each year seek support from the counseling staff and over 900 students each year seek support from the health clinic, using the tools and resources provided to strengthen and nourish themselves. In support of wellness, all students are required to have health insurance so that each student can be provided the care and assistance needed during times of illness or injury. Students seeking additional academic support can find a home in the Student Learning Center. The Student Learning Center (SLC) fosters students' social, emotional, and academic development. The SLC provides support on campus and online through success coaching and

academic tutoring six-days per week, working with students on study skills, reading and writing skills, art history skills, and math/logic skills. SLC staff act as student advocates as well as facilitators of students' learning.

The Otis College student community is one of the most diverse art and design student communities in the U.S. with diversity as the College's hallmark. Finally, the College also seeks to empower students through student leadership and involvement opportunities such as Student Union (SU), Campus Activities Board (CAB), Team International Student Outreach (TISO), Admissions Ambassadors, Resident Assistants, Orientation Week Leaders, Black Creatives Peer Mentors, and a wide variety of clubs and organizations. Through academics, student services, and campus activities and events, Otis College encourages students' growth and development as artists, designers, and engaged citizens committed to making a difference.

# Campus Policies

Otis College of Art and Design is committed to creating a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment for all members of its community. To achieve this, the college has established comprehensive policies that address a wide range of areas, from the presence of animals on campus and gender inclusivity to health, safety, and student rights.

These policies are designed not only to ensure compliance with legal standards such as the Disabilities Act but also to promote a campus culture that values diversity, respect, and well-being. By providing clear guidelines on topics like alcohol and drug use, campus safety, and the respectful use of pronouns, Otis College fosters an environment where students can thrive academically and personally.

Otis College of Art and Design maintains a range of policies to ensure a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment for all students, faculty, and staff. Animals on campus, particularly service animals, are subject to specific guidelines to maintain safety and comfort for everyone. Service animals, especially in residence halls, are allowed to assist students with disabilities, provided they are trained to perform specific tasks for their owners. The college offers comprehensive FAQs to clarify what constitutes a service animal, the rights of students with service animals, and how these animals should be managed on campus.

- [Learn more about the Animals on Campus Policies](#)

The college is deeply committed to fostering an inclusive environment, reflected in its policies regarding bias incidents, the Disabilities Act, and gender inclusivity. Bias incidents, which involve any behavior or action that discriminates against individuals based on their identity, are taken seriously and addressed promptly. The college adheres to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), ensuring that students with disabilities receive appropriate accommodations. Gender inclusivity is a core value, with a focus on respecting individuals' gender identities and pronouns. This policy promotes a respectful community where all students feel acknowledged and supported.

- [Learn more about BIAS Incidents policies](#)
- [Learn more about Disabilities Act policies](#)
- [Learn more about Gender Inclusivity policies](#)
- [Learn more about Pronoun policies](#)

In terms of health and safety, Otis College has strict policies regarding the use of alcohol and other drugs on campus. The college educates students about the dangers of alcohol absorption and the impact of substance use, emphasizing the risks associated with drug use. These policies are designed to promote responsible behavior and ensure the well-being of the student body. Additionally, the college provides resources and support for students who may struggle with substance abuse, offering counseling and educational programs to encourage healthier choices.

- [Learn more about Alcohol and Other Drugs policies](#)

Campus facilities at Otis College are accessible to students, with specific guidelines governing their use. Students are encouraged to utilize campus resources for both academic and personal development, but they must adhere to policies designed to maintain the integrity and safety of these spaces. Campus safety is a top priority, with measures in place to protect students and ensure a secure learning environment. Health and wellness resources, including mental health services, are readily available to support students' overall well-being, contributing to a holistic approach to student life.

- [Learn more about Campus Facilities policies](#)
- [Learn more about Campus Safety policies](#)
- [Learn more about Health and Wellness policies](#)

Finally, Otis College upholds student rights through clear complaint procedures and policies related to technology and information use. Students have the right to raise concerns about their educational experience, and the college provides transparent processes for addressing these complaints. The use of technology on campus is regulated to protect the privacy and security of all users. These miscellaneous policies ensure that students have access to the resources they need while maintaining a respectful and secure campus environment.

- [Learn more about Student Resources policies](#)
- [Learn more about Student Rights policies](#)
- [Learn more about Technology and Information policies](#)
- [Learn more about Miscellaneous policies](#)

## Animals on Campus

Pets and other animals are prohibited on Otis College of Art and Design (Otis College) campuses. The College recognizes the importance of “Service Animals” as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (“ADAAA”) and the broader category of “Assistance Animals” under the Fair Housing Act that provide physical and/or emotional support to individuals with disabilities.

Otis College is committed to allowing individuals with disabilities the use of a Service Animal on campus to facilitate their full- participation and equal access to the College’s programs and activities. Otis College is also committed to allowing Emotional Support Animals (ESAs) necessary to provide individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to use and enjoy College housing. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that qualified students with disabilities can participate in and benefit from College services, programs and activities.

## Definitions and Descriptions

An individual with a disability is a person who 1) has a physical or mental impairment that limits one or more of a person’s major life activities or 2) has a record of having, or being perceived as having, a physical or mental impairment.

A service animal means any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental health disability. The work, or tasks, performed by a service animal must be directly related to the individual’s disability. Tasks performed can include, but are not limited to, pulling a wheelchair, retrieving dropped items, alerting a person to a sound, reminding a person to take medication, or pressing an elevator button. Service animals are defined in Title III of the ADA regulations (28 C.F.R. § 36.104). Service animals under Title II and III of the ADA are limited to dogs; however, entities must make reasonable modifications in policies to allow individuals with disabilities to use miniature horses if they have been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for individuals with disabilities.

Support animals are animals used by individuals with disabilities to alleviate one or more identified symptoms of an individual’s disability. Emotional support animals (ESAs), assistance animals, comfort animals, and therapy animals are not service animals under Title II and Title III of the ADA because they are not individually trained to perform work or tasks. Support animals are not service animals. Unlike a service animal, support animals do not assist with daily living tasks. Individuals with a disability may be allowed an ESA in College housing with the appropriate documentation; however, they are not permitted

in other areas of the College (e.g. dining facilities, libraries, academic buildings, classrooms, labs, individual centers, etc.).

## **Service Animals on Campus**

Individuals with disabilities, including visitors who utilize service animals on campus grounds, are encouraged, but not required to complete an Animal Registration Form. Additionally, students are strongly encouraged to affiliate with Disability Services. Staff and faculty are encouraged to contact Human Resources & Development. Disability Services collaborates with students, faculty, and staff to ensure that individuals with disabilities have equal access to all Otis College programs and activities.

## **Pets in The Residence Hall**

Pets are not permitted in the residence hall. Residents with proper documentation through Disability Services may be permitted to have a support animal in their residence hall unit. Please contact Disability Services at 310-846-2554 or ds@otis.edu if you are requesting your Support Animal in the Residence Hall. Support animals may not reside in the College's Residence Hall without prior written approval as described in this section. Note: There is only one animal allowed per student with appropriate documentation.

# **Service Animals in The Residence Hall**

## **Procedures for Approval of Support Animals in College Housing**

The question in determining if a Support Animal will be allowed in College housing is whether the Support Animal removes a barrier to access the College's programs, services, and/or activities within the residence hall. The College must also determine if the animal's presence in College housing is reasonable. Otis College will not ask for or require an individual with a disability to pay a fee or surcharge for an approved Service/Support Animal.

All students with service animals, who plan to live in the residence hall with their service animal, must notify Disability Services as soon as possible. Service animals do not have to be registered with Disability Services, but they must be accounted for in the residence halls. Service animals and their owners are held to the responsibilities listed under the "Responsibilities of the Owner of a Service or Support Animal" section. Please see that section for more information.

All requests to have a Support Animal in College Housing must be approved by Disability Services before the animal comes to campus. Incoming students should receive confirmation of placement in Residence Life and Housing before making the request. Existing residents must submit requests at least four weeks prior to the date the animal is expected to be in the residence hall, if the student knows they will make a support animal request. To make a request, submit appropriate documentation (see below) to Disability Services ds@otis.edu.

The documentation required must include:

- A letter with the prospective resident's explanation of the function or tasks the animal has been trained to perform as a disability-related accommodation, the type of animal, a description of the animal (e.g. weight, coloring, etc.) and the animal's name.
- Medical documentation, regarding the student that meets the Otis College documentation guidelines as maintained by Disability Services. Insufficient documentation may result in accommodation delays or denial. For Housing requests, Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA)

definitions with respect to disabilities shall apply. Be sure to include information as to how this accommodation relates to ameliorating issues related to the documented disability.

- Documentation that the Service/Support Animal is in compliance with all required Los Angeles County requirements associated with licensing, vaccinations, and other health regulations.

The documentation will be reviewed on a case by case basis by Disability Services in consultation with the Director of Residence Life and Housing, or designee, to determine whether the presence of a Support Animal is reasonable. A request for a Support Animal may be denied as unreasonable if the presence of the animal: (1) imposes undue financial and/or administrative burden; (2) fundamentally alters College housing policies; and/or (3) poses a direct threat to the health and safety of others or would cause substantial property damage to the property of others, including Otis College property.

Otis College may consider the following factors, among others, as evidence in determining whether the presence of the animal is reasonable, or in the making of housing assignments for individuals with Support Animals:

1. The size of the animal is too large for available assigned housing space;
2. The animal's presence would force another individual from individual housing (e.g. serious allergies);
3. The animal's presence otherwise violates individuals' rights to peace and quiet enjoyment;
4. The animal is not housebroken or is unable to live with others in a reasonable manner;
5. The animal's vaccinations are not up-to-date;
6. The animal poses or has posed in the past a direct threat to the individual or others such as aggressive behavior towards or injuring the individual or others; or
7. The animal causes or has caused excessive damage to housing beyond reasonable wear and tear.

The requesting individual will be notified in writing of the decision within ten (10) business days of the date the request was received by Disability Services. If the request is approved, the requesting individual must follow all sections of the Otis College of Art and Design Animal Policy. The resident is also urged to connect with Disability Services.

When a service/support animal is confirmed, the Office of Residence Life and Housing will notify other residents within the housing assignment (as well as maintenance and security staff, as needed) that the approved animal will be residing in a shared assigned living space. The animal cannot be brought into housing before receiving approval and the notification of suitemates.

## **Responsibilities of the Owner of a Service or Support Animal**

The "Owner" is the individual who has requested the accommodation and has received approval to bring a Service/Support Animal into College Housing.

In accordance with Civil Code Section 54.2, owners are responsible for any damage caused by their animals and must take appropriate precautions to prevent property damage or bodily injury. The owner's responsibility covers but is not limited to replacement of furniture, carpet, window, wall covering, and the like. Arrangements and responsibilities pertaining to the cost and care of a service animal are the sole responsibility of the owner at all times. The College shall have the right to bill the owner's student account for unmet obligations.

If the College grants an individual's request to live with a Support Animal, or if a student has a service animal, the individual (otherwise known as the "Owner") is solely responsible for the custody and care of the animal and must meet the following requirements:

**Maintain Overall Health and Well-being:** The owner is responsible for the overall health and well-being of their animal at all times. This includes, but is not limited to all requirements for the presence of animals in

public places (vaccinations, licensure, ID tags, etc.) mandated by State or local ordinances. Dogs must have current vaccination against rabies and wear a rabies vaccination tag. Cats should have the normal shots required for a healthy animal. Local licensing requirements are the responsibility of the owner. Animals to be housed in College housing must have an annual clean bill of health from a licensed veterinarian. Documentation can be a vaccination certificate for the animal or a veterinarian's statement regarding the animal's health. The College has authority to direct that the animal receive veterinary attention.

Any evidence of mistreatment, abuse, neglect, or leaving the support animal unattended for unreasonably long periods of time may result in immediate removal of the service/Support Animal and/or discipline for the responsible individual in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct and/or any housing-related sanctions.

**Be Under Control of Owner:** The animal must be properly housed and restrained or otherwise under the dominion and control of the Owner at all times, ensuring that the animal does not unduly interfere with the routine activity of the campus, the residence hall or cause difficulties for students who reside there. Reasonable behavior is expected from the animal at all times. In accordance with the ADA, the service/Support animal shall have a harness, leash, or other tether, unless either the Owner is unable because of a disability to use a harness, leash, or other tether, or the use of a harness, leash, or other tether would interfere with the service animal's safe, effective performance of work or tasks, in which case the service animal must be otherwise under the handler's control (e.g., voice control, signals, or other effective means). If an animal is found running at large, the animal is subject to capture and confinement and immediate removal from College housing.

**Clean Up after Your Animal:** The Owner is responsible for ensuring the safe and sanitary cleanup of the animal's waste and, when appropriate, must toilet the animal in the relief area designated by the College consistent with the reasonable capacity of the owner. Indoor animal waste, such as cat litter, must be placed in a sturdy plastic bag and securely tied up before being disposed of in the trash room. Litter boxes should be placed on mats so that waste is not tracked onto carpeted surfaces. Failure to clean up after your animal may result in a fine.

**Care of Animal:** Animals in Housing must be contained within the privately assigned residential area at all times, except when transported outside the residential area in an animal carrier or controlled by leash or harness. Approved animals may not be left overnight in the residence hall to be cared for by another student. Animals must be taken with the Owner if they leave campus for a prolonged period of time.

**Follow Campus and Housing Policies:** The Owner agrees to continue to abide by all other campus and/or residential policies. Reasonable accommodation which may constitute an exception to a policy that otherwise would prohibit having an animal does not constitute an exception to any other policy.

The Office of Residence Life and Housing has the ability to relocate the owner and approved animal as necessary according to current contractual agreements. Any violation of the above rules or incidence of other violations may result in immediate removal of the animal from the College and may be subject to disciplinary action. Should the approved animal be removed from the premises for any reason, the Owner is expected to fulfill his/her housing obligations for the remainder of the housing contract.

The Owner must fully cooperate with College personnel with regard to meeting the terms of this Policy and developing procedures for care of the animals (e.g., cleaning the animal, feeding/watering the animal, designating an outdoor relief area, disposing of feces, etc.).

**Damage to Property:** An individual with a disability may be charged for any damages caused by their service/Support Animal beyond reasonable wear and tear to the same extent that it charges other individuals for damages beyond reasonable wear and tear. The Owner's living accommodations may also be inspected for fleas, ticks, or other pests if necessary as part of the College's standard or routine



inspections. If fleas, ticks or other pests are detected through inspection, the residence will be treated using approved fumigation methods by a college-approved pest control service. The Owner will be billed for the expense of any pest treatment above and beyond standard pest management in the residence hall. The College shall have the right to bill the individual's account for unmet obligations under this provision.

**Term of Residence:** The animal is allowed in College housing only as long as it is necessary because of the Owner's disability. The Owner must notify Disability Services in writing if the service/Support Animal is no longer needed or is no longer in residence. To replace a Support Animal, the new animal must be necessary because of the Owner's disability and the Owner must follow the procedures in this policy and those outlined by Disability Services when requesting a different animal.

**Written Consent:** The individual must provide written consent for Disability Services to disclose information regarding the request for and presence of the Support Animal to those individuals who may be impacted by the presence of the animal including, but not limited to, Residence Life and Housing personnel and potential and/or actual roommate(s)/suite(s). Such information shall be limited to information related to the animal and shall not include information related to the individual's disability.

### **Areas Off Limits to Service and Support Animals**

Under the ADA, the College must allow a service animal to accompany the individual with a disability at all times and everywhere on campus except where service animals are specifically prohibited. Support Animals in Housing stay only in residence: they do not accompany the individual with a disability at all times (i.e. support animals do not attend class; enter the library or dining hall). Before bringing a support animal onto campus grounds, the requesting individual must submit appropriate documentation.

The following areas are generally off limits to Service and Support Animals:

**Mechanical Rooms/Custodial Closets:** Mechanical rooms, such as boiler rooms, facility equipment rooms, electric closets, elevator control rooms and custodial closets, are off-limits to Service Animals. The machinery and/or chemicals in these rooms may be harmful to animals.

**Areas Where Protective Clothing or Gear Is Necessary:** Any room where protective gear or clothing is worn is off-limits to service and support animals. Examples impacting students include the Photo Lab, the woodshop and metal/machine shops.

**Areas Where There is a Danger to the Service Animal:** Any room, including a classroom, where there are sharp metal cuttings or other sharp objects on the floor or protruding from a surface; where there is hot material on the floor (e.g., molten metal or glass); where there is a high level of dust; where there are harmful chemicals or materials; or where there is moving machinery is off-limits to service and support animals.

**Exceptions:** Exceptions to off-limits areas may be granted on a case-by-case basis in consultation with Disability Services, the Environmental Health and Safety Manager, lab director (per department procedure), and the individual with a disability. The final decision shall be made based on the nature of the machinery and the best interest of the animal. Example: The machinery in a classroom may have moving parts at a height such that the tail of a large dog could easily be caught; this is a valid reason for restricting access for a large dog. However, a small hearing dog may be shorter than any moving part and, therefore, considered for admission to the classroom.

### **Removal of Support Animal**

The College may require the individual to remove the animal from College housing if:

- the animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others or causes substantial property damage to the property of others;
- the animal's presence results in a fundamental alteration of a College program;
- the Owner does not comply with the Owner's Responsibilities set forth above; or
- the animal or its presence creates an unmanageable disturbance or interference with the Otis community.

The College will base such determinations upon the consideration of the behavior of the particular animal at issue, and not on speculation or fear about the harm or damages an animal may cause. Any removal of the animal will be done in consultation with Disability Services. Please note there will be health and safety checks performed when Disability Services receives a report of issues related to Service/Support animals. The Owner will be afforded all rights of due process and appeal as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct.

If you have any questions, please contact Disability Services at 310-846-2554 or [ds@otis.edu](mailto:ds@otis.edu).

## **Service Animal FAQs**

### **What if the dog does not have a vest? How do I know it is a service animal?**

Some, but not all, service animals wear special collars and harnesses. There is no ADA requirement that the owner carry any certification papers showing that the animal is a service animal. When it is not obvious what service an animal provides, only limited inquiries are allowed. Staff/Faculty may ask two questions: (1) is the dog a service animal, and (2) what work or task has the dog been trained to perform. Staff cannot ask about the person's disability, require medical documentation, require a special identification card or training documentation for the dog, or ask that the dog demonstrate its ability to perform the work or task.

### **Can I play with the animal?**

Service animals are not pets, they are working animals. When a service dog is working, you should not engage with it in any way. You should ask the owner if petting or talking with the animal is permitted— even if it seems to be at rest. You may not always be aware when an animal is working. A good practice would be to ask the owner. The owner may tell you that the dog is on duty or in harness. This means that the dog is still working and should not be petted. Similarly, you should also ask if you can pet a support animal as this animal provides comfort for its owner that you may inadvertently disturb.

### **Can I take a photograph of the animal?**

You should not take a photograph of the animal without permission from its owner. Likewise, please do not do anything to bring unwanted attention to the service team (pointing, saying "Look, a dog!"). This is considered rude and can make the owner uncomfortable.

### **I have an allergy/am afraid of dogs. Can I deny the animal entrance to the classroom/campus?**

Allergies and fear of dogs are not valid reasons for denying access or refusing service to people using service animals. When a person who is allergic to dog dander and a person who uses a service animal must spend time in the same room or facility, they both should be accommodated by assigning them, if possible, to different locations within the room or different rooms in the facility. Please contact Disability Services for more information.

### **Under what circumstances can an animal be removed from the class or campus?**

A service animal's professional behavior and good grooming are necessary for it to be protected under the ADA. A person with a disability cannot be asked to remove their service animal from the premises unless: (1) the dog is out of control and the Owner does not take effective action to control it, (2) the animal is a direct threat to the safety of others, (3) the dog is not housebroken or (4) wanders away from its owner. When there is a legitimate reason to ask that a service animal be removed, staff and/or faculty must offer the person with the disability the option to obtain goods or services without the animal's presence.

### **Does the animal go into the cafeteria?**

Yes and no. Establishments that sell or prepare food must allow service animals in public areas even if state or local health codes prohibit animals on the premises. Support animals are only allowed in the owner's residential unit.

### **Do faculty/staff have to care for the animal?**

No, the animal is the sole responsibility of the owner. Faculty/Staff are not required to provide care or food for a service animal. Most service animals are on a strict schedule of food and water and do not eat "People Food."

### **Can we charge individuals with service/support animals a maintenance fee?**

No. Individuals with disabilities who use service/support animals cannot be isolated from other students, treated less favorably than other students, or charged fees that are not charged to other students without animals. However, if the animal causes damage, the owner of the animal is responsible for any and all damages.

### **Does the ADA cover service dogs "in training?"**

Title II and III of the ADA does not cover "service animals in training" but California allows animals in training in public places for training purposes by licensed trainers and owner-trainers. Please note a service animal in training is versed in basic socialization, house training, basic obedience training and training roughly equivalent to the American Kennel Club's Good Canine Citizen test.

For more information on Service Animals, visit: <https://www.ada.gov/>

## **Bias Incidents**

Bias is a personal inclination or temperament based on unreasoned judgment or belief. Bias may be reflected in behavior implicitly (nonverbal) or explicitly (verbal or written) that can be threatening, harassing, intimidating, discriminatory, hostile, unwelcoming, exclusionary, demeaning, degrading, or derogatory and is based on a person's real or perceived identity or group affiliation, including (but not limited to) race, age, disability status, gender, gender identity/expression, national origin, sexual orientation, veteran status, or religion.

The Otis College **Bias Incident Response Team (BIRT)** addresses incidents of real or perceived bias targeting Otis College students, faculty, and staff. The fundamental role of the **BIRT** is to:

- Make appropriate referrals for response to bias incidents in a timely and restorative manner.
- Promote civility and respect.
- Educate the campus community about recognizing and reporting bias incidents.

The Bias Incident Response Team **does not adjudicate conduct code violations, affirmative action issues, or issues of state or federal law.** However, the BIRT can help individuals connect to resources in each of

these areas for appropriate resolution. The BIRT's main function is Case Management and works with campus partners who provide **Individual Support**. This entails:

- Reviewing bias incident reports and strategizing on a response as a team.
- If an incident report includes a violation of law or college policy, it will be put through the student conduct process (for students) or referred to Human Resources (for staff) or to the Provost's office and Human Resources (for faculty). The BIRT will always yield to college-wide formal processes if there are specific violations and allow those processes to move to a formal resolution
- BIRT will always seek to balance the scale of response to scale of incident
- Including ad hoc members on the team as needed, based on the reported incident and community potentially impacted (e.g., LGBTQ+, Veterans, disabled people, people of color, etc.).

Depending on the nature and severity of the behavior, the associated bias, and impact, incidents will be addressed as appropriate through interventions such as: education, restorative practices, community dialogue, and formal processes through institutional offices (e.g., review, investigation, resolution).

**Not every incident will be a violation of college policy or law, however all reported incidents will be reviewed for an appropriate response.**

To read more about the Bias Incident Response Team, go to: <https://www.otis.edu/birt>

To report incidents of bias/discrimination, go to the following incident reporting site here: <https://www.otis.edu/incident-reports>.

## Disabilities Act

### Disabilities / Americans with Disabilities Act

Otis College complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the ADA, and state and local regulations regarding students and applicants with disabilities. Pursuant to these laws, no qualified individual with a disability shall unlawfully be denied access to or participation in any services, programs, or activities of Otis College of Art and Design. In carrying out this policy, the College recognizes that disabilities include mobility, sensory, health, psychological, and learning disabilities, both temporary and permanent, and will provide reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities. The College is unable, however, to make accommodations that are unduly burdensome or that fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program, course, or activity.

[Owl Care Online Portal](#) has an accommodation section where students can register with Disability Services and request accommodations for the semester. Disability Services will verify documentation (or advise students as to the proper documentation needed). After verification, a "notification letter" for all relevant faculty will be generated for students to download to give to their faculty. Faculty are advised to only provide accommodations written in the accommodations letter. Retroactive accommodations are not provided unless explicitly stated. All discussions will remain private.

Please see this website for more details on the accommodations request process: <https://www.otis.edu/life-otis/student-support-services/disability-services.html>

Students with questions about disabilities, accommodations or verification should contact Disabilities Services (DS) at (310) 846-2554 or by e-mail at [ds@otis.edu](mailto:ds@otis.edu) before accommodations are needed.

If you have a disabilities-related complaint (disabilities discrimination and/or accommodation disputes) please fill out the bias related incident report form. Please contact the Disability Services office at [ds@otis.edu](mailto:ds@otis.edu) with any questions.

# Gender Inclusivity

## Gender Identity Policy

At Otis College of Art and Design, gender identity reflects one's innermost concept of self as man, woman, blend of both, or neither. In other words, it's how individuals perceive themselves and what they choose to call themselves. One's gender identity can be the same or different from their legal sex (male/female).

At our College, systems are set up to allow you to select from the following gender identities:

- Agender:
  - not having a gender or a “lack of” a gender. Agender people see themselves as neither a man nor a woman, or both. They're gender-neutral and often are described as genderfree or genderless.
- Bigender:
  - a gender identity in which a person has or experiences two genders.
- Demigender:
  - an umbrella term for all gender identities that have a partial connection to a certain gender, and a partial connection to another gender(s), such as demigirl or demiboy
- Genderqueer or Non-Binary:
  - an umbrella term to describe non-binary association with gender.
- Genderfluid:
  - a gender identity which refers to a gender that varies, or changes over time.
- Man or Male:
  - part of the gender binary for those who identify as cis-gendered male or man
- Woman or Female:
  - part of the gender binary for those who identify as cis-gendered woman or female
- Transgender:
  - an umbrella term to describe someone whose gender identity or gender expression does not correspond with their sex assigned at birth.
- Transman or Transmasculine:
  - a man who was assigned female at birth
- Transwoman or Transfeminine:
  - a woman who was assigned male at birth
  
- Decline to state

## How It Is Used:

The collection and use of gender identity data at Otis College is a new and evolving practice which will continue to change over time. Our College is continually analyzing systems and business processes that currently store and use legal sex information to determine appropriate and/or required use.

While legal sex data is required for compliance with select laws and business processes, it's always optional for you to identify your gender identity. You may add, edit, or delete this data at any time.

## Data Privacy & Security

Gender identity data, including information about individuals who identify as LGBTQIA+, is protected by the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#).

Access to this information through the College's systems is restricted to staff who have a legitimate educational interest.

The College will primarily use this information in aggregate to make informed, data-driven decisions related to strategic resources and student, staff, and faculty support.

## **How to Update/Identify Your Gender identity at Otis College**

To add, edit, or delete your gender identity:

1. Log in to [portal.otis.edu](http://portal.otis.edu)
2. Select "Self Service Banner" under Campus Applications (for faculty/staff) or "Student Self Service" under Tech Tools (for students)
3. Select "My Profile" and then "more personal information" under your profile picture
4. Select "edit" within the Personal Details box
5. Follow the steps on the page to add, edit or delete your gender identification information.

## **For Extension Students: How to Update/Identify Your Gender identity in the Student Portal**

To add, edit or delete your gender identity:

1. Log in to your student portal
2. Select "My Profile" in the left hand menu under "Student Home"
3. Scroll down the gender section and select your gender identification
4. Scroll down the page and select save to update your information

## **Inquiries & Concerns**

If you believe your gender identity information is being accessed or used inappropriately, and/or if you have suggestions for appropriate use, please report your concerns or recommendations to the following offices:

- Registrar's Office/One Stop - [onestop@otis.edu](mailto:onestop@otis.edu)
  - For students who have questions about the policy or how to update.
- Extension Office - [extension@otis.edu](mailto:extension@otis.edu)
  - For extension students who have questions about this policy.
- Human Resources and Development - [HumanResources@otis.edu](mailto:HumanResources@otis.edu)
  - For staff/faculty who have questions about the policy or how to update.
- Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging - [dei@otis.edu](mailto:dei@otis.edu)
- For general questions about this policy
- Alumnx Relations/Institutional Advancement: [alumni@otis.edu](mailto:alumni@otis.edu)

For alumnx, board of trustees, and board of governors who have questions or want information about how to update their gender identity fields.

## **Gender Inclusive Restrooms**

Otis College has a total of eight gender inclusive restrooms, five single-use, and three multi-use restrooms located across campus. All-gender restrooms within any organization simply allow individuals to be able to use the restroom they choose with a decreased level of anxiety or fear of being "policed" or harassed

for their gender identity and expression. As a college campus that embraces diversity and inclusion in all forms, it is imperative we work together as a community to make changes and decisions that will only enhance our campus climate. For clarity, “multi-use” restrooms are those with several stalls with locks that multiple people can use simultaneously, regardless of gender. Here is the list of the current officially designated, all-gender restrooms across campus:

Five Single-Use All-Gender Restrooms:

- Ahmanson, basement
- Anne Cole Building, 2nd floor
- Wood and Metal Shop
- North Building (2)

Three Multi-Use All-Gender Restrooms:

- Galef, 2nd floor
- Residential Wing, ground floor
- Ahmanson, 5th floor

[Download Restroom Map](#)

## Preferred Name and Pronouns

### Gender Pronouns

Otis College of Art and Design is committed to fostering an inclusive campus that values self-expression and respect for the variety of communities it serves. The College recognizes that many students, faculty, and staff choose to use a preferred first name rather than a legal name whenever a legal name is not absolutely necessary, limited by technology, or required by law.

At Otis College, students may request a preferred first name and preferred pronouns. The link to update your preferred first name and pronouns can be found on The Dashboard - my.otis.edu. Otis College reserves the right to remove or deny the preferred first name if used inappropriately. This includes, but is not limited to, names using foul or inappropriate language, names submitted to avoid a legal obligation, and names used to create misrepresentation. Each individual may request one preferred first name change during each twelve-month period.

For additional information regarding the Otis College Pronoun Policy, go to <https://www.otis.edu/about/policies/preferred-pronoun-policy.html>

It is a firm expectation that Otis community members recognize and use an individual’s pronouns and preferred first names when that information has been provided to them. Pronouns and preferred first names should be used whenever speaking with, or referring to, any member of the Otis College community who has indicated such a preference.

Mistakes may happen, and in those situations, we encourage individuals to apologize, and rephrase what they were saying or asking. However, intentionally using incorrect pronouns to refer to someone, or refusing to acknowledge an individual’s pronouns or name, may constitute a violation of the College’s Non Discrimination Policy. Referring to people using the wrong pronouns, especially on purpose, is disrespectful and can lead to feelings of alienation, exclusion, and overall dysphoria, and community



members should not hesitate to report such behavior using the College's Bias Incident Report Form. For additional information, go to <https://www.otis.edu/about/policies/preferred-pronoun-policy.html>.

## **Inquiries & Concerns**

If you believe your gender identity information is being accessed or used inappropriately, and/or if you have suggestions for appropriate use, please report your concerns or recommendations to the following offices:

- Registrar's Office/One Stop - [onestop@otis.edu](mailto:onestop@otis.edu)
  - For students who have questions about the policy or how to update.
- Extension Office - [extension@otis.edu](mailto:extension@otis.edu)
  - For extension students who have questions about this policy.
- Human Resources and Development - [HumanResources@otis.edu](mailto:HumanResources@otis.edu)
  - For staff/faculty who have questions about the policy or how to update.
- Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging - [dei@otis.edu](mailto:dei@otis.edu)
  - For general questions about this policy
- Alumnx Relations/Institutional Advancement: [alumni@otis.edu](mailto:alumni@otis.edu)
  - For alumnx, board of trustees, and board of governors who have questions or want information about how to update their gender identity fields.

## **Preferred Name Policy**

Otis College of Art and Design is committed to fostering an inclusive campus that values self-expression and respect for the variety of communities it serves. The College recognizes that many students, faculty, and staff choose to use a preferred first name rather than a legal name whenever a legal name is not necessary, limited by technology, or required by law.

At Otis College, students may request a preferred first name and preferred pronouns. The link to update your preferred first name and pronouns can be found on my.otis.edu portal. Otis College reserves the right to remove or deny the preferred first name if used inappropriately. This includes, but is not limited to, names using foul or inappropriate language, names submitted to avoid a legal obligation, and names used to create misrepresentation. Everyone may request one preferred first name change during each twelve-month period.

Additional information about initiating this process as well as limitations to preferred first name use can be found at <https://www.otis.edu/about/policies/preferred-name-policy.html>

## **Inclusion and Equity**

### **Pregnant and Parenting Students**

Otis College supports pregnant and parenting students so that they may stay in school and complete their education, and thereby build better lives for themselves and their children. It is illegal under Title IX for schools to exclude pregnant students (or students who have been pregnant) from participating in any part of an educational program, including co-curricular activities. Otis College is committed to full participation by pregnant, nursing and parenting students. In response to notification of need, the College may implement special instructional programs or classes for pregnant students. Participation is completely voluntary on the part of the student, and any programs and classes offered will be comparable to those

offered to other students with regard to the range of academic, co-curricular, and enrichment opportunities.

The College treats pregnant students in the same way that any similarly situated student is treated. Thus, any special services provided to students who have temporary medical conditions are also provided to pregnant students. Likewise, a student who is pregnant or has given birth will not be required to submit medical certification for school participation unless such certification is also required for all other students with physical or emotional conditions requiring the attention of a physician.

Otis College will excuse a student's absences because of pregnancy or childbirth for as long as the student's doctor deems the absences medically necessary. When a student returns to the College, she will be allowed to return to the same academic and co-curricular status as before her medical leave began.

The Lactation Room is a temporary private room for nursing mothers. It is for use by faculty, staff and students only. Any student needing to use the Lactation Room should work with the Disability Services ([ds@otis.edu](mailto:ds@otis.edu)) to facilitate access. The Lactation Room is located in Ahmanson 100C.

Questions regarding this policy and its implementation should be directed to Disability Services ([ds@otis.edu](mailto:ds@otis.edu)) or (310) 846-2554.

## **Religious Accommodations Policy**

Otis College of Art and Design respects the religious beliefs of all members of the community, affirms their rights to observe significant religious holy days, and will make reasonable accommodations, upon request, for such observances. If one's religious observance is in conflict with the academic experience, the student should inform their instructor(s) of the dates of religious holy days by the second week of any term. It is the student's responsibility to discuss reasonable accommodations with their instructor(s).

Types of instances / absences that the policy supports:

- Class absence - excused absence from a scheduled academic class / classes due to a religious conflict that falls on the same day as the class itself. Missing a class due to travel associated with a particular holiday does not constitute an excused absence and faculty do not have to consider such requests for accommodations.
- Missed exam/critique – excused absence from an exam or critique scheduled on a date/time in conflict with a religious holy day. Reasonable accommodations can be made to take an exam earlier or later than the date/time in conflict, or to find an alternative date/time to critique the student's work. If instructors require a make-up exam, they retain the right to determine the content of the exam, the conditions of its administration, with considerations given to equitable treatment. Missing an exam or critique due to travel associated with a particular holiday does not constitute an excused absence and faculty do not have to consider such requests for accommodations.
- Deadline conflict – reasonable accommodations for academic work that is due on a date / time in conflict with a religious holy day. In such cases work can be submitted earlier or later than the date in conflict. Missing a deadline due to travel associated with a particular holiday does not constitute an excused absence and faculty do not have to consider such requests for accommodations.

## **Process and Expectations**

Students requesting absence from class, excuse from an exam/critique, or accommodations with an academic deadline, should notify the faculty member(s) in writing (by email) as soon as the conflict is identified. Out of respect for the academic process, students should notify faculty no later than two weeks into the academic term.

Faculty members will, upon receiving the request for a religious accommodation, submit the request to the Chair of their department and the Provost, and meet with the student to discuss reasonable accommodations. Faculty and Chairs may contact the Provost's office for guidance.

Absences due to religious holidays or holy days will be excused. Students who are absent for religious observance are responsible for staying current with coursework, exams, projects and other academic requirements, and must submit missed work by the accommodations deadline agreed upon with the faculty member.

#### **Steps / Tips for working with your professors:**

1. Make contact with your instructor(s) well in advance, ideally at the beginning of the academic term. Review the course syllabus and identify dates in potential conflict with your religious observance.
2. Speak with your instructor(s) about and submit in writing (email) the dates(s) and time(s) you plan to be absent. This should be done no later than two weeks into the academic term
3. Be prepared to discuss the personal, social, or cultural relevance of your request to be excused for religious observance.
4. Discuss if you need to be absent for all or part of the class.
5. Present potential alternatives if you're planning to be absent during a critical class session.
6. Discuss how you plan to obtain missed info or materials due to your absence. Absence from class does not necessarily excuse you from any information shared during the missed class or other class expectations.

### **Appeals**

If a student feels that a reasonable accommodation is being denied, the student should discuss the issue with their department Chair. If after speaking with the department Chair, the student feels that reasonable accommodation is being denied, the student should discuss the issue with the Provost ([provost@otis.edu](mailto:provost@otis.edu)) who will serve as the final authority. Students can seek advice or guidance at any point by speaking with the Dean of Student Affairs or email [studentaffairs@otis.edu](mailto:studentaffairs@otis.edu).

### **Veterans**

As a recognized institution of higher learning, Otis College welcomes veterans and the dependents of 100% service-connected, disabled, or deceased veterans who qualify under the provisions of the United States public laws pertaining to their education. Otis College is a participant in the Yellow Ribbon Program. Veterans must be accepted into a degree program to be eligible for Veterans Administration benefits. For more information on the services, programs and opportunities for Veterans, please visit our Veterans information site at <https://www.otis.edu/veterans>.

## **Alcohol and Other Drugs**

### **Alcohol and Drug Abuse Risks**

There are many risks associated with the abuse of alcohol and other drugs including poor academic or job performance; relationship difficulties, including sexual dysfunction; a tendency to verbal and physical violence; financial stress; injuries or accidents; and violations of the law such as driving under the influence and willfully destroying property.

The consumption of drugs and alcohol can increase the risk for many health related and other medical, behavioral, and social problems. Even low doses of drugs or alcohol significantly impair the judgment,

which can lead to diminished damage, high blood pressure, heart disease, ulcers, and cancer of the liver, mouth, throat, and stomach; contracting diseases such as HIV/AIDS through the sharing of hypodermic needles; pregnancy problems including miscarriages, still birth, and learning disabilities; fetal alcohol syndrome; and psychological or psychiatric problems.

## Drugs and Pregnancy

1. The “use of marijuana during pregnancy may result in low birth weight and smaller length and head circumference in babies.”
2. “Babies whose mothers smoked marijuana during pregnancy may have vision problems and shorter attention spans. Also, THC, the ingredient in marijuana that causes the ‘high,’ accumulates in the mother’s milk and transfers to nursing infants where it could cause harm to the baby’s development.”
3. The “use of cocaine during pregnancy increases the risk of hemorrhage and premature delivery. Chronic use of cocaine causes increased risk of spontaneous abortion.”
4. “Nursing babies of cocaine abusers can also receive doses of cocaine through their mother’s milk.”
5. “Mental retardation and abnormal facial features have been seen in babies whose mothers used inhalants or solvents in combination with alcohol while they were pregnant.”
6. “The use of solvents during pregnancy has also been linked to central nervous system defects in newborns.”
7. “Heroin use during pregnancy increases the likelihood of stillbirths and neonatal deaths, and babies born to opiate-addicted mothers experience withdrawal symptoms such as restlessness, tremulousness [tremors], sweating, vomiting, diarrhea, high-pitched crying, frantic fist sucking, and seizures.”

## Enforcement

Otis College also exercises the right to address alcohol and other drug-related offenses on College property or at College activities in the form of imposed internal sanctions and external, legal sanctions. These sanctions will be consistently enforced and penalties will depend upon the severity of the offense. Internal sanctions may include expulsion, and/or referral for prosecution of the most serious violations of law and this policy. Otis College supports enforcement, by applicable law enforcement agencies, of all local, state and federal laws. Violations of local, state, and federal laws and ordinances may result in misdemeanor or felony convictions and/or the imposition of other legal sanctions, including but not limited to fines, imprisonment, forfeiture of personal and real property, loss of driving privileges, and required attendance at substance abuse education or treatment programs. Federal penalties for illegally distributing drugs include life imprisonment and fines in excess of \$1,000,000.

The following is a brief summary of some of the state and federal criminal sanctions that may be imposed upon someone who violates the alcohol and other drug policy in the state of California:

- A violation of California law for the unlawful sale of alcohol may include imprisonment in the county jail for six months, plus fines and penalties.
- A violation of California law for the possession, use and/or sale of narcotics, marijuana and/or other illicit drugs includes imprisonment in the county jail or state prison for one to nine years, plus fines up to \$100,000 for each count.
- A violation of federal law for the possession, use and/or sale of narcotics, marijuana and/or other illicit drugs may include imprisonment in the federal penitentiary for one to fifteen years plus substantial financial penalties.
- A violation of the law involving an individual being under the influence of a combination of alcohol and other drugs (itself potentially deadly), may result in an increase in criminal sanctions and penalties.

# Alcohol Absorption

## Factors that Affect how Alcohol Is Absorbed

Did you realize, given the same exact amount of alcohol, the level of intoxication varies according to some physiological and biological factors?

Here are some examples:

### 1. Females vs. Males

Alcohol affects females more quickly and intensely due to a typically smaller body size and weight than males. Also, females have about half as much of the enzymes used to metabolize alcohol than males do (alcohol dehydrogenase and acetaldehyde dehydrogenase).

### 2. Smaller people vs. Larger people

Smaller people have less body mass through which alcohol can diffuse, meaning there is more alcohol in their bloodstream. Therefore, they become more intoxicated quicker.

### 3. Higher proportion of body fat to muscle tissue mass

Alcohol is not drawn into body fat as well as it draws into lean muscle mass. Therefore, blood alcohol concentration is intensified in those with more body fat. Think oil and water.

### 4. High stress mood states vs. relaxed mood states

When students are stressed, as opposed to when they are more relaxed, alcohol absorbs more rapidly. Stress also causes the stomach to empty directly into the small intestine, where alcohol is absorbed even faster.

### 5. Medications

Other drugs and medications often have adverse effects and unpredictable interactions with alcohol. Even Tylenol can cause significant liver troubles if paired with alcohol. Make a point to know what the potential interactions are with medications/drugs you have taken before you drink. In some cases, these interactions can be fatal. When in doubt, don't drink alcohol when taking meds.

### 6. Drinking on an empty stomach vs. eating while you drink

Drinking on an empty stomach irritates your digestive system, and results in more rapid absorption of alcohol. Instead, eat high-protein foods (tofu, cheese, etc.) along with alcohol before and when drinking, and you'll be in much more control.

### 7. Health Concerns

Genetic enzyme deficiencies (alcohol dehydrogenase and aldehyde dehydrogenase), diabetes, hypertension, thiamine deficiency, depression, seizure disorder and a myriad of other health conditions may decrease the body's ability to process alcohol and therefore present increased health risks. Alcohol and other drug dependencies may increase the risk of developing chronic disease and long-term dependence. Consult with your health care clinician.

### 8. "Chugging" vs. "Skillful sipping"

Why does chugging significantly lead to unwanted risks? Going overboard with drinking is like overdosing. The more alcohol you drink within a short period of time, the more you overtax your physiological system. It responds by shutting down. First, your cognitive system shuts down, you lose inhibitions and feel loose. Pour in more alcohol, and your body might force you to vomit (first sign of alcohol poisoning), or pass out (other brain functions shut down). Finally, your sympathetic and parasympathetic systems will shut down due to systemic alcohol poisoning. Enjoy your drink more slowly and spread your drinking out over time, and you can control how intoxicated you become.

# Impact of Alcohol and Other Drug Use

## Information Regarding the Impact of Alcohol and Other Drug Use

The excessive use of alcohol, improper use of controlled substances and use of illicit drugs pose significant health risks to individuals including addiction, permanent injury and death. Additional risks include the following: impairment of reflexes making the operation of vehicles or machinery dangerous; short- and long-term effects from mixing alcohol with over-the-counter or prescription medications, which may include permanent damage to organs or death; negative impacts on social and emotional well-being and on education and employment; birth defects if you are pregnant; long-term health problems including liver disease, heart disease, increased risk of cancer and pancreatitis. Additional information on the health risks associated with the excessive use of alcohol and use of controlled substances, as well as mixing medication with alcohol and other drugs may be obtained at the Student Health and Wellness Center.

## Medical / Recreational Use of Marijuana

The college strictly prohibits the use of marijuana for medical or recreational purposes on campus, even if it otherwise meets the qualifications of the California Compassionate Use Act, Proposition 215, or the Adult Use of Marijuana Act, Proposition 64. Otis College does not recognize documented compassionate or recreational use on campus or in the residence halls or affiliated-housing after a student's use and/or possession is discovered. This includes all cannabis products including those containing CBD. Any student who believes he or she may be adversely affected by this policy may contact the Dean of Student Affairs for more information.

## Parental Notification Policy

In accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the Dean of Student Affairs (or designee) reserves the right to notify the parents/guardians of students under 21 years of age, and the parents/guardians of dependent students, regardless of age, of any incident in which the student is found responsible for violating the College alcohol and drug policy. Additionally, if a student's health and safety is deemed a significant risk, the Dean of Student Affairs or designee may notify parents of their student's circumstances.

## Policy on Illegal Drugs

Students are prohibited from the selling, manufacturing, distributing, possessing, and/or using illegal drugs on or off College property or at College-sponsored events in accordance with federal, state, and local laws.

Otis College does not permit the use of marijuana for any purpose on College property even if the use meets the qualifications of the California Compassionate Use Act, Proposition 215, and/or the Adult Use of Marijuana Act, Proposition 64. Therefore, even employees and/or students who qualify under Propositions 215 and 64 to use marijuana for medical and/or recreational purposes are not permitted to possess, store, provide, or use marijuana on Otis College owned or controlled property (including but not limited to residence halls, academic buildings, leased facilities, and parking lots), or during an Otis College-sanctioned activity or events regardless of the location. This includes all cannabis products including those containing CBD.

Examples of violations include the following:

- Misuse of over-the-counter drugs;
- Misuse or sharing of prescription drugs;
- Possessing, using, being under the influence of, distributing, or manufacturing/growing any form of any illegal drug including marijuana;
- Possessing, using, being under the influence of, distributing, or manufacturing any form of illegal drug;
- Possessing paraphernalia (i.e., rolling papers, pipes, bongs, etc.) for intended or implied use of any form of illegal drug;
- Possessing paraphernalia that contains or appears to contain illegal drug residue;
- Purchasing or passing illegal drugs from one person to another;
- Using mail services to purchase, pass, or distribute illegal drugs.

Students found in violation of the above policy will be subject to disciplinary action and are subject to all legal sanctions under federal, state, and local law for any offenses involving illegal drugs on College property or at College activities.

## Risks of Drug Use

### The Risks of Various Drugs

The following is a partial list of the adverse effects of drug use on the individual and society arranged by source:

- Amphetamines/Methamphetamines
  - Increased heart rate, blood pressure, body temperature and metabolism, tremors, reduced appetite, irritability, anxiety, panic, paranoia, violent behavior, psychosis, weight loss, insomnia, severe dental problems, cardiac and cardiovascular complications, stroke, seizures, addiction.
- Cannabis (marijuana, hashish)
  - Marijuana use can impair or distort short-term memory and comprehension, alter the user's sense of time, and reduce coordination. A lowered immune system and an increased risk of lung cancer may also ensue. THC, the active chemical in marijuana, is stored in the fat cells of the body, and depending on the amount used and duration of time, can stay in the body for anything from a few days to about two months. Addiction is generally found psychologically more than physically.
- Cocaine (crack and other stimulants)
  - The immediate effects of cocaine use include dilated pupils, and increased blood pressure, heart rate, and respiration rate followed by a crash when the drug wears off. Over the longer term, cocaine users often have nasal passage and nasal septum problems. Stimulant use is generally addictive.
- Hallucinogens (LSD, mescaline, psilocybin)
  - Hallucinogens cause illusions and distortions of time and perception. The user may experience episodes of panic, confusion, suspicion, anxiety and loss of control. Flashbacks can occur even after use has stopped. PCP or phencyclidine has been shown to produce violent behaviors which can lead to injuries to the user or a bystander. There is generally little potential for addiction.
- Heroin (other opiates)
  - Heroin causes the body to experience diminished pain. If injected, it can result in blood vessel damage (and possibly the transmission of infections such as hepatitis and HIV if needles are shared). There is a high rate of addiction among users.
- Inhalants



- loss of inhibition, headache, nausea or vomiting, slurred speech, loss of motor coordination, wheezing, cramps, muscle weakness, depression, memory impairment, damage to cardiovascular and nervous systems, unconsciousness, sudden death.
- Tobacco (cigarettes, chew, and other products)
  - Tobacco use has been proven not only to be addictive, but to have serious, well-documented health consequences. While many people, particularly students, look to smoking as a way of reducing stress, it should be remembered that there is no comparison between the stress of facing emphysema or lung cancer and the stress of preparing for midterms.

## **Safe Harbor**

The College has a Safe Harbor policy for students. The College believes that students who have a drug and/or addiction problem deserve help. If any College student brings their own use, addiction, or dependency to the attention of College officials outside the threat of drug tests or conduct sanctions and seeks assistance, a conduct complaint will not be pursued. However, if a student's alcohol and/or other drug addiction/ dependency results in behavior that threatens the safety and security of the surrounding community, a student conduct process may be pursued. A written action plan may be used to track cooperation with the Safe Harbor program by the student. Failure to follow the action plan will nullify the Safe Harbor protection and the campus conduct process will be initiated.

## **Substance Abuse Help**

As members of the Otis College community, we all share in the responsibility for creating and maintaining a healthy and productive environment for work and study alike. With this responsibility comes the obligation to be involved in preventing and addressing problems caused by the abuse of alcohol and other drugs. Free, confidential counseling for alcohol and other drug abuse issues is available to students through Student Counseling Services, located on the Goldsmith Campus, Student Health and Wellness Center, telephone 310-846-5738 or email [studenthealth@otis.edu](mailto:studenthealth@otis.edu). Other referral resources may include assessment, individual counseling, educational programs, materials, referral and case management through community agencies, all which might include a fee.

# **Campus Facilities and Access**

## **Bringing Guests or Children/dependents to Class/campus Activities**

All degree-seeking students engaged in undergraduate and graduate programs must get advance permission from their instructor before bringing a guest to class. Children/dependents (under the age of 18) should not be brought into offices, classrooms, and other instructional and student support areas on a regular basis. On occasion, extenuating circumstances may arise when students, in their role as parents/guardians, must bring their children/dependents with them to campus. On such occasions, with the instructor's advance permission, children/dependents may be brought into the classroom, but they must remain under the direct supervision of the parent/guardian and shall not be permitted to disrupt the learning environment. Students must avoid bringing children/dependents to classrooms/studios on days of exams/presentations. Parents/guardians failing to supervise their children/dependents sufficiently may be asked to remove the children/dependents from campus grounds. Students as parents/guardians are responsible for the behavior of their children/dependents on campus and are subject to disciplinary sanctions according to the Otis College Code of Conduct for any disruptive or destructive behavior by their children/dependents. Parents/guardians are responsible and liable for any and all injuries or damages

sustained to or by their child/dependent while on the College campus, unless caused by the sole negligence of the College, its officers, agents, or employees.

## **Campus Access**

Otis College of Art and Design is an independent College, and its facilities, buildings, properties, and grounds (hereafter "campus") are private property. Access to the College campus, including the Goldsmith Campus and all off-site locations, is permitted only with Otis' consent, which may be withdrawn at any time for any reason. Please refer to the Otis College of Art and Design website for more details on the general Campus Access and Trespass Policy at <https://www.otis.edu/campus-safety/campus-access-policy>.

## **Chalking**

No chalking is allowed of any kind anywhere on the Otis College campus grounds. Additionally, no individual or groups external to the College are allowed to chalk.

## **Flag Policy**

The Otis College of Art and Design Flag Pole is the culmination of an initiative of the Otis Veterans Association. This initiative was actualized due to the support of the College and the Ahmanson Foundation. The Otis Veterans Association continues to maintain the American flag flown on the pole. This flag pole is outfitted to hold one flag. The flag is illuminated so that it can be displayed at night.

This policy was developed to assure clarity in management of the flagpole, located outside the Galef Building which flies the United States flag. It is the policy of Otis College of Art and Design that the flagpole outside the Galef Building is the only official flagpole and is to be the only flagpole on the Goldsmith Campus. It is for the purpose of flying the colors of the United States. No other flag is to be flown from this flagpole. The display of the United States flag will be in accord with federal law and College policy, and with proclamations by the President of the United States, the Governor of California, and the President of the College.

### **Lowering of the Flag to Half-staff**

The United States flag will be flown on this flag pole year-round and will be lowered to half-staff to recognize and honor important occurrences. The lowering of the flag to half-staff is done, traditionally, when the entire nation is in mourning. These periods of mourning are proclaimed either by the President of the United States, for national remembrance, or the Governor of the State of California, for local remembrance, in the event of a death of a member or former member of the federal, state government, or judiciary.

The process of lowering/removing the flag is facilitated by the Office of Campus Safety and Security.

### **Request for Use of Flag Pole**

Students who wish to use the flag pole for other purposes must complete a formal request using the College's [Exhibition and Facilities Use Contract](#). Please contact Campus Safety and Security at [campussafety@otis.edu](mailto:campussafety@otis.edu) or at 310-665-6965 if you have any questions about this policy.

## **Guest Speakers on Campus**

It is the policy of the campus to foster a spirit of free inquiry and to encourage the timely discussion of the broad range of issues that concern our community, provided that the views expressed are stated openly and are subject to critical evaluation. Within our prevailing standards of decency and honesty, this policy will be construed to mean that within the context of the College and consistent with the institutional mission and values, controversial topics may be raised for intelligent discussion on the campus. Guest speakers do not represent the ideas, opinions, or political/ideological positions of Otis College. Restraints on free inquiry should be held to that minimum which is consistent with preserving a community in which change is accomplished by peaceful democratic means, even if it involves robust debate. Students, either as individuals or as members of recognized student organizations, who act in violation of the provisions of this rule will be subject to Conduct procedures and actions as outlined in the Code of Student Conduct.

## **Student Organization Responsibilities**

A registered student organization, after consulting with and obtaining prior approval of its advisor, may invite guest speakers to the campus to address meetings, subject to the following provisions:

- Sponsorship must be by a registered student organization.
- Proper arrangements for the use of College facilities must be made, consistent with institutional policy.
- It must be clear that the student organization, not the College, is extending the invitation and that any views the speaker may express are his or her own and not those of the College.
- The student organization must take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that the meeting is conducted in an orderly manner. This may necessitate consultation with Campus Safety and Security and/or hiring of outside Security.
- The student organization must provide means for critical evaluation of the speaker's view, which must include, at a minimum, an open question period following the speaker's presentation.
- The student organization must comply with any and all conditions for the orderly and scholarly conduct of the meeting.

## **Guest Speaker Responsibilities**

A speaker invited by a student organization must not advocate action or urge the audience to take action which is illegal under the laws of the United States, California, or which is prohibited by the rules of the College or the Code of Student Conduct. It is the responsibility of the student organization to inform speakers in writing of this prohibition.

## **Lockers**

Lockers are available on a first-come, first-served basis, and are assigned by Technical Support Services (TSS). Instructions are posted at the Tool Crib (Ahmanson 701) at the start of the term. Lockers are the only official storage areas for student artwork and materials. Lockers are to be kept locked at all times. Otis College is not liable for material left in lockers or other parts of the building. Students are responsible for the condition of their lockers and will be charged for any necessary repairs. Lockers must be cleared out by the end of the second week after the last day of class of the spring term. Any lockers occupied after that time will have the lock removed and the contents disposed of. For additional information, please refer to the locker policy, issued to each student upon assignment of a locker.

## **Lost and Found**

The Campus Safety and Security Office is the Lost and Found site. If you find an item that may have been lost, take it to the Safety and Security Office. To increase your chances of having lost items returned, write

your name and phone number in your books and notebooks, use laundry-proof marking pens for clothing and bags, and inscribe items such as cameras using an electric engraver, which can be borrowed from the Tool Crib.

## **Mail**

Commuter Students may not use the Otis College address as a mailing address unless permission has been given by the Dean of Student Affairs or designee and the Director of Purchasing. Residential students will be assigned a mailbox at the time of move-in into the residence hall. Residents must follow all mail policies associated with residential mailboxes as outlined in their Hallway Handbook. Any mail policies and procedures at our affiliated residential housing locations (i.e. Park West) must be followed and are overseen by the third party property management. Residence Life and Housing will communicate those policies, procedures, and mailbox assignments and will refer students to appropriate staff within those affiliated housing locations for any questions or issues/concerns.

## **On-Campus Parking**

Vehicles parked on College grounds must display a permit at all times. Vehicles without a valid Otis College parking permit will be cited and/or towed by Campus Safety. Parking permits are available by submitting an online form located at [portal.otis.edu](http://portal.otis.edu) under Campus Safety or directly at this link: [https://otiscollege.formstack.com/forms/park\\_registration](https://otiscollege.formstack.com/forms/park_registration). Full- or part-time students are expected to follow all posted signs and placards, and park in designated spaces only. Tickets will be issued to individuals parked in more than one space, in a reserved space, or in areas assigned for visitors, disabled persons, or carpool parking. All vehicles parked in Visitor Parking must display a valid visitor permit, available in the Security Office. All parking violations carry a minimum fine of \$25. Student fines will be posted to student accounts. Some violations also carry additional fines assessed by the city and/or county government. Unpaid fines are considered holds on a student's account and will prevent the student from registering for classes and/or completing other College business. The parking structure is secured from 11:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. and may only be accessed with a valid Otis College ID card.

Otis College of Art and Design provides parking for faculty, employees, students, vendors, and visitors. Available parking spaces are filled on a first-come, first-serve basis each day. This policy is not a guarantee that a parking space will be provided or available at all times.

Loitering in the parking area after normal day or evening classes and/or special activities is prohibited. Students must be aware that Otis College does not carry any responsibility with respect to any losses to student vehicles from fire, theft, vandalism, or from any other causes, while parking on campus. Otis College reserves the right, after a reasonable attempt is made to contact the owner(s), or notice has been posted, to remove illegally parked or abandoned vehicle or any vehicle parked in such a way as to constitute a serious hazard to other vehicles or pedestrian traffic or to the movement and operation of emergency equipment. Otis College shall not be liable for any damage to any vehicle which occurs during the removal or impoundment.

## **Sales and Solicitation**

Canvassing or soliciting for funds, sales, or subscriptions is prohibited on campus or in College buildings unless written permission has been granted by the Dean of Student Affairs (or designee) for students. Additionally, outside and for-profit groups are not allowed to sell items or solicit members of the College community on campus without prior approval from the Dean of Student Affairs (or designee). Posters, flyers, and other event advertisements must be approved by the Director of Student Engagement and Leadership prior to posting or distribution. The sale of merchandise, publications, or service on College

property, other than by contracted vendors, authorized stores, restaurants, departments or divisions of the College, is likewise prohibited except upon written permission from an Otis College senior administrator (or designee).

## **Student Access to Facilities—goldsmith Campus**

In order to meet program needs and accommodate work schedules, degree students may access the Goldsmith Campus facilities 24 hours a day, commencing with the first day of classes and ending on the last scheduled day of class/critique, except during holiday periods. Facilities access is subject to the guidelines and limitations below. Any person who fails to comply with these policies will forfeit the right to 24-hour access and will not be permitted on campus from 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. Any student intending to access campus after 11:00 p.m. will need to swipe their student identification card at key entry points that are restricted by access control readers including the parking garage and all exterior pedestrian gates. Certain buildings and locations are also restricted by access control readers. Students with guests will need to obtain a guest pass from the Campus Safety & Security office located on the first floor of the Academic building. To register a guest, the student and guest must present to the security officer the following: (a) a valid Otis College ID card, (b) first and last names, (c) anticipated work location(s), and (d) signature in the sign-in book. The student must accompany their guest at all times.

The Wood Shop and the Metal Shop are unavailable to students outside the hours posted for each shop. For safety reasons, students are not allowed to use personal power tools outside the shop areas. All currently enrolled students will be given After-Hours access to designated computer labs in Ahmanson and Galef via their Student ID access card. After-Hours lab availability will be posted for each building with a schedule on the Labs and Shops Dashboard and is typically outside of instruction hours. Students using the labs after-hours are responsible for monitoring access to the respective lab and may not permit access to anyone that does not have a valid student ID. The computer lab doors are to remain locked and may not be propped-open or otherwise left ajar during after-hours use. Students will be permitted to leave and return to the labs after-hours using their valid Student ID access card.

In the event of an emergency, the red phones located on each floor provide direct access to the security guard and may also be used to call 9-1-1. Emergency blue phones are located on the perimeter of the campus and can be used to contact Campus Security.

## **Student Use of College Facilities**

All students planning to install an exhibit or perform an installation of any kind must first obtain an "Exhibition and Facilities Use contract." This must be done by filling out and obtaining the necessary signatures on the Contract, available from each respective department chair. Exhibitions, installations, art projects, or performances within, on, or about any Otis College premises without a valid Exhibition contract with all required signatures will not be permitted. All Otis College Students must abide by state and local fire, building, electrical, and health codes when preparing art piece installations, film shoots, and all other projects. When in doubt, students are encouraged to consult with their instructors or the Environmental health, safety, and security manager.

No student project may obstruct or block any fire exits, escape pathways, fire exit corridors, aisles, doors, or stairwells and staircases. Same applies to any preparatory work attributed to an individual student project. No student project may be suspended from, affixed to, prevent normal function of, or block access to any electrical fixtures. No student project may be installed in front of or inside elevators or inside facility restrooms. No student project may obstruct by virtue of its installation the normal functions of all receptionist areas, information desks, and security stations. Fire extinguishers, heat and smoke detectors, pull stations, sprinkler heads and pipes, automatic door closers, evacuation signs, exit signs, smoke-free

building signs, and emergency lights are all considered “life safety devices.” Tampering with, vandalizing, or misusing any of these devices constitutes a very serious offense under California law.

## Visiting a Class

Students on occasion and with permission from the faculty of record may invite a visitor to a class in which they are enrolled (all Otis College student classroom behavior is subject to the Code of Student Conduct as outlined in The Hoot; please refer to the Bringing Guests or Children/Dependents to Class policy regarding non-Otis College visitors). If a student enrolled in a course invites and seeks permission to bring a visitor, the student host is responsible for maintaining appropriate behaviors (both their own and that of an approved visitor) as outlined in the Code of Student Conduct. It is strongly recommended that students seek permission for classroom visitors at least 3 days in advance of a requested classroom visit.

## Health and Wellness

### Care Team (Campus Assessment, Response, Evaluation Team)

Otis College has a behavioral intervention team, known as the CARE Team. The CARE Team identifies, addresses, and assists students who are at risk due to behavioral, psychological, or physical health reasons. A student’s academic progress may also be at risk due to the layers of issues they may be facing, and the case management team addresses/suggests appropriate academic intervention efforts with the guidance of Academic Affairs, while also focusing on additional factors that may be influencing a student’s overall college experience. Anyone can report a student of concern to the CARE Team by completing a reporting form, found here: <https://www.otis.edu/incident-reports>.

## Immunizations

The immunizations listed below are required for all newly enrolled students. All forms must be submitted to the Student Health and Wellness Center before the first day of classes.

- MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella) and TB screening/test.
- MCV4 (meningitis vaccine) is required for all students planning on living in the Residence Hall or Otis College affiliated apartments. More info is available on SHWC website, <https://www.otis.edu/student-health-wellness-center>.
- The COVID-19 vaccine is strongly recommended.
- Information about the vaccine and exemptions can be found on our site: <https://www.otis.edu/student-health-wellness-center/incoming-students>.

## Infectious Disease Policy

Violation of College requirements or public health orders in place to reduce the risk of spreading infectious disease or failing to follow any applicable federal, state, and/or local public health orders. Examples include:

- Failing to follow College policies, procedures, and any other requirements in place to help reduce the risk of contracting or spreading infectious diseases.
- For example: not isolating and/or not notifying the College if you are symptomatic or have tested positive for COVID-19.

- Failing to comply with any additional or more specific actions required by a campus department, unit, or location, to limit the spread of infectious disease, while participating in a program or activity, utilizing a service or benefit, or using College facilities.
- For example not abiding by Residence Hall Handbook policies and/or signage related to minimizing the spread of infectious disease in the residence halls.
- Failing to comply with any directions given by an employee or public health official, including those related to isolation requirements, expectations, or guidelines. These directions can be communicated in any form—verbally, in email, through College announcements, and so forth.
- For example going to class, work, or visiting someone's residence when a person has been instructed to isolate due to exposure, symptoms or test results.
- If multiple public health orders or campus requirements apply, or in the event of conflict between or among them, students are required to follow the most restrictive requirement.

## **Student Health and Wellness Center Policies**

The Student Health and Wellness Center (SHWC) is available for all currently enrolled students if any medical or counseling needs arise. When a student is in significant emotional distress or experiencing a crisis, same-day appointments are available. Per Student Health and Wellness Center policy, excuse notes will not be provided for missing class. The SHWC has a strict no show and late cancellation policy. For more information on the SHWC list of policies, fees, and requirements, as well as student rights and responsibilities as it pertains to the functioning of the Student Health and Wellness Center, please visit <https://www.otis.edu/student-health-wellness-center>.

## **Student Health and Accident Insurance Programs**

All students are required to carry health insurance during their time at Otis College. Otis College provides a Student Health insurance Plan (SHIP) that all students are automatically enrolled in. If a student has insurance coverage that meets requirements set forth by the College, they may be eligible to waive out of the SHIP during designated waiver periods. For more information about the Student Health Insurance Program, contact the Student Health and Wellness Center.

All Otis College students are automatically covered by the Student Accident Insurance Program for campus-related activities. In the event of an accident or injury, the student should immediately report the injury to the Student Health and Wellness Center. If students need to seek medical treatment, they must work with the Student Health and Wellness Center to submit an Accident Claim.

## **Student Resources**

### **Basic Needs Emergency Funding**

This program is for currently registered students, to assist with purchasing supplies, books and other indirect educational costs needed to be successful at Otis College. Your request will be evaluated based on your demonstrated financial need (FAFSA Expected Family Contribution) or your extenuating circumstances detailed in your application. These are one-time funds that are meant for students facing unexpected situations.

Upon approval, processing time is approximately 3-5 business days.  
If you need emergency funding, please contact the One Stop at [onestop@otis.edu](mailto:onestop@otis.edu) to apply.

## **Feed-A-Need Food Assistance Program**

If a student is experiencing temporary food insecurity (i.e., can't afford to eat and/or do not have access to food within a given period of time), students may apply to the Feed-A-Need program once per semester. This program provides students with up to 14 free meals a semester, which can be used within the semester a student has been approved to receive free meals. To qualify for this program, a student must:

- Be a full-time enrollment in a BFA or MFA program;
- Be able to demonstrate need (i.e., disclosing on the Feed-A-Need application the current situation and why the student temporarily does not have access to food);

The application is located on the Student Dashboard at [my.otis.edu](http://my.otis.edu). Applications are processed within 48 hours. If a student is approved, meals will be placed on the student's One Card, and meals can be used at Elaine's Dining Hall only as a meal during meal hours.

## **Food Pantry**

Otis College has an open access food pantry and students who are enrolled have the ability to use their ID Card to access the Food Pantry at any time for any reason, no questions asked. This is open to any student, with no application requirements. Otis College solicits donations every semester from faculty, staff, students, and community members throughout the academic year.

## **Identification Cards/ One Card**

All students are required to obtain an Otis College Identification (ID) Card, available through the Student Engagement and Leadership Office and Campus Safety and Security. Otis College ID Cards remain valid with current enrollment. ID Cards are used for campus access, purchase food in Elaine's and the Café, pay for laundry, buy supplies in the campus art supply store, check out library materials, tools, and equipment, and to establish a student's identity as a currently enrolled student. Students are encouraged to treat the ID Card as an important document and to take care not to lose it. Students are required, upon the request of any Otis College faculty/instructor, staff, administrator, administrator, or security guard, to show their ID Card. Under no circumstances should students allow their card to be used by any other person. Lost or stolen ID Cards should be reported to the Office Campus Safety and Security. Replacement costs for lost cards is \$25.00.

## **Personal Appliances**

Students are prohibited from bringing personal appliances and personal electronics, including but not limited to coffee makers and teapots, microwaves, refrigerators, hot plates, and televisions to their campus studios. Such items will be removed and held by Campus Security for pick-up.

## **Posting Policy**



The College supports the freedom to publicize activities and distribute materials by internal or external entities relating to functions both on- and off-campus that benefit the College community and are consistent with the College's values.

## **General Posting**

Approval must be obtained prior to making use of campus facilities for the sale, promotion, posting or distribution of any type of material. All material must have a responsible sponsor stated directly on each piece and adhere to all policies that apply. All printed materials posted or distributed on campus by students and guests must meet the approval of the Director of Student Engagement and Leadership. Printed materials include flyers, posters, banners, announcements and advertisements. Bring your poster/flyer to the Office of Student Engagement and Leadership for stamped approval. Allow 24 hours turnaround time for approval.

## **Additional Approvals**

The Office of Student Engagement and Leadership (or designee) must approve all promotional material for any and all activities before being posted. Career Services must also approve announcements advertising employment opportunities for Otis' students.

Academic and Administrative office posters do not need the approval of the Office of Student Engagement and Leadership. The promoting group must obtain permission of the appropriate department to post on bulletin boards in Academic/Administrative areas for non-departmental ads.

## **Literature Distribution**

Literature distribution must be supervised by a student member of the sponsoring registered organization. Nonstudents may not distribute literature on campus without specific approval of the Director of Student Engagement and Leadership or the Dean of Student Affairs. Each sponsoring organization will be held responsible for the conduct of the distribution activity, including the behavior of any nonstudent participant. For a complete guide to posting on campus, you should contact the Director of Student Engagement and Leadership directly. Failure to adhere to this policy may result in losing the privilege to distribute or post printed materials on campus for a period of time to be specified by the Director of Student Activities.

## **Student Activities Fee**

Otis College's student activities fee is a fee based requirement for all enrolled students. The student activities fee supports the co-curricular activities and services produced by the Office of Student Engagement and Leadership. All fees associated with the student activities fee must be used within the purview of Student Engagement and Leadership and are managed by the Director of Student Engagement and Leadership and Dean of Student Affairs. Any proposed use of student fees that lie outside of student co-curricular programming and services within student activities, cannot be done without full engagement of the student community, namely Campus Activities Board (CAB) and Student Union (SU).

## **Student Education Records - Ferpa**

The Family and Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords students certain rights with respect to their education records. These rights include the following:

The right of the student to inspect and review their education records within 45 days from the day the College receives a request for access. Students should submit requests to the registrar, dean of student

affairs, department chair, or other appropriate official written requests that identify the record(s) they wish to inspect. The College official will make arrangements for access and notify the student of the time and place where the records may be viewed. If the requested records are not maintained by the College official to whom the request was submitted, that official shall advise the student of the correct official to whom the request should be addressed.

The right to request the amendment of education records that the student believes are inaccurate or misleading. Students may ask the College to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the College official responsible for the record, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the College decides not to amend the record as requested by the student, the College will notify the student of the decision and advise the student of his or her right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the student when notified of the right to a hearing.

The right of consent to disclosures of identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception that permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to College officials with legitimate educational interests. A College official is a person employed by the College in an administrative, supervisory, academic, research, or support staff position, including a member of law enforcement unit personnel and health staff; a person serving on the Board of Trustees; or a student serving on an official committee or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A College official has legitimate educational interests if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. The College may disclose certain information, known as directory information, at its discretion without consent. Students may refuse to let the College release any or all of this information. If a student does not want this information released, the student must send written notice annually to the Office of Registration and Records. Forms are available from that office. The College has established the following student information as public or directory information: student name, address, college assigned student email address, telephone number, birth date, major field of study, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, and the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended. Upon request, the College discloses education records without consent to officials of another school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the College to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

The Office that administers FERPA is the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202-4605

## **Student Work**

All artwork, projects, and other work (including digital work) done by any student while studying at the College or during any official College activity off-campus, are created for educational purposes. The College reserves the right to retain any student work for exhibition or publication, and each student grants to the College such rights to all student work and photographs. When the College has no further need for the student's work, it will be returned to the student if so requested in advance. Although the College will take caution in the care and handling of the student's work, the student releases the College from any liability for the loss, theft, or damage of any student work in its possession or control.

## **Unclaimed Student Work**

The College will dispose of any unclaimed materials or work left by students who have graduated, withdrawn, been dismissed, departed for summer vacation, or otherwise left the College. Any work blocking a fire exit, left in a hallway, or other non-storage area, or in any way interfering with the normal activities of the College will be removed without notice. The College will assume no liability for the loss, theft, or damage of any student work at any time. Liberal Arts and Sciences (LAS) assignments must be picked up from the LAS office by the end of semester following the semester in which the work was completed.

## **Sustainability**

The College demonstrates its commitment to sustainability throughout its facilities. Ahmanson Hall was retrofitted from a former IBM research facility, while the North Building was retrofitted from a former bank. The Galef Center was designed according to green principles using low-energy glass and HVAC systems. To reduce waste and conserve energy, Ahmanson Hall employs a highly efficient cooling tower heat exchanger system; computer-controlled "smart" variable speed heating, ventilating, and air conditioning (HVAC), thermostats, and elevators; and new water bottle filling stations. Across campus gray water is used for the sprinklers, non-emergency lighting is sensor-controlled, hand dryers reduce paper waste, energy-efficient ceramic kilns are fired during low peak hours, and lighting with ballast and fluorescent tubes all save energy and resources. In addition, the Café offers eco-friendly packaging and discounts for bringing your own cups, while College publications use Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) recycled paper and printing methods.

One of the most important ways that students can contribute to Otis College' sustainability initiatives is by separating trash into the proper receptacles on campus, taking care not to mix the different types. Excess materials and supplies can be donated to the campus Resource Exchange (located behind the ground floor wood/metal shop in the parking garage). Students can also trade for needed materials and supplies that may be in stock throughout the year, and on our Annual UpCycle Day, held on the second Wednesday of each fall. Students are also encouraged to carpool, bike or take public transportation to and from campus. More info about Otis College' sustainability issues is available at <https://www.otis.edu/about/initiatives/sustainability/index.html>.

## **Student Rights**

### **Demonstrations/ Peaceful Protests**

All currently enrolled students, undergraduate and graduate, have a right to demonstrate on College premises. The College reserves the right to limit, disallow or disband a demonstration which incites immediate, violent action or represents a violent action or actions that threaten or endanger the campus community, or if for any reason of time, place, or manner of behavior, the demonstration materially disrupts class work or other College business, involves substantial disorder, or invades the rights of others.

While the rights of students under the First Amendment to the Constitution, as applied by California law, will always be protected, demonstrations are generally subject to the following limits:

Demonstrators entering campus buildings for the purpose of conducting orderly and peaceful demonstrations may not enter or occupy rooms or offices; obstruct entry, exit, or restrict the free movement of persons; block hallways, doorways, stairs or exits of college facilities; materially interrupt or interfere with college business functions; or remain in buildings after close of normal hours of operation.

For safety and security reasons, demonstrators are not allowed to enter residence halls; private offices; spaces where classes or private meetings are being held or immediately scheduled to be held; libraries; facilities or areas containing valuable or sensitive materials, collections, equipment, records protected by law or by existing College policy such as educational records, student-related or personnel-related records, or financial records; security, utilities, or other facilities or services vital to the business functions of the College.

Demonstrators shall not engage in activities that are illegal, which violate the rights of others, or that harm or threaten to harm a person or property. Further, any demonstration that violates College policy may be discontinued, either at the direction of the administrator (or their designee) of the College department administratively responsible for the space in which the demonstration is occurring, or at the direction of Otis College Campus Safety and Security team. Blocking entry to or free exit from buildings, impeding or obstructing the free movement of others, engaging in harassing behavior, or inciting immediate, violent action that represents a violent action or actions that threaten or endanger the campus community, to the campus community is prohibited under the Code of Student Conduct.

## **Counter Demonstrations**

A protest, demonstration, or event on campus may invite another form of protest. When these occasions arise, all student members of the College community have a right to expression consistent with these guidelines. In the interest of community safety and protection of rights, the College may designate a separate protest area for counter protestors. As with demonstrations, counter-demonstrations must not infringe upon the rights of others to engage in peaceful assembly, orderly protest, free exchange of ideas, or interfere with the rights of others to make use of campus facilities or attend College functions. This includes, but is not limited to, not damaging, defacing, marking, altering, or interfering with signs, tables or exhibits, or other items posted or displayed by others.

## **Ensuring a Productive Demonstration**

To help make sure that all participants stay safe, students, student groups, and student organizations planning to host demonstrations or rallies are strongly encouraged to follow these guidelines:

1. Reserve any outdoor space or indoor space using the reservation platform. Students must meet with the Dean of Student Affairs Office in order to complete this step and submit an official reservation.
2. Meet with Campus Safety and Security early in the planning process. This allows any potential safety issues to be addressed and for organizers to create safety and security procedures. At times, Campus Safety and Security officers may be present at a demonstration, protest, or event to ensure the safety of all participants and provide a more immediate response in the event of an emergency.
3. Representatives of the organization sponsoring a demonstration should meet with the Director of Student Engagement and Leadership or other authorized Student Affairs staff to discuss and develop necessary safety and security and crowd management procedures, to ensure that expectations, rights and responsibilities are mutually understood, and to provide the Director of Student Engagement and Leadership or other Student Affairs staff with sufficient information to evaluate the crowd management and safety and security plans regarding the demonstrations
4. When a campus demonstration is scheduled, organizers can expect the College personnel present (typically staff from Student Affairs and/or Campus Safety and Security) to help ensure that organizers' rights are protected and the college's regular and essential operations and activities continue. Such regular and essential operations and activities include, but are not limited to, classes, meetings, and the standard operation of college offices and facilities. As the college is concerned about the entire community and visitors, particular attention will be paid to managing crowds, maintaining access to buildings, sidewalks, streets, etc., and personal safety for all.

- Organizers are strongly encouraged to inform attendees of the Code of Conduct and consequences for failure to adhere to its expectations. To support overall demonstration coordination and safety for participants, organizers should have at least one representative present throughout the demonstration. Be aware that some participants may have physical challenges that require assistance. Disability Services can provide advice on accommodating participants with disabilities or mobility challenges, and can assist in connecting students to appropriate resources.

*NOTE: The Otis College campus is private property, and individuals who do not have specific College business are not permitted on campus and will be escorted off the premises.*

## **Due Process Procedure**

In the event a student has an issue or concern that is not otherwise addressed or provided for in this publication or on the Otis College website, the student may inform the Dean of Student Affairs or designee of the issue or concern. Otis College's subsequent determination and resolution of the issue or concern shall be final.

## **Field Trips**

Field trips which include off-campus tours of galleries and working studios, and other College-related off-campus activities, are part of the educational experience at Otis College. Students participating in field trips are expected to adhere to the same standards of behavior as published in The Hoot and in the Travel Study Behavior Code of Conduct. Any violation of the regulations or local, state, or federal laws may result in disciplinary action or sanctions by the College. Students who choose to travel to the site of a field trip early or remain at the site after the planned activity is completed, or who willfully separate from the group, do so at their own risk. Students are responsible for carrying their own personal medication while on a field trip.

## **Freedom of Speech and Expression**

The College supports every individual's right to freedom of expression consistent with the forum (area of campus) in which the expression is made. The College also recognizes the importance of fostering a culture of tolerance and civility that is a cornerstone for the accomplishment of its educational goals. Within the classroom, visual and/or oral demonstrations, depictions, or conduct that may be offensive to an individual will not be restricted when there is a legitimate pedagogical context, such as material having an appropriate connection to course subject matter. Similarly, campus discourse on topics of political, artistic, or social issues that are conducted consistent with the nature of the forum and reasonable institutional limitations that are clear and unambiguous will be supported.

Expression that is severe, persistent, and objectively offensive, or directed toward an individual based upon that individual's protected status (e.g., sex/gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, disability or age), is not a protected form of speech or expression and can form the basis of a violation of Otis College policies, especially when coupled with prohibited behaviors. Other limitations on free speech include endangering someone or threatening them, inciting violence, using "fighting words" directed at an individual or group that directly provoke violence, defamation, obscenity, and expression that has a discriminatory effect such that it limits or denies someone's educational or employment access, benefits, and/or opportunities.

## **Freedom Wall**

The Freedom Wall at Otis College of Art and Design is a “continuous” outdoor creative space where students can express themselves and/or visually share ideas, text, and images. Use of The Freedom Wall is a privilege afforded to students with the expectation that its use will foster a community of respectful engagement. The Freedom Wall is overseen by the Students’ Union which seeks to provide a safe place for student expression while maintaining a respectful and inclusive environment for the College community.

## **Proper Use Guidelines**

1. The Freedom Wall is for every student’s temporary use—it is not “owned” by any person or group. Work can be added and removed from The Freedom Wall at any time, within its clearly marked borders.
2. All work can be removed, covered, altered, or reused by other students; makers forfeit ownership of their work when contributing to The Freedom Wall.
3. All users of The Freedom Wall must adhere to the Core Values and Behavioral Expectations outlined in the Code of Student Conduct; misconduct such as but not limited to hate speech, defamation, discriminatory harassment, threats, bullying, or intimidation counter Otis College’s core values, and are prohibited.
4. Objects attached to The Freedom Wall can protrude from its surface a maximum of 6” and cannot pose threat or cause injury to passersby. All objects should not weigh more than 10 lbs. All relief and/or attached objects must be safely secured to The Freedom Wall.
5. Materials emitting noxious or hazardous fumes, gasses, or vapors during application are not permitted; materials that remain toxic or volatile upon drying/curing/setting are not permitted; all creations should become materially stable and inert within periods normally associated with common water- or solvent-based media (1-6 hours).
6. If painting or using wet media, you must use provided tarps to cover the drain—All storm water drains to the Ocean.

The college reserves the right at any time without justification or cause to remove artwork from The Freedom Wall.

## **Gambling**

Students are expected to abide by the federal laws and the laws of California prohibiting illegal gambling, including online gaming. Gambling for money or other things of value on campus or at College-sponsored activities is prohibited except as permitted by law. Such prohibited activity includes, but is not limited to betting on, wagering on, or selling pools on any College event; possessing on one’s person or premises (e.g., room, residence unit, car) any card, book, or other device for registering bets; knowingly permitting the use of one’s premises or one’s phone or other electronic communications device for illegal gambling; knowingly receiving or delivering a letter, package, or parcel related to illegal gambling; offering, soliciting, or accepting a bribe to influence the outcome of an event; and involvement in bookmaking or wagering pools.

## **Hazing**

All acts of hazing as defined by this policy, by any individual student or sanctioned or promoted by any College registered student club or organization and any of its members or alumni are prohibited. Students are entitled to be treated with consideration and respect, and no individual may perform an act that is likely to cause physical or psychological harm to any other person within the College community. Accordingly, any such behavior is expressly forbidden when related to the admission, initiation, pledging, joining, or any other group-affiliation activity.

Any student or organization found to be involved in any hazing activity will face conduct action and may be subjected to suspension or expulsion from the College. A violation of this policy may exist irrespective of any alleged voluntary or consensual participation in the activity by the person(s) being abused.

The law of California makes it a criminal offense for anyone to participate in hazing. Otis College policy is based upon the proposition that students are entitled to be treated with consideration and respect. Otis College regulations on hazing are synonymous with state law as follows (Calif. Penal Code §245.6):

1. It shall be unlawful to engage in hazing, as defined in this section.
2. "Hazing" means any method of preinitiation or initiation into a student organization or student body, whether or not the organization or body is officially recognized by an educational institution, which is likely to cause serious bodily injury to any former, current, or prospective student of any school, community College, College, university, or other educational institution in this state. The term hazing does not include customary athletic events or school sanctioned events.
3. A violation of this section that does not result in serious bodily injury is a misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of not less than one hundred dollars (\$100), nor more than five thousand dollars (\$5,000), or imprisonment in the county jail for not more than one year, or both.
4. Any person who personally engages in hazing that results in death or serious bodily injury as defined in paragraph (4) of subdivision (f) of Section 243 of the Penal Code, is guilty of either a misdemeanor or a felony, and shall be punished by imprisonment in county jail not exceeding one year, or by imprisonment in the state prison.
5. The person against whom the hazing is directed may commence a civil action for injury or damages. The action may be brought against any participants in the hazing, or any organization to which the student is seeking membership whose agents, directors, trustees, managers, or officers authorized, requested, commanded, participated in, or ratified the hazing.
6. Prosecution under this section shall not prohibit prosecution under any other provision of law.

## **Relationships Between Faculty/staff and Students**

Otis College of Art and Design prohibits all faculty and staff members, including graduate teaching assistants, and others involved in teaching activities, from engaging in or pursuing dating, sexual, or intimate relationships with students, including consensual relationships.

Faculty and staff members are in a position of trust and power with respect to a student's educational activities. Relationships with students can jeopardize the effective functioning of the College's mission by the appearance of unfairness in the exercise of professional judgment. This includes, but is not limited to, those students whom faculty or staff currently, or may in the future, instruct, mentor, evaluate, supervise, advise, or exercise other forms of professional responsibilities towards, such as allocating resources, selecting students for scholarships and awards, and providing recommendations or references.

The purpose of this policy is to create and maintain a professional learning and work environment that is free from unlawful discrimination, harassment, and exploitation. This policy recognizes that there is often an inherent inequity in dating, sexual, or intimate relationships between faculty/staff and students. Such relationships often result in perceptions of favoritism, bias, or discrimination that undermine academic achievements or decisions affecting students. The College has a policy against discrimination and harassment including, without limitation, sexual harassment. Dating, sexual, or intimate relationships between faculty/staff and students may result in claims of sexual harassment and questions about the voluntariness of the relationship. Please refer to College policies on Harassment, Sexual Harassment, and Non-Retaliation for more details.

## **Shoes on Campus**

For the safety and wellbeing of the student community, all students must wear shoes at all times on campus property with the exception of a student's residential room.

## **Smoking on Campus**

Smoking and/or consuming tobacco (including chewing tobacco) or any other tobacco-related products is prohibited inside all campus buildings, instructional areas (workshops, etc.), gallery and studio spaces, and within the parking structure. For the purposes of this policy, tobacco-related products shall include all those containing either tobacco as an ingredient or any chemical derivatives and byproducts of tobacco (i.e., nicotine). Tobacco-related products include cartridges for smokeless cigarettes, electronic cigarettes/vapes, hookahs, and portable vaporizers. All outside smoking is restricted to the designated smoking area located on the east side of the Galef building.

## **Student Behavioral Expectations**

As members of the Otis community, students are expected to behave responsibly at all times. The College expects and trusts its students to be honest in their studio, classroom, and community endeavors. Students are expected to assist in maintaining an environment that supports effective teaching and learning, and a culture of civility and respect for others. Any behavior that disrupts or interferes with the functioning of a classroom, studio, or College-sponsored off-campus venue may therefore result in students being asked to leave the class. In addition, students may be subject to disciplinary action as per the Code of Student Conduct and/or have their grade lowered in the course.

## **Complaint Procedures**

### **Student Complaint Disclosure and Procedures**

On October 29, 2010, the United State Department of Education issued a Final Regulations on Program Integrity Issues [75 FR 66831] that includes regulations at 34 CFR §600.9 requiring that educational institutions not created by the state be "established by name as an educational institution by a State through a charter, statute, constitutional provision or other action . . ." and be "authorized to operate educational programs beyond secondary level, including programs leading to a degree or certificate." California's independent, non-profit, WSCUC accredited colleges and universities are authorized within the meaning of 34 CFS §600.9 et seq for the following reason:

1. The California Master Plan for Higher Education specifically recognizes that California's independent institutions of higher education "share goals designed to provide education opportunity and success to the broadest possible range of [California's] citizens" with the state's public segments (California Education Code § 66010.2).
2. The Legislature "recognizes the role of independent, regionally accredited postsecondary education in California postsecondary education," and that "statewide planning, policy coordination, and review of postsecondary education shall include attention to the contributions of the independent institutions in meeting the state's goals of access, quality, educational equity, economic development, and student aid" (California Education Code §66014.5(a)).
3. The Legislature in adopting the Private Postsecondary Education Act chose to exempt institutions that are "accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, or the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges" from the Act (California Education Code, Title 3, Division 10, Part 59, Chapter 8).



4. All of the institutions covered by the WSCUC exemption to the California Private Postsecondary Education Act of 2009 have had to meet strict standards regarding classroom instruction quality, adequate facilities, and financial stability. These institutions are eligible to participate in California's student aid program known as the Cal Grant Program, and are subject to audit by the California Student Aid Commission.
5. California's long standing "Supervision of Trustees and Fundraisers for Charitable Purposes Act" [Cal. Gov't Code § 12598] provides public means to submit complaints regarding non-profit colleges and universities that abuse their status under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (23 U.S.C. §501(c) (3)), and grants to the California Attorney General broad powers to undertake law enforcement investigations and legal actions to protect the public interest.

Under existing law, the Attorney General maintains oversight of nonprofit colleges and universities to assure compliance with their stated public purpose. Accordingly, final authority rests with the Attorney General, who can review any complaint to assure that a student's complaint was subjected to a fair process consistent with procedures established by the nonprofit college or university. A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about a situation that the person making the complaint wants to see rectified. The Student Complaint Procedure is intended to resolve students' complaints related to College policies, programs, and services. The goal of the procedure is to allow students to exercise their due process rights with a simple and easily understood process.

Any Otis College student, or person acting on a student's behalf, may express or file a complaint. All Otis College faculty and staff will refrain from any reprisal or threat of reprisal against any student registering a complaint.

The Student Complaint Procedure consists of two parts: making internal complaints (within Otis College) and making external complaints (to agencies outside of Otis College). When making an internal complaint regarding the handling of student education records, academic or behavioral conduct, harassment, sexual harassment, or grade appeals, the student complainant should consult The Hoot for specific procedures.

## **Internal Complaint Procedure**

### **Step 1: Informal Complaint**

Students should first attempt to resolve concerns or complaints informally. To make an informal complaint, the student expresses his or her concerns or complaints to the faculty or staff member most directly involved. A student may make an informal complaint verbally or in writing. Students may request that the person's supervisor be involved in this informal resolution process. Any student needing advice on how to begin an informal complaint should consult the Dean or Assistant Dean of Student Affairs.

### **Step 2: Formal Complaint**

If the student is not satisfied with the conclusions of the informal process, the student may make a formal complaint. Such complaints are made with an expectation that the College will formally investigate and provide a written summary of findings and action steps, if any. Students are normally required to go through the informal process before initiating the formal process.

To make a formal complaint, the student, or person acting on the student's behalf, submits the complaint using the online Student Complaint Form, available at [https://otiscollege.formstack.com/forms/student\\_complaint](https://otiscollege.formstack.com/forms/student_complaint). Using the form helps to ensure that full information is provided and makes it easier for the College to respond to the student's concerns. However, students can also use their own format for writing their complaint and then e-mail (studentaffairs@otis.edu), mail, or deliver (Ahmanson Hall, 2nd floor) it to the Office of Student Affairs, Ahmanson 206.

Otis College will refer the nature of the complaint to the appropriate office or administrators that have oversight and conduct an investigation into the complaint, including interviews with relevant persons, a record review, or other efforts that are necessary to form an accurate and factual basis for the resolution of the complaint. Once the investigation is concluded, Otis College will prepare a brief written report that summarizes the complaint and a finding (either “founded,” meaning a violation has occurred, or “unfounded,” meaning the complaint is without merit). The written report will normally be provided to the student complainant and any relevant persons within 20 business days.

## External Complaint Procedure

If the student believes that his or her complaint warrants further attention and is related to the College’s compliance with academic program quality and accrediting standards, the student is directed to contact the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) at <https://wascsenior.app.box.com/s/x2j13qq6vabssp95euk>. WSCUC is the primary academic accrediting body for Otis College of Art and Design. Complaints that a student believes warrant further consideration after exhausting the reviews of Otis College and WSCUC may be submitted to the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education for review of a complaint.

The student may file a complaint with the Bureau of Private Postsecondary Education (“Bureau”) using the [Bureau's complaint form](#). The Bureau may review and, as appropriate, act on the complaint, or may refer the complaint to an appropriate state agency or entity for resolution (e.g, to WSCUC, ACPE, California Student Aid Commission, Attorney General’s office, various state licensing bodies) or request reconsideration by Otis College of Art and Design. The Bureau retains the responsibility to determine whether a referred complaint remains pending or is resolved.

### The Bureau may be contacted at:

P.O. Box 980818

West Sacramento, CA 95798-0818

Phone: (916) 431-6959 or (888) 370-7589

FAX: (916) 263-1895

Email: [bppe@dca.ca.gov](mailto:bppe@dca.ca.gov) <https://www.bppe.ca.gov> If the student believes that his or her complaint warrants further attention and is related to the handling of the student’s education records, a complaint may be filed with the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202-4605.

Most complaints made to media outlets or public figures, including members of the California legislature, Congress, the Governor, or individual trustees of Otis College of Art and Design are referred to the College President’s Office.

Nothing in this disclosure limits any right that you may have to seek civil or criminal legal action to resolve your complaints.

Otis College of Art and Design has provided this disclosure to you in compliance with the requirements of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, as regulated in CFR 34, Sections 600.9 (b) (3) and 668.43(b). If anything in this disclosure is out of date, please notify the Vice President of Student Affairs and Campus Diversity and Inclusion at:

9045 Lincoln Blvd.

Los Angeles, CA 90045

310-665-6961

[studentaffairs@otis.edu](mailto:studentaffairs@otis.edu)

# **Technology and Information**

## **Computers and Electronic Devices in The Classroom**

The use of computers and electronic devices in the classroom can greatly enhance teaching and empower student learning. However, there are circumstances under which the use of such devices may interfere with teaching and learning. Faculty may, at their discretion, restrict the use of computers and electronic devices in their classrooms except in the case of students whose accommodation for a documented disability includes the use of an assistive device. Restrictions include requesting that students power down their devices, stow them away, or turn them in for the duration of the class session.

## **Computer Network and Internet Access**

The computer network is the property of the College and may be used only for legitimate College purposes. A user expressly waives any right of privacy in anything he or she creates, stores, sends, or receives using the College's computer equipment or Internet access. A user consents to allow College personnel access to and review of all materials created, stored, sent, or received by the user through any College network or Internet connection. The College has the right to monitor and log any and all aspects of its computer system including, but not limited to, Internet sites visited by users, email traffic, chat and newsgroups, file downloads, and all communications sent and received by users. The College has the right to utilize software that makes it possible to identify and block access to Internet activities that limit computer and network resources.

## **Copyright Infringement**

The downloading, possession, distribution, or copying of a copyrighted work—for example, a document, photograph, piece of music, or video—is an infringement of copyright unless the person downloading is properly authorized to do so by the copyright owner. Without proper authorization from the copyright owner, these activities are prohibited. All computer equipment, software, and facilities used by students and employees are proprietary to Otis College of Art and Design. Otis College reserves the right to withdraw any of the facilities privileges provided by the College if the College considers that a student's or employee's use of them is in any way unacceptable.

## **Equipment Use and Check-Out**

Currently enrolled students, with a valid Otis College ID, and a completed Checkout Agreement Form may borrow equipment from any of the designated labs and shops Checkout Centers during open hours. Students are automatically assigned an account in the equipment checkout system when they register each semester. The Checkout Agreement outlines the terms and conditions of the transaction as well as the students' responsibility while using the equipment. Students are accountable for all fees, repair, and replacement costs attributed to equipment associated with their Otis College ID. Students must complete a safety seminar to use shop facility equipment and be registered with Technical Support Services. Safety programs will be given at the beginning of each term and periodically throughout the year.

## **Filming, Photography, and Recording Devices on Campus**

Filming, photography, and recording will be permitted on the Otis College campus and other leased sites provided that such activity does not interfere with the educational, operational, and normal program functions of the College and does not pose a security or safety risk. Requests for filming, photography, and

other recording devices on campus may require approval via submission of completed Exhibition and Facility Usage Contract forms.

## **External-Use Filming or Photography**

External-use filming or photography for commercial or noncommercial purposes by private and commercial entities not affiliated with Otis College and for which Otis College will not own the copyright to the work created, requires a filed proposal to be approved by the Vice President of Information Technology and Operations oversight, with all relevant fees made payable to Otis College of Art and Design.

## **Internal-Use Filming or Photography**

Internal-use filming or photography contracted by a Otis College personnel or department for non-commercial purposes for which Otis College owns artistic or creative control may be subject to oversight by Facilities Management unless done without interrupting normal business operations, does not require any special campus services (i.e., security, production set up, facilities assistance, etc.), and does not violate applicable fire and life safety codes.

## **Incidental, Non-Commercial Filming, Photography, and Other Recording Devices**

No permit is required for the incidental filming or photography by Otis College faculty, staff, and students creating work to be used for non-commercial, educational, or administrative purposes provided such incidental filming, photography or recording can be done without interrupting campus programs, classes, activities, or normal business operations, does not require any special campus services (i.e., security, production set up, facilities assistance, etc.), and does not violate applicable fire and life safety codes.

In addition, no permit is required for the incidental, unobtrusive filming, photography, or recording by visitors or tourists to Otis College as long as such filming, photography, or recording is not used for commercial purposes at any time without the express written permission of the Vice President of Information Technology and Operations. The use of recording devices without the express consent of those being recorded is prohibited.

## **Strictly Prohibited Filming, Photography, and Recording**

All filming, photography, and recording within Otis College parking structures are prohibited. In addition, all photography, video, and audio recording will not be allowed in any of the following established private areas at any time:

Bathrooms, shower areas, locker and changing rooms—areas where a reasonable person might change clothing, including private offices; Rooms used for medical, physical, or mental therapy or treatment; and entrances, exits, lobbies, and hallways to on-campus counseling centers; during the course of meetings with College administration, unless permission is granted.

Notwithstanding the aforementioned, the College reserves the right to prohibit any filming, photography, or recording on its premises or at any leased property, for any or no reason.

If filming, photography, and/or recording is related to an ADA accommodation, students should contact the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs at (310) 846-2554. Employees seeking ADA accommodations should contact Human Resources at (310) 845-2597 or [humanresources@otis.edu](mailto:humanresources@otis.edu).

## Intellectual Property Policy

Otis College recognizes that students, faculty, employees, contractors, administrators, and the College itself often create or contribute to innovative thought, design, and invention. Accordingly, the College has adopted an Intellectual Property Policy to equitably address these matters, thereby providing further motivation for creative expression. In general, the policy provides that those who create independently of the College reap the entire fruits of their labor, while those who create with the support of the College share the benefits of their creations with the College on a fair and just basis. Please refer to the College's Policy on Intellectual Property Ownership for more detail.

- **Preamble**

- The creation of copyrightable and patentable works is one of the ways the College fulfills its mission of contributing to the advancement of knowledge and education. The College encourages the creation of original works as well as the free expression and exchange of ideas. This Policy is intended to embody the spirit of academic tradition, which provides intellectual property ownership to faculty and students for their scholarly and aesthetic copyrighted works, innovative invention, and design, and is otherwise consistent with the United States copyright and patent laws, which provide the College ownership of its employment-related works.

- **Purpose and Scope**

- This statement sets forth the College's Policy on copyright and patent ownership for works and inventions produced at, by, or through the College. This Policy applies to College employees (including faculty), students, and other persons or entities using College facilities or resources or acting under contract with the College for commissioned works.

- **Definitions**

- For purposes of this Policy, the following definitions shall apply:
  - *Copyrights*: Copyrights are the intangible property rights granted by Federal statute for an original work fixed in a tangible form of expression. Copyrights provide the owner(s) with the following exclusive rights in a work: to reproduce, to prepare derivative works, to distribute by sale or otherwise, to perform publicly, and to display publicly.
  - *Independent Effort*: Independent Effort means creation, inquiry, investigation, design, and engineering to advance knowledge, the arts, or invention where the specific choice, content, course, and direction of the effort is determined without direct assignment or supervision by the College.
  - *Intellectual Property*: Intellectual Property means Copyrights and Patents.
  - *License*: A license is a contract in which an owner of Intellectual Property rights grants to another permission to exercise one or more of those rights.
  - *Originator(s)*: An originator is a person who invents or produces a work by his or her own innovation, intellectual labor, and creativity. When there is more than one originator, the ownership of each originator's contribution shall be considered separately pursuant to this Policy.
  - *Patent*: A patent is a right granted by the federal government to exclude others from making, using, or selling the invention or design claimed in a patent deed for a specified period of time.
  - *Royalties*: Royalties are payments made to an owner of Intellectual Property rights for the privilege of exercising one or more of those rights.

- *Sponsor*: A sponsor is a person, organization, or agency that provides funding, equipment, or other support for the College to carry out a specified project pursuant to a written agreement. Sponsors include federal, state, local, and other governmental entities, as well as private industry, educational institutions, and private foundations.
  - *College Facilities*: College Facilities are buildings, equipment, and other facilities.
  - *College Funds*: College Funds are funds, regardless of source, that are administered under the control, responsibility, or authority of the College.
  - *College Resources*: College Resources are College Funds and Facilities.
  - *Work*: Any copyrightable expression including, without limitation, literary work (written lectures are included); musical work, including any accompanying words; dramatic work, including any accompanying music; pantomimes and choreographic work; pictorial, graphic, and sculptural work; motion pictures and other audiovisual work; sound recordings; collections and anthologies; digital artwork (still or animated); and computer software, as well as any patentable invention or design.
- **Intellectual Property Ownership by Category of Work**
    - *Scholarly/Aesthetic Work*: A Scholarly/Aesthetic Work is a work originated by a faculty member, student, or employee of the College not within the course and scope of employment and education, resulting from efforts independent of College Resources. Ownership of rights to Scholarly/Aesthetic Works shall reside with the originator, unless they are also sponsored works or contracted facilities works.
    - *Personal Work*: A Personal Work is a work that originates outside the course and scope of College employment and education and without the use of College Resources. Ownership of rights to Personal Works shall reside with the originator.
    - *Student Work*: A Student Work is a work produced by a registered student without the use of College Funds (other than Student Financial Aid), which is produced outside any College employment, and is not a sponsored, contracted facilities, or commissioned work. Ownership of rights to Student Works shall reside with the originator.
    - *Sponsored Work*: A Sponsored Work is a Work first produced by or through the College in the performance of a written agreement between the College and a sponsor. Ownership of rights to Sponsored Works shall be with the College.
    - *Commissioned Work*: A Commissioned Work is a work produced for College purposes by individuals not employed by the College or by College employees outside the scope of their regular College employment. When the College commissions for the production of a copyright work, it shall be a work-for-hire and title shall reside with the College. In all commissioned work, ownership shall be specified in a written agreement.
    - *Contracted Facilities Work*: A Contracted Facilities Work is a work produced by non-College personnel or College personnel acting outside the course and scope of their employment, using designated College facilities pursuant to a written agreement. Ownership of rights to Contracted Facilities Work shall be governed by the agreement permitting use of the specified College facilities. Depending on the nature of the facility, and the nature and extent of the use, the agreement may specify that ownership of resulting Intellectual Property rights rests with the College, or the College may simply be paid a fee for the use of the facility.
    - *Institutional Work*: Except as otherwise provided in this Policy, the College shall own all Intellectual Property rights to works made by College employees (including faculty) and students in the course and scope of their employment and education, and shall own all rights to works made with the use of College resources.
    - *Rights Acquired by Assignment or Will*: The College may acquire rights to Intellectual Property by assignment or will pursuant to the terms of a written agreement or testament. The terms of such agreement or testament should be consistent with this Policy and other College policies governing such acquisitions.
    - *Ownership of Joint Works*: Ownership of Joint Works shall be determined by separately assessing the category of work of each originator pursuant to Section IV above. Rights

between joint owners shall be determined pursuant to patent or copyright law, as applicable.

- **Agreement and Notification**

- Prior to any use of a College facility by non-College personnel or by College personnel outside of College employment and education, a signed agreement shall be required that specifies the disposition of Intellectual Property rights. College employees using College facilities for work outside of College employment are responsible for bringing this to the College's attention so that an appropriate agreement for use can be negotiated.
- Those participating in sponsored projects must have an agreement on file with the College that acknowledges the following: (a) individual and joint responsibility to produce and deliver Sponsored Works to the sponsor, as required by the terms of the sponsored project agreement and/or to the College when so requested, and (b) that ownership of Sponsored Works shall vest in the College.

- **Licensing and Royalties**

- The College may assign or license its Intellectual Property rights to others. Net royalties or income received from such transactions may be shared with the originator(s) of such Works as follows:
  - Net proceeds received by the College,
  - Less: Patenting/Copyrighting and related costs. Sharing of net remaining proceeds:
    - 33 1/3 percent to the originator(s) for personal use and 66 2/3 percent to the College.

- **Copyright Responsibilities and Administration**

For works subject to this Policy, the College Administration is authorized to do as follows:

1. Issue guidelines, implementing procedures, and supplementary policies consistent with this Policy. These may include directives regarding licensure, disposition of royalty income, and other rights related to Intellectual Property.
2. Apply for patents, register copyrights, and, pursuant to written agreements, acquire and accept Intellectual Property rights from third parties and sell, assign, or grant licenses in the name of the College for any Intellectual Property rights.

## **Library Policies**

Circulation privileges are available to current Otis College faculty, staff and students enrolled in full time degree programs. Certificate Students within Extension may be granted check-out privileges, but must first check eligibility with their department. To obtain privileges, Patrons must bring their Otis College ID card and complete a Library Usage Agreement. Patrons are required to present a valid Otis College ID card when requesting all library transactions. For convenience, some transactions can take place online. From the Library catalog home page, patrons are able to view account status, place holds on materials and renew eligible library materials. Specific policies regarding circulation, overdue fines and lost or damaged materials, library usage, library sanctions for conduct violations etc. are available on the Library website. In addition, although circulation privileges will not be granted to them, the Library welcomes visitors interested in serious art studies. Access is granted to visitors during specially arranged hours only.

## **Official Notices**

College e-mail is the College's primary means of communication with students. Students are responsible for all communication delivered to their College email address. Methods for official notice at Otis College are text messaging, Otis College email, postal mail, departmental mailboxes, and bulletin boards.

# Academic Policies

## Graduation Policies

At Otis College of Art and Design, the academic policies are designed to support students' educational journey and ensure they meet the requirements for graduation. To graduate, students must complete all required coursework, maintain a minimum GPA as specified by their program, and fulfill any additional departmental requirements. The college conducts degree audits to verify that students are on track to graduate, and students must apply for graduation by the specified deadline to be eligible to participate in commencement ceremonies.

[Learn more about Graduation Policies](#)

## Transfer Credits

Transfer credits are carefully evaluated by Otis College to ensure they align with the institution's academic standards. Students seeking to transfer credits from other accredited institutions must provide official transcripts and course descriptions for review. The college may accept transfer credits for courses that are equivalent to those offered at Otis, typically with a grade of 'C' or better. However, there is a limit to the number of transfer credits that can be applied toward degree requirements, and some programs may have specific restrictions on which courses can be transferred.

[Learn more about Transfer Credit Policies](#)

## Enrollment and Registration

Enrollment and registration policies at Otis College are structured to provide flexibility while ensuring students progress steadily toward their degrees. Students are required to register for classes each semester by the published deadlines and must meet with their academic advisors to ensure they are enrolling in the appropriate courses. The college also has policies in place for course add/drop periods, withdrawal, and leave of absence. Additionally, other academic policies cover areas such as academic integrity, attendance, grading, and student conduct, all of which are designed to maintain a fair and rigorous academic environment.

[Learn more about Enrollment and Registration Policies](#)

# Graduation Information

## Graduation Requirements

A final degree evaluation determines that all course requirements for the major and the minimum grade point average requirements have been met.

A BFA student must have completed a minimum of 120 degree applicable credits and have a minimum overall cumulative grade point average of 2.0. MFA students must successfully complete all required coursework for their program with a minimum grade of Low Pass. Students anticipating graduation must complete a Petition for Graduation available online through the MyOtis. All graduating students must have



their accounts current with Student Financial Services. In addition, graduating students who have received grants, loans, or other aid must schedule an exit interview with the Office of Financial Aid.

Official diplomas are ordered after verification of successful completion of degree requirements and after all accounts have been cleared. The student will be notified by the One Stop once their diploma becomes available. Students must keep the One Stop informed of their current contact information to ensure that diplomas are mailed to the correct address. If you have questions about your diploma, please contact the One Stop at [onestop@otis.edu](mailto:onestop@otis.edu).

BFA program students must complete all degree requirements within a period of ten (10) years from their first date of registration. MFA students must complete all degree requirements within five (5) years from their first date of registration.

Students must normally fulfill the department major or program requirements in effect at the time of their entry year as Foundation students. But, if these requirements have been revised, students may be required to fulfill the requirements with the most recent date. Students are advised to consult with the Academic Advising Office and the Chairperson of the major department or the appropriate Program Director for the correct information.

Otis College strives to assure the accuracy of the information in the Course Catalog. However, the College reserves the right to make corrections as necessary to the Course Catalog. Otis College reserves the right to make changes to degree program requirements, academic and administrative policies and regulations, and course offerings published in the Course Catalog. These changes will be reflected as official addenda to the Course Catalog.

## **Credit Requirements**

The BFA degree requires completion of 120 total credits for all departments. This number includes a total minimum of 42 liberal arts and sciences units. Please check department listings for actual credit distribution requirements.

The MFA degree in Fine Arts and Graphic Design, requires completion of 60 credits. Please check department listings for actual credit distribution requirements.

## **Definition of Studio and Lecture Credit**

One credit unit generates 3 hours of academic engagement (instructional activities + homework). A credit hour is an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates no less than:

1. One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or
2. At least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1) of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution, including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

In eLearning Classes: One credit unit is awarded for 3 hours of academic engagement (instructional activities + homework). Instructional activities can be completed either face-to-face, synchronously or asynchronously, and constitute attendance during virtual instruction. Students in eLearning courses are

responsible for the completion of all required academic engagements (instructional activities + homework).

## **Foundation Studio Requirement**

Students must complete any missing Foundation studio courses before they begin their junior level studio courses. The missing requirements may be taken during the fall, spring, or summer semesters at Otis College or, with the Foundation Chair's approval, they may be completed off campus at an accredited community college or university. In some cases, students may be permitted to substitute a different studio course for selected missing Foundation work. The Foundation Chair must approve any such course substitution prior to enrollment in the course.

## **Independent Study**

An Independent Study is a special course designed by the student with a supervising instructor and approved by the department chair. Independent Study courses are intended to provide instruction in special topics not covered in the regular curriculum. Students taking an independent Study meet one on one with the assigned faculty and do not sit in on regular class meetings of a course they are not enrolled in. Students may enroll in no more than six credits of Independent Study per semester. Full time students can take an independent study within their 18 credits.

- Independent study courses may only cover content outside of regular curriculum offerings.
- Independent study courses may be approved for students who need to complete their course work to graduate in time.

To apply for an Independent Study course, students must complete the following steps:

- Register for an Independent Study course.
- Complete an Independent Study Course Proposal form available online in MyOtis, and have it approved by the supervising faculty and signed and approved by the appropriate chair (chair of the student's major department or the chair of Liberal Arts and Sciences).
- Submit the completed Independent Study Course Proposal form by the deadline as indicated in the Academic Calendar.

## **Foundation Forward**

Foundation Forward provides Foundation students opportunities during the Foundation year to gather information and meet key people before selecting a Major to join for their remaining three years of study. In October, Foundation Forward department presentations provide an opportunity to meet with the Chair, faculty and students of each of the Majors and the Minors.

Students declare their choice of Major in November. Students may also pursue a Minor by entering one of the Majors and taking a number of elective courses outside the Major.

## **Impacted Majors**

Based on space availability, enrollment in a specific academic major, area of emphasis, or minor is not guaranteed. Students that select a major that becomes impacted (more students selecting the major than there are spaces available) may be subject to additional academic review which may include all or some of the following important criteria:

- Grade Point Average (GPA)

- Additional portfolio requirements
- Other requirements as determined by the major department

If a student declares a major that becomes impacted, they may be placed on a waiting list for that major. Students placed on a waiting list will be notified as soon as possible and be given detailed information on their options at that time.

## **Commencement**

Commencement takes place once a year, at the end of the spring semester. To participate in the Commencement ceremony, BFA students must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0 at the end of the previous fall semester and should be on track to complete all degree requirements by the end of spring term. BFA students missing up to a maximum of six credits toward their degree who wish to participate in Commencement must submit an Application for Inclusion in Commencement to the Registrar Office for approval. If the Application is approved, the student may participate in Commencement. An undergraduate student whose cumulative grade point average is 3.5 or above at the end of the previous fall semester is eligible for graduation with honors and this distinction is noted in the Commencement program. An undergraduate student whose cumulative grade point average is 3.5 or above at the end of their final semester will have the graduation with honors distinction noted on their transcript and diploma.

To participate in the Commencement ceremony, MFA students should be on track to complete all degree requirements by the end of the spring semester. MFA students missing up to a maximum of three credits toward their degree who wish to participate in Commencement must submit an Application for Inclusion in Commencement to the Registrar Office for approval. If the Application is approved, the student may participate in Commencement.

All BFA and MFA students who wish to participate in Commencement must have all accounts current and in good standing with the College.

Degree Conferral Dates for the semester are as follows:

- Fall Semester: January 1st
- Spring Semester: Commencement Date
- Summer Semester: September 1st

## **Award of Posthumous Degree**

A posthumous degree may be awarded to a deceased undergraduate student who was within 18 credits of the completion of the requirements for graduation or to a deceased graduate student who was within 12 credit hours of the completion of the requirements for graduation. The student must have been enrolled during the two regular semesters previous to their death. The College's cumulative and semester academic good standing requirements must be met. The appropriate degree may be awarded posthumously on the recommendation of the Department Chair with the approval of the Provost. If approved, the Provost Office will notify the immediate family of the awarding of the posthumous degree. The student's transcript will show a notation that the degree was awarded posthumously.

## **Transfer Credits**

### **Transfer Credits Granted for Courses Taken Prior to Admission**

In reviewing an application for admission to Otis College, the Admissions Office will assess all previous College transcripts for transferability of prior credit and will send a Transfer Evaluation to the applicant. (Please note: failure to provide all transcripts of previous College coursework at the time of application is a Code of Student Conduct violation and may result in disciplinary action). Every applicant will have previous college credits assessed for applicability toward general liberal arts and sciences requirements. In addition, students accepted at the sophomore level will receive up to 18 transfer credits applied to Foundation Studio requirements. Students accepted at the junior level may receive up to a combined total of 63 credits toward studio and liberal arts and sciences requirements.

In order to be eligible for transfer, courses taken at other institutions must be similar in contact hours, content, purpose, and standards to Otis College courses. The student must have received a grade of C or better for the transfer credit to be accepted at Otis College. Transfer credit will be accepted from appropriately accredited institutions in the U.S. or from international Colleges of comparable status. If the student believes that there are additional credits that should be considered for transfer, the student must complete a Transfer Credit Approval Request form (available online through MyOtis) for each course and have the form(s) approved by the Department Chair and Registrar prior to the beginning of their junior year.

Junior transfer students have up to the fourth week of their first semester of classes to request consideration of transfer credits in addition to those accepted by the Admissions Office. No additional credit will be accepted for coursework completed prior to matriculation to Otis after these deadlines have passed, except in the case of an approved change in major. Courses intended to transfer toward upper division (junior and senior level) requirements must be taken at a four-year college or university at the junior or senior level and be similar in content and credits conferred.

## **Transfer Credits Granted for Courses Taken After Matriculation to Otis**

Students at the freshman and sophomore levels may, with prior approval, complete coursework at other accredited colleges and universities and transfer the credits earned to their record at Otis College, based on the policies and procedures listed below. Students are strongly encouraged to complete a Transfer Credit Approval Request Form (available online through MyOtis) to ensure that the course is equivalent and fitting for transfer to Otis College.

Courses taken at other institutions must be similar in contact hours, semester system, content, purpose and standards to Otis College courses. Specifically:

- Community college courses will be accepted for general education and lower division (freshman and sophomore level) Otis College credits only.
- Courses intended to transfer toward upper division (junior and senior level) core requirements must be taken at a four-year college or university at the junior or senior level, and be similar in content and credits conferred.
- Only grades of C or better are transferable.
- Junior and senior students at Otis College may not take courses at other institutions and apply the credits earned to their Otis College transcript and degree. All courses taken at another institution must be approved and completed prior to the beginning of an Otis College student's junior year. Exceptions to this policy are warranted only in cases involving unusual or extenuating circumstances that would normally not be faced by other students and require written approval from the Registrar and the Provost.

Only credit is transferred for courses taken at other institutions. Transferred course grades are not applied to the student's grade point average (GPA.) Off-campus study does not become a part of a student's record

until the Request for Approval of Transfer Credit Form, along with official transcripts, are submitted to and approved by the Registrar.

## **Transfer Credit Assessment upon Change of Major**

Students who wish to change majors must meet with Academic Advising. The Change of Major process must be completed and approved by the last day to add a class, as shown on the academic calendar for the change of major to be effective during that current semester.

Please note: Changes in major may result in the loss of some credits taken for the previous major. Students may be asked to make up required classes that did not transfer and are responsible for completion of all degree requirements for the new major. Students may request a change of major and enter the new major at the sophomore or junior class level only. Changes of major at the senior class level will not be approved. The College is not responsible for any additional fees or delay in graduation resulting from changes in major.

## **Total Number of Transfer Credits and Residency Requirements**

Otis College has a minimum undergraduate residency requirement for graduation of 57 credits; therefore, undergraduate students may transfer in a maximum of 63 credits from other institutions. Graduate programs in Fine Arts and Graphic Design have a minimum residency requirement for graduation of 45 credits; therefore, students in these graduate majors may transfer in a maximum of 15 credits.

## **Enrollment and Registration Policies**

### **Full-Time Enrollment**

Undergraduate students register for between 12 and 18 credits to maintain full-time status. Graduate students register for between 9 and 18 credits to maintain full-time status. International students are required to maintain full-time enrollment. An exception can be made for international students during their final semester if the total credits needed to complete their degree requirements are less than full-time enrollment.

### **Less than Full-Time Enrollment**

The College does not permit part-time schedules except in cases that are required by law (Americans with Disabilities Act) or in special circumstances (documented illness, death in the family, or other special circumstances). Students who believe their situation is a special circumstance must complete the Approval to Attend Part-Time form. This form is available online in MyOtis.

Students on financial aid (including loans) seeking approval for a part-time schedule must also complete the Approval to Attend Part-Time form and receive advisement from a financial aid counselor to determine the effect of a less than full-time enrollment upon their aid packages. Many forms of financial aid require full-time status on the part of awarded students. Students who enroll in less than full-time enrollment will be charged the per credit tuition rate for each credit taken.

### **Repeating a Course for Degree Credit**

Students may not repeat the same course (same subject code, course number and title) for credit toward their degree.

## Taking More than 18 Credits

Students who wish to register for more than 18 credits must submit an Override Request form (available online on MyOtis) signed by their department chair or academic advisor approving the additional credits. Students who take more than 18 credits will be charged the per credit tuition rate for each credit taken above 18. Students are advised to meet with a counselor in Student Financial Services before taking more than 18 credits.

## Limited Non-Degree-Seeking Status

Through special approval of the Department Chair and the Provost, Otis College graduates may petition for limited, non-degree-seeking status at either the undergraduate or graduate levels. Interested parties fill out a Petition for Non-Degree Status available through the Registration Office, which is reviewed by the College. With the approval of the appropriate Department Chair(s) and Provost, and having satisfied any prerequisites, a student may be admitted on a limited, non-degree seeking basis if space is available.

Participation by the non-degree status student is contingent upon review of any material or documents deemed necessary by the College. Students attending Otis under non-degree-seeking status are not eligible to enroll in Independent Study courses.

Enrollment with this status is limited to two semesters, for a total of 9 credits at either the graduate or undergraduate level. Students are responsible for the same per-hour tuition rate and fees as matriculated students. Students enrolled with this status are not eligible for financial aid, tuition remission, or any other form of tuition discount.

## Class Level

The official undergraduate class level as reflected in our student information system is determined by the number of credits completed and includes credits completed at Otis College and credits from other institutions that have been officially approved for transfer toward the degree. The official undergraduate class level is used to determine registration priority and for the purposes of financial aid eligibility. Official class level is determined as follows:

	<b>Level</b>	<b>Credits</b>
Senior		84–120 Credits
Junior		54–83 Credits
Sophomore		23–53 Credits
Foundation		0–22 Credits

## Adding, Dropping, or Withdrawing from Courses

Students may add, drop, or withdraw from a course by taking the following steps:

1. Consult the Academic Calendar for Add, Drop, and Withdrawal deadlines.
2. Log into Self-Service to add/drop classes during the appropriate add/drop periods. Withdrawals from courses are done by completing a Course Withdrawal Request form available online in MyOtis..

3. To withdraw from a course, please first meet with an academic advisor. Then complete a Course Withdrawal Request form available in MyOtis, which routes to the Chair for approval.

## **Leave of Absence/ Withdrawal**

### **Leave of Absence/ Withdrawal**

There are two ways for students to separate from the College before graduation: through a Leave of Absence or through a Withdrawal. Students requesting a Leave of Absence or a Withdrawal must complete the Leave of Absence/Withdrawal form available online in the student dashboard, MyOtis.

Important: Please note that when you return from your Leave of Absence or if you decide to apply for readmission and are accepted after withdrawing from the College, there is no guarantee that the program or the curriculum requirements for your program will be the same as when you left the College. Returning students will be offered the programs and curriculum requirements that are currently in place.

### **Leave of Absence Defined**

A Leave of Absence is an anticipated separation from the College of less than one year. A Voluntary Leave of Absence is initiated by the student. An Administrative Leave of Absence is initiated by the Dean of Students (or designee) and is given for medical, personal, or other issues as determined by the Dean of Students. Students who are granted an Administrative Leave of Absence must meet all specific conditions before being allowed to return to the College.

### **Withdrawal Defined**

A Withdrawal is an anticipated separation from the College of more than one year, up to and including a permanent separation. A Voluntary Withdrawal is initiated by the student. An Administrative Withdrawal is initiated by the Dean of Students (or designee) or by the Registrar (or designee) and is given for reasons of non-attendance, poor scholarship, disciplinary conduct, or other issues as determined by the Dean of Students or the Committee on Academic Standing.

Students who are given an Administrative Withdrawal must apply for readmission (if eligible) and must meet all specific conditions before being allowed to return to the College.

### **How to Qualify for A Leave of Absence**

To qualify for a Leave of Absence, students must have a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.0. Students who apply for a Leave of Absence with a cumulative GPA of below 2.0 will be Withdrawn from the College and must apply for readmission when they plan to return.

### **Leave of Absence/withdrawal and Grades**

When a Leave of Absence or Withdrawal is given before the beginning of a semester, students are dropped from their courses, and no grades are recorded for that semester. When a Leave of Absence or Withdrawal is given once the semester has started, students are withdrawn from all courses and receive a grade of "W" in all courses in which they were enrolled. A Leave of Absence/Withdrawal form must be submitted online by the published withdrawal deadline date in order to receive a grade of "W." Forms received after that date will be subject to the grades in progress at the time the form is submitted but W

grades can be given up until the last day of the semester at the discretion of the Dean of Students and the Registrar.

## **International Students Taking a Leave of Absence/withdrawal**

International students on an F-1 visa must meet with a Designated School Official (DSO) and be advised on the effect a Leave of Absence or Withdrawal will have on their visa status. International students on an F1 visa who are approved for Withdrawal are considered out of status and must return home within 15 days.

## **Tuition and Fees**

Tuition and fees will be refunded based on the published refund policy. Housing fees will be refunded based on the published housing refund policy. Financial aid recipients must meet with Student Financial Services to complete the necessary exit interview and be advised on the effect a Leave of Absence or Withdrawal will have on their financial aid eligibility and/or loan repayment.

Students who unofficially withdraw (stop attending without officially completing a leave of absence or withdrawal form) from the College will have their tuition and fees refunded based on the last known date of attendance as reported by the academic departments.

## **Access to Services and Readmission to The College**

Students on Leave of Absence have access to their Otis email account and MyOtis. Students on Leave will also continue to have access to the job board and career counseling services through Career Services. On a case by case basis, students who were accessing Student Counseling Services may have continued access as determined by the Director of Student Counseling Services. Students on Leave do not have access to College facilities and services or computer labs, laboratory equipment, library, or other privileges unless specifically stated above. Students who have withdrawn from the College do not have access to any College facilities, services, or privileges. Students on a Leave of Absence may resume their studies at the beginning of a semester within their approved year, but are strongly encouraged to seek academic and financial aid advisement on the best time to return to the College.

Students on a Leave of Absence must notify the Registration Office at least two months before the beginning of the term in which they plan to return and will be eligible for priority registration based on their class level. They must make sure all holds have been cleared and financial arrangements have been made by published deadlines for that semester.

Students on a Leave of Absence who do not return within one calendar year will be Withdrawn from the College. To resume their studies, such students must apply for readmission and will be readmitted based on the readmission policies in place at that time.

Students who have withdrawn from the College and decide they would like to return must apply for readmission. All specific conditions (if any) must be met before the student can return and readmission will be subject to the readmission policies in place at that time.

**Important:** When a student returns from Leave of Absence after completing only the Foundation year there is no guarantee of acceptance or continuation in the major of choice. Based on space availability, acceptance to a specific major, area of emphasis or minor is not guaranteed. Students may be subject to academic review by GPA, additional portfolio or other entrance requirements.

## **Probation and Academic Dismissal**



A BFA student is in good standing if the student maintains a term and cumulative GPA of 2.0. If a student's term or cumulative GPA falls below 2.0, the student will be placed on academic probation. A student will be dismissed from the College if their cumulative GPA falls below 2.0 for two consecutive semesters. First-semester Foundation students may be eligible for Grade Replacement (please refer to the Foundation Grade Replacement policy).

An MFA student is considered in good standing if the student receives a grade of "P" (Pass) or "LP" (Low Pass) in all of their courses each term. If a graduate student receives a grade of "F" during a term, the student will be placed on academic probation. A graduate student will be dismissed from the College if the student has two consecutive semesters on academic probation. If the 2nd semester of probation occurs in the final semester of MFA study and all degree requirements have been met, the determination of academic standing will include the Chair's review of transcript and portfolio.

The College recognizes that there may be cases of dismissal that require review and merit exception. If dismissed, a student may file a written appeal to the Academic Standing Committee in care of the Registration Office. Factors and supporting documentation that may be considered in an appeal may include but are not limited to the following:

### **Required:**

- Poor academic performance that was the result of circumstances that have been demonstrably corrected or substantially addressed, and should no longer adversely influence the student's academic performance.

### **Optional:**

- Written documentation from a department representative/advisor arguing convincingly that the student has a strong probability of completing the degree program to which the student would be reinstated.
- Evidence in the academic record of an ability to succeed academically and make timely progress toward completion of a degree program which may include past academic performance.
- A proposed schedule for completion of the degree and a plan to foster academic improvement. Evidence of support from other representatives of the College's support services in addition to, but not in lieu of, letters from departmental and College advisors. This may include evidence of a confidential nature that the student would prefer not be divulged to the committee as a whole.

Upon receiving a written appeal, the Committee may invite eligible students to appear before the Committee, as necessary. Exceptions to dismissal will be granted only rarely. If readmitted, the student will be placed on probationary status with special requirements. If the student does not meet all the requirements of such continued enrollment, the student will be dismissed from the College.

## **Readmission to The College**

Students who have left the College and wish to re-enroll after a period of absence must apply for readmission. Information on readmission and the Readmission Application is available online at [Readmission | Otis College](#).

Applications should be submitted at least two months prior to the start of the semester in which the student wishes to enroll. Students must also submit official transcripts for any courses attempted at other institutions during the period of absence.

Readmission applications for students who left the college while on academic probation (term or cumulative grade point average below 2.0), were academically dismissed with the possibility of returning,

or were sanctioned at any point by the Student Conduct Committee will be reviewed by the Academic Standing Committee who may request an in-person interview. Academically dismissed students who are eligible to apply for readmission must complete a [Readmission Application](#) and must have met all conditions outlined in their dismissal letters

Readmission to the College is not guaranteed, nor is there a guarantee of continuation or acceptance in the major of choice. Based on space availability, readmission to a specific major, area of emphasis or minor is not guaranteed. Students may be subject to academic review by GPA, additional portfolio or other entrance requirements. If a student is requesting a different class standing or major, a review of transcripts by the Liberal Arts and Sciences department and the relevant studio department may be necessary to assess transferable credits. A portfolio review by the studio department may also be required to evaluate preparedness for advanced class standing or entrance to the new major.

## Grades

### Grading Policies

#### BFA Grading System

A	4.0	A-	3.7
B+	3.3	B	3.0
B-	2.7	C+	2.3
C	2.0	C-	1.7
D	1.0	F	0
UW	0	I	Incomplete
HP	High Pass	P	Pass
NP	No Pass	W	Withdraw without Penalty

#### MFA Grading System

P	Pass (satisfactory)
Lp	Low Pass (marginally Satisfactory)

F	Fail (unsatisfactory)
Uw	(unofficial Withdrawal)
I	Incomplete
Ip	In Progress
W	Withdraw without Penalty

Otis College Operates on A Semester System. for Bfa Students the Semester and Cumulative Grade Point Averages (gp As) Are Computed at The End of Each Semester by Multiplying the Number of Credits Earned in Each Course by The Numerical Values Associated With

Those Grades. This Figure Is Then Divided by The Total Number of Credits Completed, Including Failed Courses, if Any. the Semester And/or Cumulative Gpa Is Used in Determining Probationary Status, Requirements for Graduation, Qualification for The Dean's List, and All Matters Concerning Academic Status. Credits Transferred from Another College Are Not Included in The Cumulative Gpa at Otis College. Mfa Students Are Graded on A Pass/fail Basis and No Numerical Gpa Is Calculated.

Select Sections of Writing as Discovery and Visual Culture I as Well as The English Writing Labs Are Graded on A Pass/no Pass Basis with Hp (high Pass), P (pass) or Np (no Pass) as Grade Options. Credits Are Earned for The Class if A Student Receives a Grade of Hp or P. No Credits Are Earned for A Grade of Np. the Pass/no Pass Option Grades Do Not Factor Into the Semester/cumulative Grade Point Average.

The Faculty Member Has the Authority to Determine the Grades that Each Student Will Receive for Work Done Under His or Her Instruction. Criteria for Grading Is Often Described in Assignment Rubrics. Faculty Members Customarily Discuss Their Grading Practices with Students During the First Class Session. These Grades Are Also Made Available by Accessing Self-Service Through My Otis..

## **Dean's List**

Undergraduate Students Carrying a Load of 12 Credits or More and With a Semester Grade Point Average of 3.5 or Above Will Be Placed on The Dean's List for That Semester. This Distinction Is Noted on Students' Transcripts and Becomes a Permanent Part of The Academic Record. There Is No Dean's List for Graduate Programs.

## **Foundation Grade Replacement**

Foundation Students Who Receive a Grade of D, F, or Uw in A Course Taken in Their First Semester of Full-Time Study May, with The Approval of The Department Chair and The Provost, Request to Retake the Course the Following Spring or Summer Semester (for Fall Foundation Students) or The Following Summer or Fall Semester (for Spring Foundation Students). Although Both the Original Grade and The Repeated Course Grade Will Appear on The Transcript, the Repeated Course Grade Will Replace the Original Course Grade in The Determination of Cumulative Gpa, Even if The Repeated Course Grade Is Lower.

Under This Policy, Students May Repeat up To Three Courses. Students May Repeat a Given Course Multiple Times in Order to Fulfill Degree Requirements, but The Original Course Grade Can Be Replaced only On the First Attempt to Repeat the Course. Repeated Course Credits Do Not Count Toward Graduation Unless the Original Grade Received Was an F or U/W. Repeated Course Grades Are Not Included in Dean's List or Honors Calculations. the Policy Does Not Apply to Courses in Which the Grade Received Was Due to Academic Dishonesty. Students Who Wish to Receive Federal Financial Aid Are Expected to Maintain Full-Time Status in The Semester During Which a Course Is Repeated. a Student May Not Take a Course at Another Institution for The Purpose of Replacing a Grade for A Course at Otis College. the Student Must Complete a Foundation Grade Replacement Form Available at The Registration and Records Office and Submit the Form by The Last Day to Add a Class During the Semester that They Repeat the Course(s).

## **Grades of Incomplete**

The Grade of "i" or Incomplete" may Be Assigned when A Student in Good Standing in A Course Has Completed and Passed a Majority of The Work Required for A Course But, for Reasons Beyond the Student's Control, Cannot Complete the Entire Course. Incomplete Grades Can only Be Granted by Faculty upon Their Respective Department Chair's Approval and Faculty Are Under No Obligation to Grant Students an Incomplete Grade.

In Cases Where the Faculty Agrees to Assign an I Grade, It Is Important to Arrive at An Agreement Between Faculty and Student About Exactly What Is Required in Order to Finish the Course.

Grades of Incomplete Cannot Be Entered by Faculty in Self-Service and Can only Be Entered by Authorized Registration Staff Once a Completed Request for Incomplete Form Has Been Submitted by The Department to The Registration Office and Approved by The Registrar.

Students Can Obtain a Request for Incomplete Form Online in The Student Dashboard, My Otis. the Form Must State the Reason for The Incomplete Grade and The Work that Must Be Completed. the Date the Work Is Due Must Also Be Listed on The Form by The Faculty. the Forms Must Be Approved by The Department Chair. in Cases in Which It Is Impossible for The Student to Complete the Form, the Request for Incomplete Form May Be Submitted by The Faculty Member in Consultation with The Student and The Appropriate Department Chair.

If Granted, the Student Will Have 30 Business Days from The End of The Semester in Which to Complete the Coursework, Faculty Will Then Submit a Grade Change Form (available in My Otis) in Order to Assign the Final Grade for The Course. All Coursework Must Be Completed by The Due Date Established on The Incomplete Form and Grade Change Forms Must Be Submitted Within a Week of That Due Date. if A Student Does Not Complete the Coursework Within the Appropriate Time Frame and No Final Grade Is Reported from The Department, the Incomplete Grade Will Revert to An F.

## **Grade Appeals**

It Is the Faculty Member's Prerogative to Evaluate Student Work Based on Their Stated Criteria and Professional Judgment. It Is the Student's Prerogative to Know how Their Work Was Evaluated and The Basis for Calculating the Final Grade. if A Student Has a Concern About a Final Grade, the Student May Appeal the Grade. Reasons to Appeal a Grade Include but Are Not Limited to The Following:

- Clerical Error or Dispute About the Calculation of The Final Grade;
- Unfair or Unequal Application of Grading Standards;
- Prejudicial, Capricious, or Arbitrary Grading; And
- Failure for Plagiarism that Was Not Determined by The Academic Integrity Committee.

Students Have One Semester from The Time the Grade Was Issued to Initiate an Appeal. After the Semester Has Lapsed, All Grades Become a Permanent Part of The Student's Academic Record, and No Appeals Will Be Considered. a Student Who Wishes to Appeal a Final Grade Should Complete a Grade Change Appeal Form Which Is Available Online in The My Otis. the Faculty Member Reviews the Appeal And, when Appropriate, Meets with The Student to Discuss the Issue. the Faculty Member Then Completes the Appeal for Grade Change Form and The Department Chair Submits the Form to The Registration Office for Final Processing.

If the Student Believes Their Concerns Have Not Been Adequately Addressed by The Faculty Member, the Student May Appeal the Grade by Submitting the Following to The Department Chair:

1. A Detailed Written Statement Describing the Reasons for The Appeal And
2. A Copy of The Completed Appeal for Grade Change Form. the Department Chair Attempts to Resolve the Issue with The Faculty Member and Student. if The Determination Is a Grade Change, the Department Chair Will Resubmit the Appeal for Grade Change Form with That Result. if The Determination Is No Grade Change, the Chair Will Inform the Student via E-Mail, with A Copy to The Registrar.

After Being Informed of The Grade Determination by The Department Chair, the Student May Make a Final Appeal by Submitting the Following to The Provost:

1. The Detailed Written Statement Submitted to The Chair, Plus a Written Response to The Faculty Member's and Chair's Determinations in The Case;
2. The Course Syllabus;
3. A Copy of The Completed Appeal for Grade Change;
4. The Department Chair's E-Mail
5. Any Other Relevant Documentation.

The Provost Then Considers the Appeal And, when Appropriate, Meets with The Student, Faculty Member, And/or Department Chair. the Provost Informs the Student via E-Mail of The Decision, with A Copy to The Registrar. the Provost's Decision Is Final.

## Other Academic Policies

### Other Academic Policies Attendance

Attendance is critical to learning and academic success. Consistent attendance by all students benefits everyone and allows class communities to learn in an efficient and productive manner without disruption. Nonetheless, we acknowledge that there are times when a student must miss a class meeting. At Otis College of Art and Design, students will take responsibility for their absences and for meeting assignment requirements and deadlines. Student responsibility and proactivity are valued at Otis College of Art and Design. Students who have requests or accommodations related to a disability or religious observance, please refer to the Disabilities/ADA Policy and the Religious Accommodations Policy within the policies section of the student handbook.

*Students are not expected or required to disclose reasons for their absences.*

**Student absences are determined to be "excused" or "unexcused" per the following criteria.**

- An absence is recorded as "excused" if the student completes and submits course work missed due to an absence.

- An absence is recorded as “unexcused” if the student does not submit course work missed due to an absence.

Each instructor will indicate the accepted timeframe for submitting coursework missed due to an absence on the course syllabus.

**Some class meetings or experiences cannot be made up (“excused”), therefore an absence on those dates is automatically recorded as “unexcused.”** The instructor determines which and how many class meetings or experiences cannot be made up (“excused”) and indicates them on the course schedule.

## **Consequences of “Unexcused” Absences:**

**During the fall and spring semesters,** students must not incur more than:

- 3 “unexcused” absences in a course that meets once per week
- 4 “unexcused” absences in a course that meets twice per week
- 5 “unexcused” absences in a course that meets three times per week.

**During the 10-week summer semester,** students must not incur more than:

- 2 “unexcused” absences in a course that meets once per week
- 3 “unexcused” absences in a course that meets twice per week
- 4 “unexcused” absences in a course that meets three times per week.

After a student reaches the maximum number of “unexcused” absences, as quantified above, the student will receive a failing grade for the course.

## **Arriving Late or Leaving Early**

A “tardy” is arriving late for class or leaving class early. The instructor determines the timeframe for a “tardy,” the consequence of a tardy, and includes this information on the course syllabus.

## **Auditing Courses**

The College has a no course auditing policy. Auditing a class in which a student is not officially registered is not permitted.

## **eLearning Courses**

Otis College is aware of and embraces the potential learning-enhancing value of eLearning in various manifestations. Myriad literature suggests that, when executed thoughtfully, eLearning can help students manage their schedules, review class materials, and organize their efforts productively and thereby enhance overall learning in specific courses.

Otis College will take advantage of the flexibility and opportunity provided in virtual instruction offering many eLearning courses. Various programs offer options to take 100% online courses, blended courses where half of the instruction takes place in the physical classroom while the other half occurs virtually online, and hyflex courses where students can take the same course online or on-campus. This virtual instruction can occur synchronously, instruction occurring at a specific day and time, or asynchronously, working independently within a given time frame. Such classes are designated in the course description and with the following codes on the course schedule: BL = Blended, OL = Online, HY = HyFlex, SY = Synchronous, AS = Asynchronous. Please note that when in a virtual learning environment, contact with

your faculty and/or completion of at least 1 coursework activity by the specified due date will constitute your attendance for that week.

## **General Course Adjustments**

The College makes all reasonable efforts to deliver the courses, programs, research opportunities, and other services and facilities as described in its printed or online materials. However, the College is entitled, if it reasonably considers necessary (including to maintain the safety of the Otis Community, to manage resources efficiently, or to maintain the integrity of its courses and programs):

1. To alter the time, location, number of classes, and method of delivery of courses and programs as reasonable or necessary.
2. To make reasonable variations to the content and syllabus of courses and programs.
3. To suspend, discontinue, or combine courses or programs as the College considers reasonable or necessary (for example, because too few students enroll, or if a key faculty member is unwell or leaves the College).
4. To record and/or stream classroom Zoom sessions to ensure the content is accessible to all students enrolled in the class (the Otis College web-conferencing system, Zoom, is used to support classroom instruction). Recordings and streams are considered educational materials and will be shared only with those enrolled in the class.
5. To make any necessary changes to its policies and procedures.

Except in circumstances beyond its reasonable control, the College will make all reasonable efforts to communicate significant changes or cancellations before a course or program begins, and to provide options for reasonable alternatives where appropriate.

# **Title IX: Sex/Gender Discrimination**

## **Title IX: Harassment and Non-Discrimination Policies**

Below are the College's policies as they relate to discrimination, harassment, and retaliation. In this section you will find the following:

1. Discriminatory Harassment Policy
2. Sex-Based Harassment and Non-Discrimination policy
3. Title IX Sexual Misconduct Policy

### **Discriminatory Harassment Policy**

Discriminatory harassment is defined as any unwelcome conduct based on actual or perceived status including sex, gender identity, race, color, age, creed, national or ethnic origin, physical or mental disability, veteran status, pregnancy status, religion, sexual orientation, or other protected status. Discriminatory harassment should be reported to campus officials, who will act to remedy and resolve reported incidents. When discriminatory harassment is subjectively and objectively offensive and is so severe or pervasive that it unreasonably interferes with, limits, or denies the ability to participate in or benefit from the College's educational or employment program or activities, sanctions can be imposed for the creation of a hostile environment.

### **Sex-Based Harassment and Non-Discrimination Policy**

Otis College of Art and Design expects that all members of the community—students, faculty, instructors, staff, guests, and visitors—should be able to pursue their work and education in an environment free from sexual misconduct, violence, harassment, and intimidation. The College does not tolerate sexual misconduct, violence, harassment, or intimidation within the work or academic environment, as defined below.

Any sexual misconduct that unreasonably interferes with an individual's work or academic performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, offensive, or otherwise adverse working or learning environment, can be a violation of this policy. Such examples may include, but are not limited to, the following: sex-based harassment, sexual violence, sex or gender-based bullying, hazing, stalking, relationship violence, and failure to provide equal opportunity in any program or activity the College operates, including but not limited to admissions, student activities, employment, or professional development.

### **Violations of The College's Sexual Harassment and Non-Discrimination Policy**

Sexual misconduct is a serious offense, and such violations are subject to any combination of conduct sanctions as described in Section 7: Formal Conduct Procedures with individuals found responsible for violation of the sexual harassment and misconduct policy facing a potential sanction of College suspension or College dismissal. Deviations from this range are rare and only made where there are compelling mitigating circumstances. Suspensions, if given, are based on satisfying conditions rather than administered solely for a period of time. Predatory, pattern and/or repeat offenders face dismissal, which may also be imposed for any serious offense whether pattern, predatory or repeat offending is evidenced or not. The other forms of sexual misconduct defined below cover a range of behaviors, and therefore a



range of sanctions from warning to dismissal can be applied, depending on the nature and frequency of the misconduct. Definitions of specific College sexual misconduct policy violations are provided below.

## **Sex-Based Harassment**

The Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR), the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), and the State of California regard sex-based harassment, a specific form of discriminatory harassment, as an unlawful discriminatory practice.

Otis College has adopted the following definitions of sex-based harassment in order to address the unique environment of an academic community. One definition is required by federal law, and the other by state law. Both apply, and while they overlap, they are not identical.

### **California Sexual Harassment Definition**

- unwelcome sexual advances, or
- requests for sexual favors, or
- other verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature
- made by someone from in the work or educational setting\*
- under any of the following conditions:
  - submission to the conduct is explicitly or implicitly made a term or condition of an individual's employment, academic status, or progress, or
  - submission to, or reject of, the conduct by the individual is used as the basis of employment or academic decisions affecting the individual, or
  - the conduct has the purpose or effect of having a negative impact upon the individual's work or academic performance, or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or educational environment, or
  - submission to, or rejection of, the conduct by the individual is used as the basis for any decision affecting the individual regarding benefits and services, honors, programs, or activities available at or through the educational institution.

### **Sexual Violence, defined as**

1. physical sexual acts\*\*
2. perpetrated against a person without the person's affirmative consent.

Acts of sexual harassment may be committed by any person upon any other person, regardless of the sex, sexual orientation, and/or gender identity of those involved.

Title IX Sex-Based Harassment, as an umbrella category, is a form of sex discrimination. It includes these specific definitions of sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking and is defined as:

Conduct on the basis of sex,\*\*\* or that is sexual in nature, that has the effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive working or educational environment. There are two types of sexual harassment defined here:

- **Hostile Environment:** includes situations in which there is unwelcome, sex-based conduct that is, based on the totality of circumstances, subjectively and objectively offensive and sufficiently severe or pervasive/persistent, it limits or denies a person's ability to participate in or benefit from the recipient's education program or activity, from both a subjective (the Complainant) and objective (a

reasonable person's) viewpoint. The determination of whether an environment is "hostile" must consider circumstances that could include, but are not limited to, the following:

- How severely the speech and/or conduct influenced the complainant's ability to access the educational program/activity;
- The type, frequency, and duration of the speech and/or conduct;
- The nature and severity of the speech and/or conduct;
- The age of both complainant(s) and respondent(s), roles each party holds within the education program and/or activity, previous interactions, and any other factor that could impact the evaluation of the speech and/or conduct;
- Whether the conduct was physically threatening;
- Whether the speech or conduct was humiliating;
- The effect of the speech or conduct on the Complainant's mental and/or emotional state;
- Whether the speech or conduct was directed at more than one person;
- Whether the speech or conduct arose in the context of other discriminatory conduct; and
- Whether the speech or conduct unreasonably interfered with the alleged individual's educational or work performance;
- Quid Pro Quo sex-based harassment exists when a person authorized to provide an aid, benefit, or service (i.e., employee, agent, or other such person) initiates or pursues unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature where submission to, or rejection of, such conduct results in educational or employment action.
- Sexual Exploitation: Taking non-consensual or abusive sexual advantage of another for one's own advantage or benefit, or to benefit a person other than the one being exploited. Examples of sexual exploitation include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - Prostituting another student;
  - The trafficking of another person, defined as the inducement of a person to perform a commercial sex act, or labor or services, through force, fraud, or coercion;
  - Non-consensual video or audio recording of sexual activity;
- Exceeding the boundaries of explicit consent, such as allowing friends to hide in a closet to be witness to one's consensual sexual activity;
- Knowingly making an unwelcome disclosure of (or threatening to disclose) an individual's sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression;
- Knowingly soliciting a minor for sexual activity;
- Engaging in voyeurism (Peeping Tommerly); and/or
- Knowingly transmitting a sexually transmitted disease/infection or HIV to another student.

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\*The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Fair Housing Act requires — when an institution provides student and/or faculty/staff housing and sexual harassment occurs in an institution-owned residence — that the FHA/Title VII definition of sexual harassment will also apply in addition to the Title IX definition (use the definition of discriminatory harassment above, or the CA definition, to comply).

\*\*A "physical act" includes both of the following:

**Rape:**

- penetration,
- no matter how slight,
- of the vagina or anus,

- with any part or object,
- or oral copulation of a sex organ
- by another person
- without the consent of the victim.

#### **Sexual Battery:**

- the intentional touching of another person’s intimate parts without consent, or
- intentionally causing a person to touch the intimate parts of another without consent, or
- using a person’s own intimate part to intentionally touch another person’s body part without consent.

\*\*\*Including gender identity, sex characteristics, sexual orientation, sex stereotypes, and pregnancy or related conditions.

## **Title IX Sexual Misconduct Policy**

### **Title IX Sexual Misconduct Policy**

The College is committed to complying with all requirements as set forth by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (“Title IX”) and subsequent revisions. As such, the College does not discriminate on the basis of sex and prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates, as required by Title IX, including in admission and employment. Such discrimination includes, but is not limited to, the following: sexual harassment; sexual violence; stalking; relationship violence; and failure to provide equal opportunity in admissions, activities, or employment. Student workers will be covered by this policy, and may also fall under the jurisdiction of Human Resources and Development, which will jointly resolve all complaints with the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs.

Title IX’s prohibition on discrimination in admission applies to institutions of vocational education, professional education, graduate higher education, and public institutions of undergraduate higher education. § 106.15(d). (<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/rights/reg/ocr/edlite-34cfr106.html#S15>)

Please note: The 2024 amendments which take effect on August 1, 2024, and obligate recipients to apply the requirements set forth therein to complaints of sex discrimination regarding alleged conduct that occurs on or after that date.

**Title IX sexual harassment** pertains to the following three categories of conduct, when they occur on the basis of sex, or are sexual in nature:

1. A College employee explicitly or implicitly conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the College on an individual’s participation in unwelcome sexual conduct (quid pro quo);
2. Unwelcome conduct on the basis of sex determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the College’s education programs or activities; or
3. “Sexual assault” as defined in 20 U.S.C. 1092(f)(6)(A)(v), “dating violence” as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(10), “domestic violence” as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(8), or “stalking” as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(30). Definitions of these terms are provided below.

### **Jurisdiction\***

This Policy applies to the College's education program and activities,\*\* to conduct that takes place on property owned or controlled by the College, and at college-sponsored events. The Respondent must be a member of Otis College's community in order for this Policy to apply.

This Policy is also applicable to the effects of off-campus misconduct that effectively deprives a person of access to Otis College's education program or activities. The College will extend jurisdiction to off-campus and/or to online conduct when the Title IX Coordinator determines that the conduct affects a substantial College interest.

Regardless of where the conduct occurred, the College will address notice/complaints to determine whether the conduct occurred in the context of its employment or education program or activity and/or has continuing effects on campus (including virtual learning and employment environments) or in an off campus sponsored program or activity. A substantial College interest includes:

1. Any action that constitutes a criminal offense as defined by law. This includes, but is not limited to, single or repeat violations of any local, state, or federal law.
2. Any situation in which it is determined that the Respondent poses an immediate threat to the physical health or safety of any student, employee, or other individual.
3. Any situation that significantly impinges upon the rights, property, or achievements of others, significantly breaches the peace, and/or causes social disorder.
4. Any situation that substantially interferes with the educational interests or mission of the College.

If the Respondent is unknown or is not a member of the Otis College community, the Title IX Coordinator, or designee, will assist the Complainant in identifying appropriate institutional and local resources and support options. If criminal conduct is alleged, the College can assist in contacting local or institutional law enforcement if the individual would like to file a police report.

Further, even when the Respondent is not a member of the College's community, supportive measures, remedies, and resources may be provided to the Complainant by contacting the Title IX Coordinator.

In addition, the College may take other actions as appropriate to protect the Complainant against third parties, such as barring individuals from Otis College property and/or events.

All vendors serving the College through third-party contracts are subject to the policies and procedures of their employers and/or to these Policies and procedures to which their employer has agreed to be bound by their contracts.

When the Respondent is enrolled in or employed by another institution, the Title IX Coordinator can assist the Complainant in liaising with the appropriate individual at that institution, as it may be possible to pursue action under that institution's policies.

Similarly, the Title IX Coordinator may be able to assist and support a student or employee Complainant who experiences discrimination in an internship, travel study program, or other environment external to the College where sexual harassment or nondiscrimination policies and procedures of the facilitating or host organization may give the Complainant recourse.

You may file a formal complaint at any time by using the online [Title IX Reporting Form](#). You may also file a complaint by email, or in person.

#### Online Harassment and Misconduct

Otis College policies are written and interpreted broadly to include online manifestations of any of the behaviors prohibited below, when those behaviors occur in or have an effect on the College's education program and activities or when they involve the use of College networks, technology, or equipment.

Although Otis College may not control websites, social media, and other venues through which harassing communications are made, when such communications are reported to the College, it will engage in a variety of means to address and mitigate the effects.

Members of the community are encouraged to be good digital citizens and to refrain from online misconduct, such as feeding anonymous gossip sites; sharing inappropriate content via social media; unwelcome sexual or sex-based messaging; distributing, or threatening to distribute, nude or semi-nude photos or recordings; breaches of privacy; or otherwise using the ease of transmission and/or anonymity of the Internet or other technology to harm another member of the Otis College community.

Any online posting or other electronic communication by students, including cyber-bullying, cyber-stalking, cyber-harassment, etc., occurring completely outside of the College's control (e.g., not on College networks, websites, or between Otis College email accounts) will only be subject to this Policy when such online conduct can be shown to cause a substantial in-program disruption or infringement on the rights of others.

Otherwise, such communications are considered speech protected by the First Amendment. Supportive measures for Complainants will be provided, but legally protected speech cannot be subjected to discipline.

Off-campus harassing speech by employees, whether online or in person, may be regulated by the College only when such speech is made in an employee's official or work-related capacity.

## **Time Limits on Reporting**

There is no time limitation on providing notice/complaints to the Title IX Coordinator. However, if the Respondent is no longer subject to the College's jurisdiction and/or significant time has passed, the ability to investigate, respond, and/or provide remedies may be more limited or impossible.

Acting on notice/complaints significantly impacted by the passage of time (including, but not limited to, the revocation or revision of policy) is at the discretion of the Title IX Coordinator, who may document allegations for future reference, offer supportive measures and/or remedies, and/or engage in informal or formal action, as appropriate.

*Note: When notice/complaint is affected by significant time delay, the College will typically apply the policy in place at the time of the alleged misconduct and the procedures in place at the time of notice/complaint. Typically, this Policy is only applied to alleged incidents that occurred after August 14, 2020. For alleged incidents that occurred prior to August 14, 2020, previous versions of this Policy will apply. Those versions are available from the Title IX Coordinator.*

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\*CA Educ. Code, Section 66281.1 requires institutions take reasonable steps to respond to each incident of sexual harassment. The institution shall take reasonable steps to respond to each incident of sexual harassment involving individuals subject to the institution's policies that occur in connection with any educational activity or other program of the institution, as well as incidents that occurred outside of those educational programs or activities, whether they occurred on or off campus, if, based on the allegations, there is any reason to believe that the incident could contribute to a hostile educational environment or otherwise interfere with a student's access to education.

\*\* Which includes the Recipient's employees' work environment.

# Definitions & Prohibited Conduct

## Definitions

### Coercion

There is a difference between seduction and coercion; coercion is defined as unreasonably pressuring another person for sex. When someone makes clear that they do not want to engage in certain sexual activity, that they want to stop, or that they do not want to go past a certain point of sexual interaction, continued pressure beyond that point can be coercive. Coercing someone into engaging in sexual activity violates this policy in the same way as physically forcing someone into engaging in sexual activity.

### Complainant

Complainant means:

1. A student or employee who is alleged to have been subjected to conduct that could constitute sex discrimination under Title IX or its regulations; or
2. A person other than a student or employee who is alleged to have been subjected to conduct that could constitute sex discrimination under Title IX or its regulations and who was participating or attempting to participate in the recipient's education program or activity at the time of the alleged sex discrimination.\*

### Consent

"Affirmative consent" means affirmative, conscious, and voluntary agreement to engage in sexual activity. Individuals may perceive and experience the same interaction in different ways. Therefore, it is the responsibility of each person involved in the sexual activity to ensure that they have the affirmative consent of the other or others to engage in the sexual activity. Lack of protest or resistance does not mean consent, nor does silence mean consent. Affirmative consent must be ongoing throughout a sexual activity. If consent is not clearly provided prior to engaging in the activity, consent may be ratified by word or action at some point during the interaction or thereafter, but clear communication from the outset is strongly encouraged. For consent to be valid, there must be a clear expression in words or actions that the other individual consented to that specific sexual conduct. Reasonable reciprocation can be implied consent. For example, if someone kisses you, you can kiss them back (if you want to) without the need to explicitly obtain their consent to being kissed back.

Consent can be withdrawn once given, as long as the withdrawal is reasonably and clearly communicated. If consent is withdrawn, that sexual activity should cease within a reasonably immediate time. Consent to some sexual contact (such as kissing or fondling) cannot be presumed to be consent for other sexual activity (such as intercourse). A current or previous intimate relationship is not sufficient to constitute consent. If an individual expresses conditions on their willingness to consent (e.g., use of a condom) or limitations on the scope of their consent, those conditions and limitations must be respected.

### Incapacitation

A person cannot consent if they are unable to understand what is happening or are disoriented, helpless, asleep, or unconscious for any reason, including due to alcohol or other drug consumption.

Incapacitation occurs when someone cannot make rational, reasonable decisions because they lack the capacity to give knowing/informed consent (e.g., to understand the "who, what, when, where, why, and

how” of their sexual interaction).

Incapacitation is determined through consideration of all relevant indicators of an individual’s state and is not synonymous with intoxication, impairment, blackout, and/or being drunk.

This policy also covers a person whose incapacity results from a temporary or permanent physical or mental health condition, involuntary physical restraint, and/or the consumption of incapacitating substances.

## **Incest**

Non-forcible sexual intercourse, between persons who are related to each other, within the degrees wherein marriage is prohibited by California law.

## **Respondent**

Respondent means a person who is alleged to have violated the recipient’s prohibition on sex discrimination.

## **Sexual Assault**

An offense classified as a forcible or nonforcible sex offense under the uniform crime reporting system of the Federal Bureau of Investigation<sup>8</sup>. This action is directed against a Complainant, without their consent, or instances in which the Complainant is incapable of giving consent. Sexual acts include forcible rape, forcible fondling, sexual assault with an object, forcible sodomy, incest, or statutory rape.

## **Sexual Misconduct**

Includes, but is not limited to, sexual harassment, nonconsensual sexual contact, nonconsensual sexual intercourse, and/or sexual exploitation (see "Community Standards Sexual Misconduct Policy" for further information).

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<sup>8</sup>Federal Register. "Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex in Education Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance." *Federal Register*, 29 April 2024, [https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/04/29/2024-07915/nondiscrimination-on-the-basis-of-sex-in-education-programs-or-activities-receiving-federal?](https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/04/29/2024-07915/nondiscrimination-on-the-basis-of-sex-in-education-programs-or-activities-receiving-federal?utm_campaign=subscription+mailing+list&utm_medium=email&utm_source=federalregister.gov)utm\_campaign=subscription+mailing+list&utm\_medium=email&utm\_source=federalregister.gov. Accessed 26 July 2024.

### **\*\*Rape:**

- The carnal knowledge of a Complainant (penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person),
- without their consent,
- including instances where they are incapable of giving consent because of age or because of temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity."

### **Sodomy:**

- Oral or anal sexual intercourse with a Complainant,

- forcibly,
- and/or against their will (non-consensually), or
- not forcibly or against their will in instances in which the Complainant is incapable of giving consent because of age or because of temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity.

#### Sexual Assault with an Object:

- The use of an object or instrument to penetrate,
- however slightly,
- the genital or anal opening of the body of the Complainant,
  - forcibly, and/or
  - against their will (non-consensually), or
- not forcibly or against their will in instances in which the Complainant is incapable of giving consent because of age or because of temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity.

#### Fondling:

- The touching of the private body parts of the Complainant (buttocks, groin, breasts),
- for the purpose of sexual gratification,
- forcibly, and/or
- against their will (non-consensually), or
- not forcibly or against their will in instances in which the Complainant is incapable of giving consent because of age or because of temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity.

## Other Sexual and Civil Rights Offenses

### Other Sexual Assaults

#### Domestic Violence

felony or misdemeanor crimes committed by a person who:

- Is a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim under the family or domestic violence laws of the jurisdiction of the recipient, or a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim;
- Is cohabitating, or has cohabitated, with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner;
- Shares a child in common with the victim; or
- Commits acts against a youth or adult victim who is protected from those acts under the family or domestic violence laws of the jurisdiction

#### Dating/relationship Violence

Violence committed by a person:

- Who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim
- Where the existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on a consideration of the following factors:
  - The length of the relationship;



- The type of relationship; and
- The frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship

## **Stalking**

Engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to (1) fear for the person's safety or the safety of others; or (2) suffer substantial emotional distress.

Course of conduct means two or more acts, including, but not limited to, acts in which the stalker directly, indirectly, or through third parties, by any action, method, device, or means follows, monitors, observes, surveils, threatens, or communicates to or about, a person, or interferes with a person's property.

Substantial emotional distress means significant mental suffering or anguish that may, but does not necessarily, require medical or other professional treatment or counseling.

Reasonable person means a reasonable person under similar circumstances and with similar identities to the Complainant.

## **Other Civil Rights Offenses**

In addition to the forms of sexual harassment described above, which are covered by Title IX, Otis College of Art and Design additionally prohibits the following offenses as forms of discrimination that may be within or outside of Title IX when the act is based upon the Complainant's actual or perceived protected characteristic.

### **Bullying**

Repeated and/or severe aggressive behavior that is likely to intimidate or intentionally hurt, control, or physically or mentally diminish the Complainant, that is not speech or conduct that is otherwise protected by the First Amendment.

### **Discrimination**

Actions that deprive, limit, or deny other members of the community of educational or employment access, benefits, or opportunities, including disparate treatment.

### **Harm/ Endangerment**

Threatening or causing physical harm; extreme verbal, emotional, or psychological abuse; or other conduct which threatens or endangers the health or safety of any person or damages their property.

### **Hazing**

Acts likely to cause physical or psychological harm or social ostracism to any person within the Otis community, when related to the admission, initiation, joining, or any other group-affiliation activity.

### **Intimidation**

Implied threats or acts that cause the Complainant reasonable fear of harm.

Violation of any other Otis College policies may constitute a Civil Rights Offense when a violation is motivated by actual or perceived protected characteristic(s), and the result is a discriminatory limitation or denial of employment or educational access, benefits, or opportunities.

## **Non-Title IX Conduct**

Behavior that does not meet the definitions in this Title IX Sexual Misconduct Policy may be covered under the College's Sexual Harassment and Non-Discrimination Policy. Disciplinary action for violations of this policy can range from verbal or written warnings, to serious sanctions, up to and including dismissal or termination from the College.

Students with questions regarding these policies or potential instances of harassment or sexual misconduct should be referred to the Title IX Coordinator or the Dean of Student Affairs, and/or encouraged to complete an online "Incident Report" to initiate a complaint process at: [https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?OtisCollege&layout\\_id=2](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?OtisCollege&layout_id=2).

Reports may be submitted at any time. Students will not be disciplined or discriminated against in any way for sexual harassment inquiries or complaints made in good faith.

The College's Title IX Coordinator will be informed of, and oversee, all complaints of sex discrimination/harassment/misconduct and is responsible for identifying and addressing any patterns or systemic problems that arise during the review of such complaints.

### **Grievance Procedures for Complaints of Sex Discrimination (§ 106.45) For situations that occurred on or after August 1, 2024.**

Otis College (or the College) has adopted grievance procedures that provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints made by students, employees, or other individuals who are participating or attempting to participate in its education program or activity, or by the Title IX Coordinator, alleging any action that would be prohibited by Title IX or the Title IX regulations.

The College will make every effort to successfully complete the grievance process for complaints of sex discrimination within the time frames outlined within the procedures below. The parties will receive periodic status updates on the progress of the Title IX Grievance Process. During the investigation and/or grievance process for complaints of sex discrimination, the College may take a number of interim actions in order to ensure the preservation of the educational experience and the overall College environment of the parties. These actions may include, but are not limited to, the following: imposing a No Contact Order; residence hall room change for one or more involved parties; changes in academic schedules or assignments for one or more parties; and emergency removal. To read more about Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, please visit: <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/frontpage/faq/sex.html>

## **Retaliation**

Protected activity under the Retaliation Policy includes reporting alleged misconduct, participating in the grievance process, supporting a Complainant or Respondent, assisting in providing information relevant to an investigation, and/or acting in good faith to oppose conduct that constitutes a violation of this Policy.

Acts of alleged retaliation should be reported immediately to the Title IX Coordinator and will be promptly investigated. The College will take all appropriate and available steps to protect individuals who fear that they may be subjected to retaliation.

Otis College and any member of College community are prohibited from taking or attempting to take materially adverse action by intimidating, threatening, coercing, harassing, or discriminating against any

individual for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by law or policy, or because the individual has made a report or complaint, testified, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing under this Policy and procedure.

Filing a complaint under the Code of Student Conduct could be considered retaliatory if those allegations could be subject to the Title IX grievance process, when the Code of Student Conduct allegations are made for the purpose of interfering with or circumventing any right or privilege provided afforded within the Title IX grievance process that is not provided by Code of Student Conduct. Therefore, the College carefully vets all complaints to ensure this does not happen, and to ensure that complaints are routed to the appropriate process.

The exercise of rights protected under the First Amendment does not constitute retaliation.

Pursuing a Code of Student Conduct violation for making a materially false statement in bad faith in the course of a grievance proceeding under this Policy and procedure does not constitute retaliation, provided that the determination of responsibility, by itself, is not sufficient to conclude that any party has made a materially false statement in bad faith.

## **Reporting Title IX Sexual Misconduct**

### **Confidentiality and Reporting Sexual Misconduct**

The majority of administrators/faculty/staff members are mandated reporters and have been trained on how to report prohibited conduct under this Policy.<sup>[1]</sup> However, some campus resources may maintain confidentiality, offering options and advice without any obligation to inform an outside agency or individual unless you have requested information to be shared. The following describes the three reporting options at the College:

#### **Confidential Reporting**

If you would like the details of an incident to be kept confidential, you may speak with on-campus counselors, off-campus rape crisis resources, lawyers, or off-campus clergy/chaplains who will maintain confidentiality. Free counseling services within Student Counseling Services are available to help you and can be seen on an emergency basis during normal business hours.

The above-listed individuals will maintain confidentiality when acting under the scope of their licensure, professional ethics, professional credentials, or official designation, except in extreme cases of immediacy of threat or danger or abuse of a minor/elder/individual with a disability, or when required to disclose by law or court order.

#### **Private Reporting**

You may seek advice from certain personnel who are still required to report information to the Title IX Coordinator, while keeping your information as private as possible. Private reporting is not confidential and will still follow all mandated reporting procedures but will do so in a way that protects privacy. These resources include: Resident Advisors (RAs), faculty members, advisors to student organizations, residence life staff, admissions officers, student activities personnel, and many others. If you are unsure of someone's duties and ability to maintain your privacy, ask them before you talk to them. They will be able to tell you and can help you make decisions about who can assist you best. Any non-confidential resource member who receives a report of allegations related to Title IX violations is required to submit a Title IX report to the Title IX Coordinator, in an effort to protect you or other members of the community. If your

personally identifiable information is shared, it will be shared with as few people as possible, and all efforts will be made to protect your privacy to the greatest possible extent.

## **Formally Reporting a Title IX Complaint**

Otis College will act on any formal notice/complaint of violation of the, Title IX: Harassment, and Nondiscrimination Policy (“the Policy”) that is received by the Title IX Coordinator<sup>[2]</sup> or any other Official with Authority by applying these procedures, known as the Formal Grievance Process.

You may file a formal complaint at any time by using the form provided at [https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?OtisCollege&layout\\_id=2](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?OtisCollege&layout_id=2). You may also email the complaint, report it by phone, or make an in-person report with the Title IX Coordinator. The Title IX Coordinator can be reached at 310-846-2554 and/or [jjohnsonmills@otis.edu](mailto:jjohnsonmills@otis.edu). Upon receipt of a formal complaint, the Title IX Coordinator will reach out to the Complainant to conduct an initial assessment (*see below*).

The procedures below apply to all allegations of harassment or discrimination on the basis of an actual or perceived protected characteristic involving students, staff, administrators, or faculty members. These grievance procedures apply to all Policy offenses.

### **Notice/Complaint<sup>[3]</sup>**

Upon receipt of a complaint or notice of an alleged policy violation by the Title IX Coordinator, the Title IX Coordinator initiates a prompt initial assessment to determine appropriate next steps. The Title IX Coordinator will contact the Complainant to offer supportive measures. This contact with Complainant will include the following information:

- The College has received a report that the Complainant may have been subjected to sexual harassment.
- A statement that retaliation for filing a complaint or participating in a complaint process, or both, is prohibited.
- Counseling resources within the institution or the community.
- Notice that the Complainant has the right, but not the obligation, to report the matter to law enforcement.
- The College’s investigation procedures.
- A list of potential supportive measures, such as counseling, no-contact directives, housing changes, and academic schedule changes.
- The importance of preserving evidence.
- A request for the Complainant to meet with the Title IX Coordinator to discuss options for responding to the report.
- Information on how the College responds to reports of sexual harassment.

The Title IX Coordinator will then initiate at least one of three responses:

1. Offering supportive measures because the Complainant chooses not to file a Formal Complaint.
2. An Informal Resolution (upon submission of a Formal Complaint), if all involved parties voluntarily agree to an Informal Resolution.
3. A Formal Grievance Process including an investigation and a hearing (upon submission of a Formal Complaint)

The College uses a Formal Grievance Process as described below to determine whether the Policy has been violated. If so, the College will promptly implement effective remedies designed to ensure that harassment or discrimination, its potential recurrence, and/or its effects, are meaningfully addressed.

If the Title IX Coordinator receives notice from a third party who is not the actual Complainant, the Coordinator will take appropriate steps to address and remedy any potential hostile environment, to the extent possible based on the information received.

Generally, disclosures in climate surveys, classroom writing assignments or discussions, human subjects research, or at events such as “Take Back the Night” marches or speak-outs do not provide notice that must be reported to the Title IX Coordinator by employees, unless the Complainant clearly indicates that they desire a report to be made or a seek a specific response from the College.

## **Intake Assessment**

Following receipt of notice or a complaint of an alleged violation of this Policy, the Title IX Coordinator<sup>[4]</sup> engages in an initial assessment, typically within one to five (1-5) business days. The steps in an initial assessment can include:

- The Title IX Coordinator seeks to determine if the person impacted wishes to make a Formal Complaint, and will assist them to do so, if desired.
- If they do not wish to do so, the Title IX Coordinator determines whether to initiate a complaint themselves [because a violence risk assessment indicates a compelling threat to health and/or safety].
- If a Formal Complaint is received, the Title IX Coordinator assesses its sufficiency and works with the Complainant to make sure it is correctly completed.
- The Title IX Coordinator reaches out to the Complainant to offer supportive measures.
- The Title IX Coordinator works with the Complainant to ensure they are aware of the right to have an Advisor.
- The Title IX Coordinator works with the Complainant to determine whether the Complainant prefers a supportive and remedial response,<sup>[5]</sup> an Informal Resolution option, or a formal investigation and grievance process.
  - If a supportive and remedial response is preferred, the Title IX Coordinator works with the Complainant to identify their needs, determine appropriate supports, and implements accordingly. No Formal Grievance Process is initiated, though the Complainant can elect to initiate one later, if desired.
  - If an Informal Resolution option is preferred, the Title IX Coordinator assesses whether the complaint is suitable for Informal Resolution,<sup>[6][7]</sup> [ , which informal mechanism may serve the situation best or is available,] and may seek to determine if the Respondent is also willing to engage in Informal Resolution.
  - If a Formal Grievance Process is preferred by the Complainant, the Title IX Coordinator determines if the alleged misconduct falls within the scope of the 2020 Title IX regulations and subsequent amendments:
    - If it does, the Title IX Coordinator will initiate the formal investigation and grievance process, directing the investigation to address, based on the nature of the complaint:
      - an incident, and/or
      - a pattern of alleged misconduct, and/or
      - a culture/climate issue
    - If alleged misconduct does not fall within the scope of the Title IX regulations, the Title IX Coordinator determines that the regulations do not apply (and will “dismiss” that aspect of the complaint, if any), assesses which policies may apply and will refer the matter accordingly. Please note that dismissing a complaint under the 2020 Title IX regulations is solely a procedural requirement under Title IX, which does not limit the College’s authority to address a complaint with an appropriate process and remedies.

In the event the allegation involves a sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, or stalking, that aligns with the location requirements of the federal Clery Act, the Title IX Coordinator will document and report data to the Chief of Campus Safety and Security for statistical purposes. Generally, this data will not personally identify those involved in the incident(s).

**Note:** Any Supportive Measures put in place will be kept confidential, except to the extent that doing so impairs the ability of the institution to provide the supportive measures. For example, in order to facilitate a housing change, Residential Life and Housing staff are informed of the need to assist with a housing change as directed by the Title IX Coordinator but will not be provided with any of the details of a complaint.

## **Notice to Respondent**

Upon the filing of a Title IX Complaint, written notice is provided to the Respondent. Such notice includes the following information:

- The specific allegation and the specific conduct that is alleged to have occurred
- The identity of the Complainant
- The date and location (if known) of the conduct that is alleged to have occurred
- A copy of this policy, which contains the process that will be followed, including an explanation that each party will have the right to inspect and review all reports and any submitted evidence prior to the completion of the investigation
- A statement indicating that the decision to accept a complaint does not presume that the conduct at issue has occurred, and that the Respondent is presumed not responsible, unless and until, at the conclusion of the process below, there is a determination of responsibility
- An explanation that each party may be accompanied by an advisor of their choice, who may be a parent, friend, attorney, or any other individual they choose
- The date and time of the initial meeting with the Title IX Coordinator, with a minimum of 5 business days' notice
- The College's alcohol and drug amnesty policy
- The name and contact information for the assigned investigator (or investigating company)
- Information regarding Supportive Measures, which are available equally to the Respondent and to the Complainant

**Note:** Should additional allegations be added at a later time, the parties will again be provided with a full written notice.

## **Emergency Removal**

If the College determines that the conduct, as alleged, poses a safety risk to one or more students, or to the College's educational environment, the College may instruct that the Respondent be suspended, on an interim basis, from the College, from residence halls, or from specific programs or activities. Any such assessment will be made on a case-by-case basis, based on an individualized safety and risk analysis. If the College determines that an immediate physical threat to the health or safety of students, or others justifies removal, then a Respondent may be suspended on an emergency basis. The decision to do so will be provided to the Respondent in writing.

The Respondent has an opportunity to challenge the decision immediately following the removal. To challenge the removal, the Respondent should contact the Dean of Student Affairs, who will explain the college's process for challenging emergency removals.

The decision to place any Respondent on an emergency removal will not be considered as evidence that any determination has been made regarding potential responsibility. Outside of the Title IX grievance

process, the College may also impose interim suspensions under its interim suspension policy, outlined below.

## **Standard of Evidence**

The decision regarding a Respondent's responsibility will be determined by a preponderance of the evidence. This means that the Decision Maker will decide whether it is "more likely than not," based upon all of the evidence, that the Respondent is responsible for the alleged violation(s).

## **Prohibition on False Evidence Provided During Title IX Process**

Each party and every witness is expected to provide truthful information to the investigator, hearing officer, and appeals officer. Should any party, or a witness, provide knowingly false information as part of this process, this may be considered a violation of the Code of Student Conduct and will be referred to the Dean of Student Affairs.

## **Mandatory and Discretionary Dismissal under Title IX**

The College must dismiss a Formal Complaint or any allegations therein if, at any time during the investigation or hearing, it is determined that:

1. The conduct alleged in the Formal Complaint would not constitute Title IX sexual harassment as defined above, even if proved
2. The conduct did not occur in an educational program or activity controlled by the College (including buildings or property controlled by recognized student organizations), and/or the College does not have control of the Respondent
3. The conduct did not occur against a person in the United States
4. At the time of filing a Formal Complaint, a Complainant is not participating in or attempting to participate in the College's education program or activity<sup>[8]</sup>

The College may dismiss a Formal Complaint or any allegations therein if, at any time during the investigation or hearing:

1. A Complainant notifies the Title IX Coordinator in writing that the Complainant would like to withdraw the Formal Complaint or any allegations therein
2. The Respondent is no longer enrolled in or employed by Otis College
3. Specific circumstances prevent the College from gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination as to the Formal Complaint or allegations therein
4. If the alleged conduct would, if true, support a finding that another College policy has been violated, the College may, in its sole authority, transfer the complaint for further consideration under the appropriate policy.

A Complainant who decides to withdraw a complaint may later request to reinstate it or refile it.

Upon any dismissal, the College will promptly send written notice of the dismissal and the rationale for doing so simultaneously to the parties.

This dismissal decision is appealable by any party under the procedures for appeal. [The decision not to dismiss is also appealable by any party claiming that a dismissal is required or appropriate.]

## **Transfer of Complaints, Sharing of Information**

Should any complaint be dismissed under Title IX and then transferred to another office, the College has the right to transfer all communications and information gathered to any other College administrator who will be reviewing and/or addressing the complaint.

## **Counterclaims**

The college is obligated to ensure that the grievance process is not abused for retaliatory purposes, thus counterclaims made with retaliatory intent will not be permitted. The college permits the filing of counterclaims but uses an initial assessment, described above, to assess whether the allegations in the counterclaim are made in good faith.

Counterclaims determined to have been reported in good faith will be processed using the Resolution Process below. Investigation of such claims may take place after resolution of the underlying initial complaint, in which case a delay may occur.

Counterclaims may also be resolved through the same investigation as the underlying complaint, at the discretion of the Title IX Coordinator. When counterclaims are not made in good faith, they will be considered retaliatory and may constitute a violation of this policy.

## **No Conflict of Interest or Bias**

Any individual carrying out this policy must be free from any actual conflict of interest or bias that would impact the outcome. Should the Title IX Coordinator have a conflict of interest, the Title IX Coordinator is to immediately notify the Dean of Student Affairs, who will take the role of Acting Title IX Coordinator for purposes of carrying out the management of the complaint. Should any investigator have a conflict of interest, the investigator is to notify the Title IX Coordinator upon discovery of the conflict.

Any party may object to the Title IX Coordinator or designated investigator, hearing officer, or appeals officer, on the grounds of an actual bias or conflict of interest. If any of the parties objects, they must notify the Title IX Coordinator or Acting Title IX Coordinator, who will evaluate whether the objection is substantiated. The party raising the objection will be notified in writing of the findings within three (3) business days. If it is determined that an actual bias or conflict of interest exists, the person who was the subject of the objection will be removed and replaced, and the effects of the bias or conflict will be addressed and ameliorated.

## **Presumption of Non-Responsibility**

The decision to proceed with an investigation is not a determination that the Respondent has engaged in the conduct as alleged. Any Respondent is presumed not responsible for the conduct that is the subject of the investigation, unless and until a decision of responsibility has been made upon the completion of the grievance process.

### **Advisor**

All parties are permitted to bring an Advisor of their own choosing to any meeting or interview to provide support. The advisor may be any person, including a family member or an attorney. The Advisor may accompany the Complainant or Respondent to any and all portions of the grievance process. Other than asking questions of the other party, or of witnesses, at the hearing, the Advisor may not participate directly in, or interfere with, the proceedings. Although reasonable attempts will be made to schedule proceedings consistent with an Advisor's availability, the process will not be delayed to schedule the proceedings or



hearing at the convenience of the Advisor. The Hearing Officer has the discretion to remove the Advisor from the proceedings if the Advisor interferes with the proceedings. For any Complainant or Respondent who does not have an Advisor at the hearing, one will be provided, at no charge, for purposes of conducting any cross-examination of the other party or witnesses.

An Advisor may not be called as a witness at a hearing to testify to what their advisee has told them during their role as an Advisor unless the party being advised consents to that information being shared. It is otherwise considered off-limits, and an Advisor who is an institutional employee is temporarily alleviated from mandated reporter responsibilities related to their interaction with their advisee during the Resolution Process.

## **Requests for Delays, and Extensions of Time**

The Title IX Coordinator may extend any deadlines within this policy for good cause shown and documented. The Complainant and Respondent will be notified in writing of any extension, the reasons for it, and projected new timelines.

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[1] CA Educ. Code, Section 66281.8 requires institutions with on-campus housing to ensure that residential life student and nonstudent staff, or their equivalent, annually receive training on how to handle, in a trauma-informed manner, reports made to them of sexual harassment or sexual violence, and situations in which they are aware of sexual harassment or sexual violence, in student residential facilities.

[2] Anywhere this procedure indicates "Title IX Coordinator," the recipient may substitute a trained designee.

[3] CA Educ. Code, Sec. 66281.8 provides regardless of whether or not a complaint has been filed under the institution's grievance procedures, if the institution knows, or reasonably should know, about possible sexual harassment involving individuals subject shall promptly investigate to determine whether the alleged conduct more likely than not occurred, or otherwise respond if the institution determines that an investigation is not required. If the institution determines that the alleged conduct more likely than not occurred, it shall immediately take reasonable steps to end the harassment, address the hostile environment, if one has been created, prevent its recurrence, and address its effects. A postsecondary institution shall be presumed to know of sexual harassment if a responsible employee knew, or, in the exercise of reasonable care, should have known, about the sexual harassment. The institution may rebut this presumption of knowledge if it shows all of the following:

- The institution provides training and requires all nonconfidential responsible employees to report sexual harassment.
- Each nonconfidential responsible employee with actual or constructive knowledge of the conduct in question was provided training and direction to report sexual harassment.
- Each nonconfidential responsible employee with actual or constructive knowledge of the conduct in question failed to report it.
  - The institution shall consider and respond to requests for accommodations relating to prior incidents of sexual harassment that could contribute to a hostile educational environment or otherwise interfere with a student's access to education where both individuals are, at the time of the request, subject to the institution's policies.

[4] If circumstances require, the Dean or Title IX Coordinator will designate another person to oversee the Resolution Process should an allegation be made about the Coordinator or the Coordinator be otherwise unavailable, unable to fulfill their duties, or have a conflict of interest.

[5] Per CA Educ. Code, Section 66281.8, an institution will not require a Complainant enter a voluntary resolution agreement or any other form of resolution as a prerequisite to receiving remedial measures from the institution which safeguard the Complainant's access to education.

[6] Per the 2020 Title IX regulations, recipients are prohibited from Informal Resolution of a complaint by a student against an employee.

[7] Per CA Educ. Code, Section 66281.8, an institution may not mandate mediation to resolve allegations of sexual harassment, and will not allow mediation, even on a voluntary basis, to resolve allegations of sexual violence. Other forms of informal resolution that are not mediation are permitted.

[8] Such a Complainant is still entitled to supportive measures, but the formal grievance process is not applicable unless the Title IX Coordinator signs the complaint in the event the Complainant cannot/will not do so.

## **Resolution Methods**

### **Alternative Resolution**

When any party requests an Alternative Resolution, the Title IX Coordinator will determine if the complaint is suited for an informal approach, and if all parties agree, will provide the Complainant and Respondent written notice that includes:

- The specific allegation and the specific conduct that is alleged to have occurred
- The identity of the Complainant
- The date and location (if known) of the conduct that is alleged to have occurred
- A copy of this policy, which contains the information about both the Alternative Resolution process as well as the formal complaint process
- A statement indicating that the decision to accept a complaint for alternative resolution does not presume that the conduct at issue has occurred, and that the Respondent is presumed not responsible, unless and until, at the conclusion of the process below, there is a determination of responsibility
- An explanation that each party may be accompanied by an advisor of their choice, who may be a parent, friend, or attorney
- The date and time of the initial meeting with the alternative resolution facilitator, with a minimum of seven (7) business days notice
- Information regarding Supportive Measures
- An explanation of the consequences of participating in the Alternative Resolution process, including a summary of the records that will be maintained or could be shared if the parties elect for an Alternative Resolution.

The Alternative Resolution process is generally expected to be completed within thirty (30) days of its authorization by the Title IX Coordinator, though that timeline may be extended for good cause by the Title IX Coordinator. The parties will be notified, in writing, of any extension and the reason for the extension.

Participation in an Alternative Resolution is voluntary, and the parties must agree to use it in lieu of a formal grievance process, in writing. Even if the parties agree to an Alternative Resolution, it is within the discretion of the Title IX Coordinator to determine that a report must proceed through Formal Complaint process in certain cases (e.g., where a Respondent is alleged to have violated the Title IX Policy on multiple occasions or with multiple Complainants, or where the reported conduct, if true, presents a threat to the

safety of the Otis College community). If any party does not voluntarily agree in writing to pursue an Alternative Resolution, or if the Complainant, Respondent, or Title IX Coordinator, at any time, determines that Alternative Resolution is no longer appropriate, the Title IX Coordinator will promptly inform the Complainant and Respondent in writing that the complaint will proceed through Formal Resolution.

Once the final terms of an Alternative Resolution have been agreed upon by the parties, in writing, the matter will be considered closed, and will not then proceed to a Formal Complaint process. Any resolution reached through an Alternative Resolution process will be confirmed in writing and provided to the parties within five (5) business days of reaching a resolution.

Records of any Alternative Resolution will be maintained and can be shared with other offices as appropriate.

Allegations under Title IX of quid pro quo harassment of a student by an employee will not be addressed through the Alternative Resolution process, and instead only through the formal complaint process. Additionally, if the Alternative Resolution process conflicts with Federal, State, or local law, allegations will not be addressed under the Alternative Resolution process.

## **Investigation and Hearing Process**

Otis College of Art and Design will ensure an adequate, reliable, and bias-free investigation of complaints. The burden is on the College—not on the Complainant, Respondent, and/or witness(s)—to conduct an investigation that gathers evidence to determine whether sex discrimination has occurred.

The Investigation process, up to evidence review, is generally expected to take about 40 business days, which may be extended for good cause by the Title IX Coordinator. All parties will be notified, in writing, of any extension granted and the reason for the extension.

The Investigator will interview all Parties and relevant witnesses and gather relevant documentary evidence provided by the Parties and any identified witnesses, including any expert witnesses. Interviews may be conducted in person, or via video conference. The Investigator will prepare an Interview Summary of each interview. The Investigator will share the Interview Summary with the interviewee. The interviewee will have three (3) business days opportunity to correct or comment on any statements made in the Interview Summary. The deadline may be extended for good cause, upon request to the investigator. If the interviewee has no corrections to, or comments on, the Interview Summary, the interviewee will sign an acknowledgement that the interviewee has reviewed and agrees that the Interview Summary is accurate. If the interviewee has corrections or comments to the Interview Summary, the interviewee may submit a written response within three (3) business days reflecting any additions or changes which the interviewee believes are necessary to ensure the accuracy of the interviewee's interview. If no response is received from the interviewee by the deadline, their Interview Summary will be presumed to be accurate. In all instances where the Investigator includes the Interview Summary as an exhibit to a report, the Investigator will either adjust the Interview Summary to reflect revisions as may be appropriate, or include any interviewee response provided within the Investigation Report.

Each party will be provided with an opportunity to offer relevant witnesses and evidence. The Investigator will consider all relevant evidence which has a tendency to prove or disprove the allegation(s) (inculpatory and exculpatory).

Any and all information for consideration by the Hearing Officer must be provided to the investigator as part of the investigation process. Information that was not provided to the Investigator will not be allowed during the hearing itself, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that such information was not reasonably known to or available to the Parties at the time of the investigation. In the event that new evidence is

provided at the hearing, either the Hearing Officer or Title IX Coordinator may send the complaint back to the investigator for further inquiry.

## **Evidence Review**

At the conclusion of all interviews and fact gathering, and when the evidence has been gathered, the Investigator will provide each party and their advisor the opportunity to review all the evidence gathered that is directly related to the allegation(s). This will include both inculpatory and exculpatory evidence. Given the sensitive nature of the information provided, the information will be provided in a secure manner (e.g., by providing digital copies of the materials through a protected, "read-only" web portal). Neither the Complainant nor the Respondent (nor their advisors) may copy, remove, photograph, print, image, video record, record, or in any manner otherwise duplicate or remove the information provided. Any student or employee who fails to abide by this policy may be subject to discipline. Any advisor who fails to abide by this policy may be subject to discipline and/or may be excluded from further participation in the process. Advisors will be asked to sign a non-disclosure agreement before any materials are provided to them for review.

The parties will then have ten (10) business days in which to respond to the evidence. Each may provide a response in writing, or verbally, to the Investigator. The Investigator will incorporate any response provided by the Parties into the Final Investigation Report. Along with their response to the evidence, the Parties may also submit a written request for additional investigation, such as a request for a follow-up interview(s) with existing witnesses to clarify or provide additional information, including offering questions to the investigator to pose to witnesses or to the other party. This response may include written, relevant questions that a party would like the investigator to ask of any party or witness. If any of the questions posed will be excluded as not relevant, or not likely to lead to relevant information, the investigator will explain any decision to exclude a question as not relevant in the Final Report.

Upon receipt of each party's response to the evidence reviewed, the investigator will determine if any additional investigation is needed and respond to all review and comment within the Final Report.

In addition, each party may offer new witnesses or other new evidence. The Investigator will take into account the responses provided, will pose questions to parties or witnesses as appropriate, and interview new witnesses, and accept new, relevant, evidence.

If new relevant evidence is provided by any party, or gathered by the Investigator, the newly gathered evidence (including answers to clarifying questions) will be made available for review by each party. Each party will have five (5) business days in which to respond to the new evidence. Each may provide a response in writing, or verbally, to the Investigator. The Investigator will incorporate any written response provided by the Parties into the Final Report.

## **Exclusion of Questions Regarding Complainant's Past Sexual Behavior, or Predisposition**

Questions and evidence about the complainant's sexual predisposition are never permitted. Questions about the Complainant's prior sexual behavior are not relevant and will not be asked, unless such questions and evidence about the complainant's prior sexual behavior are offered for one of two reasons: (a) to prove that someone other than the respondent committed the conduct alleged by the complainant, or (b) if the questions and evidence concern specific incidents of the complainant's prior sexual behavior with respect to the respondent and are offered to prove consent.

## **Investigation Report**

After all review and comment, the Investigator will then prepare a Final Report summarizing all of the relevant evidence gathered and all investigative steps taken to date. Each party and advisor will be provided with a copy of the written report, containing all relevant evidence, and ten (10) business days to review and comment on it to the Hearing Chair prior to or at the hearing. The Final Report will include as an attachment all directly related evidence gathered during the investigation, as well as all interview notes and interview summaries, showing the original (as sent to each interviewee for review) and the revised version, after corrections or additions by each interviewee.

## **Conclusion of Investigation, Notice of Hearing**

Prior to sharing the Final Report with the parties, the Title IX Coordinator will review the final Investigation Report, with attachments. The Title IX Coordinator may require that the Investigator conduct additional investigation. Once the Investigation Report is final, it will be provided through a protected, read-only, server, together with all attachments, to each Party.

At the same general time, each party will be provided with a Notice of Hearing, which will include information regarding the date of the hearing, the identity of the Hearing Officer and hearing panel, and any deadlines for submission of evidence, names of witnesses, etc. The hearing will be scheduled no less than 10 business days from the date of the Notice of Hearing.

Within three (3) business days of receipt of the Notice of Hearing, either party may object to the hearing officer, or hearing panel, on the basis of an actual bias or conflict of interest. Any objection is to be in writing and sent to the Title IX Coordinator. Should the Title IX Coordinator determine that there is an actual bias or conflict of interest, the Title IX Coordinator will remove the hearing officer and appoint another. No decision-maker may have a bias for or against complainants or respondents generally, or for or against any complainant or respondent in particular.

## **Advisor for Hearing**

Each party is entitled to one advisor at the hearing. The role of the Hearing Advisor is to ask questions of the party they are advising, the other Party, and of witnesses, but not to advocate for, or otherwise speak on behalf of, the advisee during the hearing. No party will be permitted to ask direct questions of the other Party, or of a witness. An advisor of the College's choosing will be provided for any party who does not have an advisor, if that party wishes to conduct cross-examination. The advisor will be invited to attend a pre-hearing meeting with their party, which will be scheduled by the Hearing Officer for no later than three (3) business days before the hearing. This meeting will be an opportunity to understand the hearing process and afford each party an opportunity to ask questions pertaining to the hearing process. The Hearing Officer will also review possible questions for the hearing, should the parties or advisors elect to submit them in advance.

## **Hearing**

Hearings may be in person or via videoconferencing. Each hearing will be recorded, on video with an audio transcript. No other individual is permitted to record while the hearing is taking place. The recording is the property of Otis College, and will be available for listening by contacting the Title IX Coordinator.

Only the College can call witnesses, a list of whom must be arranged for in advance in collaboration between the Hearing Officer and the parties. Each party may submit the names of witnesses they would like to call no less than five (5) business days in advance. Witnesses must have information relevant to the incident, including expert witnesses. No party will be permitted to call as a witness anyone who was not interviewed by the Investigator as part of the College's Investigation.

Up to three business days prior to the hearing, each party may submit to the Hearing Officer a preliminary list of questions they wish to pose to the other party, or to a witness. If the hearing officer determines that any are not relevant, the hearing officer will explain the reason for the exclusion of the question either prior to or at the hearing.

The hearing officer will have the authority to limit the time allotted to any phase of the hearing, and/or to limit the time allotted to the full hearing. Any such limitation will be communicated to the parties no later than three (3) business days before the hearing.

The hearing will start with an overview of the hearing process from the hearing officer. The Investigator will then present a summary of the evidence and be subject to questioning by the panel and then the advisors. Then, the Complainant may offer an opening statement. The panel will then pose questions to the Complainant. When the hearing officer has concluded, the Complainant's advisor will be permitted to question the Complainant, then the Respondent's advisor may pose questions to the Complainant. If the hearing officer has any additional questions, those will be posed by the hearing officer. If the advisors have any follow-up questions for the Complainant, the advisor will ask those questions. Next, the Respondent may offer an opening statement. The panel will then pose questions to the Respondent. When the hearing officer has concluded, the Respondent's advisor will be permitted to question the Respondent, then the Complainant's advisor may pose questions to the Respondent. If the hearing officer has any additional questions, those will be posed by the hearing officer. If the advisors have any follow-up questions for the Respondent, the advisor will ask those questions. Then, each witness will be called, in order. Questioning will be by the panel, then the Complainant's advisor, then the Respondent's advisor. The parties will then be offered the opportunity to make closing statements. This statement is to be made by the party directly, and not by their advisor. This closing statement is not evidence, but is intended as an opportunity to address the decision-maker directly. It should not include impact evidence. Impact statements should be submitted before the close of all evidence, in writing, to the hearing officer, who will exchange the statements between the parties. The panel will only consider impact evidence as it relates to sanctions, if a policy violation is found.

The hearing officer may refuse to allow those questions that seek information that is not relevant under this Policy, including those that are unduly repetitious or abusive. The hearing officer is not required to provide a lengthy or complicated explanation, but is required only to explain the reason why a question is not relevant.

If either Party does not appear or participate, their advisor may still be present for the purpose of asking questions of the other party, or of witnesses. No party or witness is required to attend or participate, and the panel will draw no inferences solely from the decision not to attend or participate.

The panel will then deliberate, making a decision by a majority vote on each policy allegedly violated. The Hearing Officer will then prepare a report. To the extent credibility determinations need to be made, they will not be based on a person's status as complainant, respondent, or witness. The Hearing Officer's report will be provided to the parties within fourteen (14) business days after the hearing.

The Hearing Officer's report will include:

- The allegations
- Description of all procedural steps taken
- Findings of fact
- Final determination applying facts to the policy
- Rationale for each finding/determination, by the preponderance of the evidence
- Sanctions and Remedies
- Rationale for sanctions
- Procedure for appeal
- When the decision is considered final and any changes to the decision that occur prior to finalization

- The written decision will be sent simultaneously to each party

## Sanctions and Remedies

### Sanctions and Remedies

Upon conclusion of the grievance process, when there is a finding of responsibility, the Complainant will be offered remedies designed to restore or preserve equal access to the institution's education program or activity. Some examples are individualized supportive measures, tutoring, or counseling.

Factors considered when determining a sanction/responsive action may include, but are not limited to:

- The nature, severity of, and circumstances surrounding the violation(s)
- The Respondent's disciplinary history
- The need for sanctions/responsive actions to bring an end to the discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation
- The need for sanctions/responsive actions to prevent the future recurrence of discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation
- The need to remedy the effects of the discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation on the Complainant and the community
- The impact on the parties
- Any other information deemed relevant by the Decision-maker(s)

The sanctions will be implemented as soon as is feasible, either upon the outcome of any appeal or the expiration of the window to appeal without an appeal being requested.

The sanctions described in this policy are not exclusive of, and may be in addition to, other actions taken or sanctions imposed by external authorities.

If it is later determined that a party or witness intentionally provided false or misleading information, that action could be grounds for reopening a grievance process at any time, and/or referring that information to another process for resolution.

- Student Sanctions

The following are the common sanctions that may be imposed upon students singly or in combination:

- **Warning:** A formal statement that the conduct was unacceptable and a warning that further violation of any College policy, procedure, or directive will result in more severe sanctions/responsive actions.
- **Required Counseling:** A mandate to meet with and engage in either College-sponsored or external counseling to better comprehend the misconduct and its effects.
- **Probation:** A written reprimand for violation of institutional policy, providing for more severe disciplinary sanctions in the event that the student or organization is found in violation of any institutional policy, procedure, or directive within a specified period of time. Terms of the probation will be articulated and may include denial of specified social privileges, exclusion from co-curricular activities, exclusion from designated areas of campus, no-contact orders, and/or other measures deemed appropriate.
- **Suspension:** Termination of student status for a definite period of time not to exceed two years and/or until specific criteria are met. Students who return from suspension are automatically placed on probation through the remainder of their tenure as a student at College.

- Expulsion: Permanent termination of student status and revocation of rights to be on campus for any reason or to attend College-sponsored events.
- Withholding Diploma: The College may withhold a student's diploma for a specified period of time and/or deny a student participation in commencement activities as a sanction if the student is found responsible for an alleged violation.
- Revocation of Degree: The College reserves the right to revoke a degree previously awarded from the College for fraud, misrepresentation, and/or other violation of College policies, procedures, or directives in obtaining the degree, or for other serious violations committed by a student prior to graduation.
- Other Actions: In addition to or in place of the above sanctions, the College may assign any other sanctions as deemed appropriate.
- Student Organization Sanctions

The following are the common sanctions that may be imposed upon student organizations singly or in combination:

- Warning: A formal statement that the conduct was unacceptable and a warning that further violation of any College policy, procedure, or directive will result in more severe sanctions/responsive actions.
- Probation: A written reprimand for violation of institutional policy, providing for more severe disciplinary sanctions in the event that the organization is found in violation of any institutional policy, procedure, or directive within a specified period of time. Terms of the probation will be articulated and may include denial of specified social and event privileges, denial of College funds, ineligibility for honors and awards, restrictions on new member recruitment, no-contact orders, and/or other measures deemed appropriate.
- Suspension: Termination of student organization recognition for a definite period of time not to exceed two years and/or until specific criteria are met. During the suspension period, a student organization may not conduct any formal or informal business or participate in College-related activities, whether they occur on or off-campus. Re-recognition is possible but not guaranteed and will only be considered after the end of the suspension period and based on meeting all re-recognition criteria and obtaining clearance from the College.
- Expulsion: Permanent termination of student organization recognition and revocation of the privilege to congregate and conduct business on campus as an organization for any reason.
- Loss of Privileges: Restricted from accessing specific College privileges for a specified period of time.
- Other Actions: In addition to or in place of the above sanctions, the College may assign any other sanctions as deemed appropriate.
- Employee Sanctions/Responsive/Corrective Actions

Responsive actions for an employee who has engaged in harassment, discrimination, and/or retaliation include but are not limited to verbal warnings; written warnings; loss of privileges, probation; suspension; termination of employment, or other disciplinary measures as deemed appropriate.

Remedies may include, but are not limited to offering to remove the complainant from the hostile environment (or vice versa); changes in residence arrangements, changes of room locks, contacting professors/managers, changes in schedules or work hours, changes in work assignment/location, or a "no contact" order.

## **Failure to Complete Conduct Sanctions**

All students, as members of the College community, are expected to comply with conduct sanctions within the time frame specified by the Dean of Student Affairs or designee. Failure to follow through on conduct sanctions by the date specified, whether by refusal, neglect, or any other reason, may result in



additional sanctions, administrative “holds” on the student account, and/or suspension from the College. In such situations, resident students will be required to vacate College housing within 24 hours of notification by the Dean of Student Affairs (or designee), although this deadline may be extended upon application to, and at the discretion of, the Dean of Student Affairs. A suspension will only be lifted when compliance with conduct sanctions is satisfactorily achieved. This determination will be made by the Dean of Student Affairs.

## **Appeals**

Appeals may be filed by either party. Appeals will be sent to the VP of Student Affairs and Campus Diversity and Inclusion. When an appeal is filed, the other party will be notified, in writing, within one business day, and will then have five (5) business days to respond to the appeal. Any party’s decision not to submit a reply to an appeal is not evidence that the non-appealing party agreed with the appeal. The appeals process is a written exchange, and no hearing is held.

The Appeals Officer may not have any actual conflict of interest or bias. Within three (3) business days of receipt of the Hearing Officer’s report at the conclusion of the hearing, either party may object to the Appeals Officer on the basis of an actual bias or conflict of interest. Any objection is to be in writing and sent to the Title IX Coordinator. Should the Title IX Coordinator determine that there is an actual bias or conflict of interest, the Title IX Coordinator will remove the appeals officer and appoint another.

Appeals may be filed on the following grounds:

- **Procedural Error:** A procedural irregularity occurred that significantly impacted the outcome of the investigation or hearing. A description of the irregularity and its impact on the outcome of the complaint must be included in the written appeal; or
- **New Evidence:** New evidence or information has arisen that was not available or known to the party during the investigation or hearing, and that could significantly impact the findings. Information that was known to the Appellant during the investigation or hearing but which they chose not to present is not new information. A summary of this new evidence and its potential impact on the investigation findings must be included in the written appeal.
- **Disproportionate Sanction:** The sanction(s) imposed were grossly disproportionate to the severity of the offense. An explanation of why the sanction(s) is/are grossly disproportionate must be included in the written appeal.
- **Conflict of Interest or Bias:** The Title IX Coordinator, Investigator(s), or Decision-maker(s) had a conflict of interest or bias for or against Complainants or Respondents generally or the specific Complainant or Respondent that affected the outcome of the matter.

The Appeals Officer crafts a letter of rationale which will be sent simultaneously to the parties. The letter will specify the finding on each ground for appeal, any specific instructions for remand or reconsideration, and any sanctions that may result which the College is permitted to share according to state or federal law.

## **Consolidation of Complaints**

In the event that the allegations under this policy involve allegations of a violation of a separate policy, whether Student Code of Conduct, Faculty Handbook, or Staff Handbook, the College has the right, within its sole discretion, to consolidate those other allegations within one investigation and/or hearing. The College may also consolidate complaints when they evidence a potential pattern of misconduct.

## **Record Keeping**

Under the new Title IX regulations issued by the Department of Education, colleges are required to keep records related to sexual harassment complaints, including any investigations and adjudications, for a minimum of seven years. This requirement is outlined in section 34 CFR 106.45(b)(10)(i)(C), which outlines the requirements for educational institutions under Title IX regulations, colleges must retain records for a period of at least seven years from the date of the conclusion of the proceedings. The College will maintain for a period of seven years records of:

1. Each sexual harassment investigation including any determination regarding responsibility and any audio or audiovisual recording or transcript required under federal regulation
2. Any disciplinary sanctions imposed on the Respondent
3. Any remedies provided to the Complainant designed to restore or preserve equal access to the College's education program or activity
4. Any appeal and the result therefrom
5. Any Informal Resolution and the result therefrom
6. All materials used to train Title IX Coordinators, Investigators, Decision-makers, and any person who facilitates an Informal Resolution process. College will make these training materials publicly available on College's website.
7. Any actions, including any supportive measures, taken in response to a report or formal complaint of sexual harassment, including:
8. The basis for all conclusions that the response was not deliberately indifferent
9. Any measures designed to restore or preserve equal access to the College's education program or activity
10. If no supportive measures were provided to the Complainant, document the reasons why such a response was not clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances

The College will also maintain any and all records in accordance with state and federal laws.

## **Disability Accommodations in the Resolution Process**

The College is committed to providing reasonable accommodations and support to qualified students, employees, or others with disabilities to ensure equal access to the College's resolution process.

Anyone needing such accommodations or support should contact the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs/Title IX Coordinator (for students and employees) at [titleix@otis.edu](mailto:titleix@otis.edu), who will review the request and, in consultation with the person requesting the accommodation and the Title IX Coordinator and HR Representative (for employees), determine which accommodations are appropriate and necessary for full participation in the process.

## **Revision of this Policy and Procedures**

This Policy and procedures supersede any previous policy(ies) addressing harassment, sexual misconduct, discrimination, and/or retaliation for incidents occurring on or after August 1, 2024, under Title IX and will be reviewed and updated annually by the Title IX Coordinator. The College reserves the right to make changes to this document as necessary, and once those changes are posted online, they are in effect.

During the resolution process, the Title IX Coordinator may make minor modifications to procedures that do not materially jeopardize the fairness owed to any party, such as to accommodate summer schedules. The Title IX Coordinator may also vary procedures materially with notice (on the institutional website, with the appropriate effective date identified) upon determining that changes to law or regulation require Policy or procedural alterations not reflected in this Policy and procedures.

If government laws or regulations change—or court decisions alter—the requirements in a way that impacts this document, this document will be construed to comply with the most recent government laws or regulations or court holdings.

This document does not create legally enforceable protections beyond the protections of the background state and federal laws which frame such policies and codes, generally.

This Policy and procedures are effective August 1, 2024

## **Reporting Sexual Harassment and Misconduct and Gender-Based Discrimination**

To report an incident, contact the Title IX Coordinator by phone at (310) 846-2554, or by email at [jjohnsonmills@otis.edu](mailto:jjohnsonmills@otis.edu). You may also contact the Dean of Student Affairs by phone at (310) 665-6967. Reports can be submitted online through the incident report form online. Anyone with knowledge about a sexual assault or incident of sexual misconduct is encouraged to report it immediately.

If you are sexually assaulted it is important that you do as follows:

1. Go to a safe place and speak with someone you trust. Tell this person what happened. If there is any immediate danger, let a security guard know if you are on campus or call 911 if you are off campus. To contact Campus Security call (310) 665-6965 or stop by the office; it is open 24 hours.
2. Consider securing immediate professional support to assist you in the crisis.
3. You can contact Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at (310) 846-5738.
4. For your safety and well-being, immediate medical attention is encouraged. Further, being examined as soon as possible, ideally within 120 hours, is important. The Rape Treatment Center will arrange for a specific medical examination at no charge. To preserve evidence, it is best that you do not bathe, shower, douche, or change clothes before that exam. Even if you have already bathed, you are still encouraged to have prompt medical care. Additionally, you are encouraged to gather bedding, linens, or unlaundered clothing and any other pertinent articles that may be used for evidence.
5. Even after the immediate crisis has passed, consider seeking support from Counseling and Psychological Services at Otis College, the Rape Treatment Center, or Valley Trauma Center.
6. Contact the Title IX Coordinator at (310) 846-2554 or [jjohnsonmills@otis.edu](mailto:jjohnsonmills@otis.edu), if you need assistance with a College-related concern

## **Federal Timely Warning Obligations**

Individuals impacted by sexual misconduct should be aware that College administrators must issue timely warnings for incidents reported to them that pose a substantial threat of bodily harm or danger to members of the campus community. The College will make every effort to ensure that the Complainant's name and other identifying information are not disclosed, while still providing enough information for community members to make safety decisions in light of the danger.

## **Contacts and Resources**

Questions or concerns regarding the College's procedures and Title IX may be directed to the following resource:

**Jessica Johnson Mills**  
Title IX Coordinator

## Student Affairs and Campus Diversity & Inclusion

9045 Lincoln Blvd.  
Los Angeles, CA. 90045  
(310) 846-2554  
[jjohnsonmills@otis.edu](mailto:jjohnsonmills@otis.edu)

A person may also file a complaint with the appropriate federal, state, or local agency within the time frame required by law. Depending upon the nature of the complaint, the appropriate agency may be the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights (OCR), the Department of Justice, and/or the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing.

### **California Department of Fair Employment & Housing**

2218 Kausen Drive, Ste 100  
Elk Grove, CA 95758  
(800) 884-1684  
(800) 700-2320 TDD Only  
[www.dfeh.ca.gov](http://www.dfeh.ca.gov)

### **Office for Civil Rights (OCR)**

U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW,  
Washington, DC 20202-1100  
Customer Service Hotline #: (800) 421-3481  
Facsimile: (202) 453-6012  
TDD#: (877) 521-2172  
[OCR@ed.gov](mailto:OCR@ed.gov)  
[www.ed.gov/ocr](http://www.ed.gov/ocr)

Local resources include:

### **Santa Monica Rape Treatment Center–UCLA Medical Center**

1250 16th St.  
Santa Monica, CA 90404  
(424) 259-7208  
<https://www.uclahealth.org/medical-services/rtc>

To report directly to law enforcement, contact:

### **Los Angeles Police Department-Pacific Division**

12312 Culver Blvd.  
Los Angeles, CA 90066  
(310) 482-6334

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

The following are some of the most commonly asked questions regarding the College's Sexual

Misconduct Policy and procedures.

### **Does a complaint remain confidential?**

Reports made to on-campus counselors, off-campus health service providers, and off-campus clergy will be kept confidential. All other reports are considered private. The privacy of all parties to a complaint of sexual misconduct will be maintained, except insofar as it interferes with the College's obligation to fully investigate allegations of sexual misconduct. Where information is shared, it will still be tightly controlled on a need-to-know basis.

In all complaints of sexual misconduct, the Complainant will be informed of the outcome. In some instances, the administration also may choose to make a brief announcement of the nature of the violation and the action taken, to the community, though personally identifying information about the Complainant will not be shared. Certain College administrators are informed privately (e.g., the President of the College, Chief Conduct Officer, Title IX Coordinator, Chief of Safety and Security, etc.). The College must statistically report the occurrence on campus of any of six major violent crimes, including certain sex offenses, and hate crimes in an annual report of campus crime statistics. This statistical report does not include personally identifiable information.

### **Will I have to confront the alleged perpetrator?**

Yes, if you file a formal complaint, but not directly. Sexual misconduct is a serious offense and the Respondent has the right to question the Complainant; however, the College does provide options for allowing questioning without direct contact, including Zoom, using a room divider, or using separate hearing rooms.

### **Do I have to name the alleged perpetrator?**

Yes, if you want formal conduct action to be taken against the alleged perpetrator. No, if you choose to respond informally and do not file a formal complaint. One should consult the complete privacy policy described above to better understand the College's legal obligations regarding information that is shared with various College officials.

### **What should I do if I am accused of sexual misconduct?**

First, do not contact the alleged impacted individual. You may immediately want to contact someone in the campus community who can act as your advisor. You may also contact the Title IX Coordinator, who can explain the College's procedures for dealing with sexual misconduct complaints. You may also want to talk to a counselor in Counseling Services.

### **What should I do about legal advice?**

Targets of criminal sexual assault need not retain a private attorney to seek prosecution because legal issues will be handled through a representative from the District Attorney's office. Parties may want to retain an attorney as an advisor and/or if they are considering filing a civil action.

### **What should I do about changing College housing rooms?**

If you want to move, you may request a room change. Room changes under these circumstances are considered emergencies. It is the College's policy that in emergency room changes, the student is moved to the first available suitable room. Other accommodations available to you might include the following:

- Assistance from College support staff in completing the relocation;
- Arranging to dissolve a housing contract and prorate a refund;
- Exam, paper or assignment rescheduling;

- Taking an incomplete in a class;
- Transferring class sections;
- Temporary withdrawal; and/or
- Alternative course completion options;
- A no-contact order;
- Counseling assistance; and/or
- Escorts or other campus safety protections.

#### **What should I do to preserve evidence of a sexual assault?**

Physical information of a sexual assault must be collected within about 120 hours of the assault for it to be useful in a criminal prosecution. If you believe you have been sexually assaulted, you should go to a hospital Emergency Room before washing yourself or your clothing. A sexual assault health professional (a specially trained nurse called a SANE) at the hospital is on call and will counsel you. If you go to the hospital, local police will be called but you are not obligated to talk to the police or to prosecute. The exam will help to keep that option open for you should you decide later to exercise it.

The hospital staff will collect information, check for injuries, and address the possibility of exposure to sexually transmitted infections. If you have changed clothing since the assault, bring the clothing you had on at the time of the assault with you to the hospital in a clean, sanitary container such as a clean paper grocery bag or wrapped in a clean sheet. (Plastic containers do not breathe and may render forensic information useless.) If you have not changed clothes, bring a change of clothes with you to the hospital, if possible, as they will likely keep the clothes you are wearing as information. You can take a support person with you to the hospital, and they can accompany you through the exam, if you want. Do not disturb the crime scene—leave all sheets, towels, etc. that may bear information for the police to collect.

#### **Will a student be sanctioned when reporting an act of sexual misconduct if the student has illegally used drugs or alcohol?**

No. The College offers amnesty in such situations. The seriousness of sexual misconduct is a major concern, and the College does not want any of the circumstances (e.g., drug or alcohol use) to inhibit the reporting of sexual misconduct.

#### **Will either party's prior use of drugs and/or alcohol be a factor when reporting sexual misconduct?**

No, not unless there is a compelling reason to believe that prior use or abuse is relevant to the present complaint.

#### **What should I do if I am uncertain about what happened?**

If you believe that you have experienced non-consensual sexual contact, but are unsure of whether it was a violation of the College's sexual misconduct policy, you should contact the Title IX Coordinator and/or Dean of Student Affairs. The College provides counselors who can help you to define and clarify the event(s), and advise you of your options.

## **Sexual Offenders**

In accordance with the Campus Sex Crimes Prevention Act of 2000, which amends the Jacob Wetterling crimes against children and sexually violent offender registration act, the Jeanne Clery Act, and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy act of 1974, Otis College of Art and Design is providing a link to the California State Sex Offender Registry. All sex offenders are required to register in the state of California and to provide notice of each institution of higher education in California at which the person is employed, carries a vocation, or is a student. See [www.meganslaw.ca.gov](http://www.meganslaw.ca.gov).

In addition to the above notice to the state of California, all sex offenders are required to deliver written notice of their status as a sex offender to the College's Dean of Student Affairs no later than five (5) business days prior to their enrollment on the College. Such notification may be disseminated by the College to, and for the safety and well-being of, the Otis College community, and may be considered by the College for enrollment and discipline purposes.\

[Download the Investigation and Hearing Panel Flowchart](#)

# Code of Student Conduct

The Code of Student Conduct at Otis College of Art and Design is rooted in a philosophy that emphasizes respect, integrity, and responsibility, reflecting the institution's commitment to fostering a positive and inclusive academic environment.

This code outlines the expectations for student behavior both on and off campus, ensuring that students act in a manner that upholds the values of the college. The jurisdiction of the code extends to all college-affiliated activities, whether they occur on campus, in residence halls, or at off-campus events, and includes behavior that may impact the college community.

Violations of the law are taken seriously under this code, with the college reserving the right to pursue disciplinary action independent of any legal proceedings. This means that students may face consequences from the college even if they are involved in legal matters outside of campus. The Student Conduct rules and expectations are clearly outlined, covering areas such as academic integrity, respect for others, and adherence to college policies on alcohol, drugs, and discrimination. Students are expected to be familiar with these rules and to conduct themselves accordingly at all times.

The student conduct process at Otis College is designed to be fair and educational, aiming to help students understand the impact of their actions and to promote personal growth. When a violation occurs, the process typically begins with a report, followed by an investigation and a hearing if necessary. The student conduct authority, usually comprised of trained administrators or faculty members, oversees this process to ensure that it is carried out impartially and in accordance with college policies. Formal conduct procedures include the right to a hearing, the presentation of evidence, and the opportunity for the student to respond to the charges.

The Code of Student Conduct at Otis College is a comprehensive framework that ensures a safe and respectful campus environment. It empowers students to take responsibility for their actions while providing a clear pathway for addressing misconduct. The process emphasizes education and personal accountability, with the goal of maintaining the high standards of behavior expected at Otis College.

## Philosophy

### Otis College Philosophy Statement

The Otis College community is committed to fostering a campus environment that is conducive to academic inquiry, a productive campus life, and thoughtful study and discourse. The student conduct program within the Office of Student Affairs is committed to an educational and developmental process that balances the interests of individual students with the interests of the Otis College community.

A community exists on the basis of shared values and principles. At Otis College, student members of the community are expected to uphold and abide by certain standards of conduct that form the basis of the Code of Student Conduct. These standards are embodied within a set of core values that include integrity, respect, community/civic engagement, and social responsibility.

Each member of the Otis College community bears responsibility for their conduct and to assume reasonable responsibility for the behavior of others. When members of the community fail to exemplify these five values by engaging in violation of the rules below, campus conduct proceedings are used to



assert and uphold the Code of Student Conduct.

The student conduct process at Otis College is not intended to punish students; rather, it exists to protect the interests of the community and to challenge those whose behavior is not in accordance with our policies. Sanctions are intended to challenge students' moral and ethical decision-making and to help them bring their behavior into accord with our community expectations. When a student is unable to uphold our shared community expectations, the student conduct process may determine that they should no longer share in the privilege of participating in this community.

Students should be aware that the student conduct process is quite different from criminal and civil court proceedings. Procedures and rights in student conduct procedures are conducted with fairness to all, but do not include the same protections of due process afforded by the courts.

Due process, as defined within these procedures:

- assures written notice of the charges against them
- provides an opportunity for a hearing before an objective decision-maker or committee
- provides an opportunity to respond to the charges against them

No student will be found in violation of College policy without information demonstrating that it is ***more likely than not*** (preponderance of evidence) that a policy violation occurred and any sanctions will be proportionate to the severity of the violation and to the cumulative conduct history of the student.

## Jurisdiction

Students at the College are provided a copy of the Code of Student Conduct each semester in the form of a link on the College website and in an email sent to their Otis College email. Hard copies are available upon request from the Office of Student Affairs. Students are responsible for having read and abiding by the provisions of the Code of Student Conduct.

The Code of Student Conduct and the student conduct process apply to the conduct of individual students, both undergraduate and graduate (remote or in-person), students enrolled in the ACCESS Extension Certificate Program, and all College-affiliated student organizations. For the purposes of student conduct, the College considers an individual to be a student when an offer of admission has been extended and thereafter as long as the student has a continuing educational interest in the College.

Students participating in summer programs, who have also been offered admission to Otis College BFA/MFA programs, will be held to the policies, protocols, and procedures outlined in their respective summer program, first and foremost. Additionally, the College reserves the right to make a decision to also adjudicate any student who has been offered admission to Otis College and/or including rescinding admission without following the formal student conduct process if the summer program student has not yet registered for their Otis College academic year courses (pre-matriculation).

The College retains conduct jurisdiction over students who choose to take a leave of absence, withdraw, or have graduated for any misconduct that occurred prior to the leave, withdrawal or graduation. If sanctioned, a hold may be placed on the student's ability to re-enroll and/or obtain official transcripts and all sanctions must be satisfied prior to re-enrollment eligibility. In the event of serious misconduct committed by a graduate while still enrolled but reported after graduation, the College may invoke these procedures and should the former student be found responsible, the College may revoke that student's degree.

The Code of Student Conduct applies to behaviors that take place on the campus, in the residence hall, at College-sponsored events and may also apply off-campus when the Dean of Student Affairs or designee

determines that the off-campus conduct affects a substantial College interest. A substantial College interest is defined to include:

1. Any situation where it appears that the student may present a danger or threat to the health or safety of themselves or others;
2. Any situation that significantly infringes upon the rights, property, or achievements of self or others or significantly breaches the peace and/or causes social disorder; and/or
3. Any situation that is detrimental to the educational mission and/or interests of the College

The Code of Student Conduct may be applied to behavior conducted online, such as harassment or bullying via email or social media. Students must also be aware that blogs, web page entries on sites such as Google+, Facebook, and Instagram, Twitter, and other similar online postings, are in the public sphere and are not private. These postings can subject a student to allegations of conduct violations if evidence of policy violations is posted online. The College does not regularly search for this information but may take action if and when such information is brought to the attention of College officials. However, most online speech by students not involving College networks or technology will be protected as free expression and not subject to this Code, with two notable exceptions:

1. A true threat, defined as "a threat a reasonable person would interpret as a serious expression of intent to inflict bodily harm upon specific individuals"; and
2. Speech posted online about the College or its community members that causes a significant on-campus disruption.

The Code of Student Conduct applies to guests of community members whose hosts may be held accountable for the misconduct of their guests. Visitors to and guests of College may seek resolution of violations of the Code of Student Conduct committed against them by members of the College community.

There is no time limit on reporting violations of the Code of Student Conduct; however, the longer someone waits to report an offense, the harder it becomes for College officials to obtain information and witness statements and to make determinations regarding alleged violations. Though anonymous complaints are permitted, doing so may limit the College's ability to investigate and respond to a complaint. Those who are aware of misconduct are encouraged to report it as quickly as possible to the Office of Student Affairs and/or Campus Safety and Security. College e-mail is the College's primary means of communication with students. Students are responsible for all communication delivered to their College email address.

## **Violation of the Law**

Alleged violations of federal, state and local laws may be investigated and addressed under the Code of Student Conduct. When an offense occurs over which the College has jurisdiction, the College's conduct process will usually go forward notwithstanding any criminal complaint that may arise from the same incident.

The College reserves the right to exercise its authority of interim suspension upon notification that a student is facing criminal investigation and/or complaint. Interim suspensions are imposed until a hearing can be held, typically within two weeks. Within that time, the suspended student may request an immediate hearing from the Dean of Student Affairs to show cause why the interim suspension should be lifted. This hearing may resolve the allegation, or may be held to determine if the interim suspension should be continued. The interim suspension may be continued if a danger to the community is posed and the College may be delayed or prevented from conducting its own investigation and resolving the allegation by the pendency of the criminal process. In such cases, the College will only delay its hearing

until such time as it can conduct an internal investigation or obtain sufficient information independently or from law enforcement upon which to proceed. In cases governed by Title IX, this delay may be longer than two weeks from notice of the incident unless a longer delay is requested in writing by the reporting party to allow the criminal investigation to proceed before the College process.

Students accused of crimes may request to take a leave from the College until the criminal charges are resolved. In such situations, the College procedure for voluntary leaves of absence is subject to the following conditions:

1. The responding student must comply with all campus investigative efforts that will not prejudice his/her defense in the criminal trial; and
2. The responding student must comply with all interim actions and/or restrictions imposed during the leave of absence; and
3. The responding student must agree that, in order to be reinstated to active student status, they must first be subject to, and fully cooperate with, the campus conduct process and must comply with all sanctions that are imposed.

## Rules and Expectations

### Core Values and Behavioral Expectations

The College considers the behavior described in the following sections as inappropriate for the College community and in opposition to the core values set forth in this document. These expectations and rules apply to all students, whether undergraduate or graduate. The College encourages community members to report to College officials all incidents that involve the following actions. Any student found to have committed or to have attempted to commit the following misconduct is subject to the sanctions outlined in Section VII: Formal Conduct Procedures.

1. **Integrity:** Otis College students exemplify honesty, honor, and a respect for the truth in all of their dealings. Behavior that violates this value includes, but is not limited to
  1. **Falsification.** Knowingly furnishing or possessing false, falsified or forged materials such as falsification or misuse of documents, accounts, records, identification, or financial instruments.
  2. **Academic Dishonesty.** Acts of academic dishonesty as outlined in the Code of Academic Integrity. This includes but is not limited to, plagiarism, fabrication, and cheating.
  3. **Unauthorized Access.** Unauthorized possession, duplication, or use of means of access to any College building (i.e., keys, cards, etc.) or failing to timely report a lost College ID Card or key.
  4. **Collusion.** Action or inaction with another or others to violate the Code of Student Conduct.
    - Complicity with or failure of any student to appropriately address known or obvious violations of the Code of Student Conduct or law;
    - Complicity with or failure of any organized group to appropriately address known or obvious violations of the Code of Student Conduct or law by its members.
  5. **Trust.** Violations of positions of trust within the community.
  6. **Election Tampering.** Tampering with the election of any College-recognized student organization.
  7. **Taking of Property.** Intentional and unauthorized taking of College property or the personal property of another, including goods, services, and other valuables.
  8. **Stolen Property.** Knowingly taking or maintaining possession of stolen property.
  9. **Abuse of Conduct Process.** Abuse or interference with, or failure to comply in, College processes including conduct, but not limited to:
    - Falsification, distortion or misrepresentation of information;

- Failure to provide, destroying or concealing information during an investigation of an alleged policy violation;
- Attempting to discourage an individual's proper participation in, or use of, the campus conduct system;
- Harassment (verbal or physical) and/or intimidation of a member of a campus conduct body prior to, during, and/or following a campus conduct proceeding;
- Failure to comply with the sanction(s) imposed by the campus conduct system, and
- Influencing, or attempting to influence, another person to commit an abuse of the campus conduct system.

**2. Community and Civil Engagement:** Otis College students build and enhance their community. Behavior that violates this value includes, but is not limited to the following.

1. **Disruptive Behavior.** Disruption of College operations including obstruction of teaching, research, administration, other College activities, and/or other authorized non-College activities that occur on campus.
2. **Riots.** Causing, inciting, or participating in any disturbance that presents a clear and present danger to self or others, causes physical harm to others, or destruction of property.
3. **Unauthorized Entry.** Misuse of access privileges to College premises or unauthorized entry to or use of buildings, including trespassing, propping, or unauthorized use of alarmed doors for entry into or exit from a College building.
4. **Trademark Misuse.** Unauthorized use (including misuse) of College or organizational names and images.
5. **Damage and Destruction.** Intentional and/or unauthorized damage to or destruction of College property or the personal property of another.
6. **IT and Acceptable Use.** Violating the College Acceptable Use and Computing Policy, found online at <https://www.otis.edu/information-systems/policies-forms>
7. **Gambling.** Gambling as prohibited by the laws of the State of California. (Gambling may include raffles, lotteries, sports pools and online betting activities. For more information, see The Hoot, "Community Standards").
8. **Weapons.** Possession, use, or distribution of explosives (including fireworks and ammunition), guns (including air, BB, paintball, facsimile weapons, and pellet guns), or other weapons or dangerous objects such as arrows, axes, machetes, nunchucks, throwing stars, or knives (switchblade or belt buckle) with a blade of longer than two inches, including the storage of any item that falls within the category of a weapon in a vehicle parked on College property.
9. **Tobacco.** Smoking or tobacco use in any area of campus except for the designated smoking areas. This includes prohibiting the use of Tobacco under the age of 21 as defined by California State law.
10. **Fire Safety.** Violation of local, state, federal or campus fire policies including, but not limited to, intentionally or recklessly causing a fire that damages College or personal property or that causes injury. Failure to evacuate a College-controlled building during a fire alarm; Improper use of College fire safety equipment; or tampering with or improperly engaging a fire alarm or fire detection/control equipment while on College property. Such action may result in a local fine in addition to College sanctions.
11. **Animals.** Animals, with the exception of service animals that provide assistance (e.g., seeing-eye dogs) and pets as outlined in the Residence Life Handbook and solely related to students within the program and their guests, are not permitted on campus except as permitted by law.
12. **Wheeled Devices.** Skateboards, hoverboards, roller blades, roller skates, bicycles, and similar wheeled devices are not permitted inside buildings, the residential community, or on campus. Additionally, skateboards and other wheeled items may not be ridden on railings, curbs, benches, or any such fixtures that may be damaged by these activities, and individuals may be liable for damage to College property caused by these activities.

3. **Respect:** Otis College students show positive regard for each other and for the community. Behavior that violates this value includes, but is not limited to
1. **Harm to Persons.** Intentionally or recklessly causing physical harm or endangering the health or safety of any person.
  2. **Threatening Behaviors.** Written and/or verbal conduct that causes a reasonable expectation of injury to the health or safety of any person or damage to any property.
  3. **Intimidation.** Intimidation defined as implied threats or acts that cause a reasonable fear of harm in another.
  4. **Bullying and Cyberbullying.** Bullying and cyberbullying are repeated and/or severe aggressive behaviors that intimidate or intentionally harm or control another person physically or emotionally, and are not protected by freedom of expression.
  5. **Hazing.** Defined as an act that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student, or one that destroys or removes public or private property, for the purpose of initiation, admission into, affiliation with, or as a condition for continued membership in a group or organization. Participation or cooperation by the person(s) being hazed does not excuse the violation. Failing to intervene to prevent, failing to discourage and/or failing to report those acts may also violate this policy.
4. **Social Responsibility:** Otis College students are given and accept a high level of responsibility to self, to others and to the community. Behavior that violates this value includes, but is not limited to the following:
1. **Sexual Assault.** Nonconsensual Sexual Intercourse (or attempts to commit the same): Any sexual intercourse (anal, oral, or vaginal), however slight, with any object, by a person upon another person, without consent and/or by physical force.
  2. **Sexual Assault.** Nonconsensual Sexual Contact (or attempts to commit the same): Any intentional sexual touching, however slight, with any object, by person upon another person, without consent and/or by physical force.
  3. **Dating/Relationship Violence.** Dating Violence is violence or abuse committed by a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with another. The existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on a consideration of the length of the relationship, the type of relationship, and the frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship. Dating violence includes sexual or physical abuse or the threat of such abuse. Relationship Violence is violence or abuse used by one person who has been or is in a relationship with another. Partners may be married or not married; heterosexual, gay, or lesbian; living together, separated or dating.
  4. **Stalking.** Stalking is a course of conduct directed at a specific person that is unwelcome and would cause a reasonable person to feel fear for their safety or the safety of their family/household.
  5. **Sexual Misconduct.** Includes, but is not limited to, sexual harassment, nonconsensual sexual contact, nonconsensual sexual intercourse, and/or sexual exploitation (see "Community Standards Sexual Misconduct Policy" for further information).
  6. **Public Exposure.** Includes deliberately and publicly exposing one's intimate body parts, public urination and defecation, and public sex acts.
  7. **Sexual Harassment.** Hostile Environment: includes situations in which there is harassing conduct that is sufficiently severe, pervasive/persistent, and objectively offensive so that it alters the conditions of education, from both a subjective (the alleged victim's) and objective (a reasonable person's) viewpoint. The determination of whether an environment is "hostile" must be based on all the circumstances.
  8. **Sexual Harassment:** Quid Pro Quo: sexual harassment exists when there are unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature where submission to, or rejection of, such conduct results in educational or employment action.

9. **Sexual Exploitation.** Taking nonconsensual or abusive sexual advantage of another for one's own advantage or benefit, or to benefit a person other than the one being exploited.
10. **Sexual Intimidation.** Stalking, cyberstalking, and/or indecent exposure; Any unreasonable behavior, verbal or nonverbal, which has the effect of subjecting members of either sex to humiliation, embarrassment, or discomfort because of their gender or sexual identity.
11. **Discrimination.** Any act or failure to act that is based upon an individual or group's actual or perceived status (sex, gender, race, color, age, creed, national or ethnic origin, physical or mental disability, veteran status, pregnancy status, religion or sexual orientation, or other protected status) that is sufficiently severe that it limits or denies the ability to participate in or benefit from the College's educational program or activities.
12. **Discriminatory Harassment.** Any unwelcome conduct based on actual or perceived status including sex, gender, race, color, age, creed, national or ethnic origin, physical or mental disability, veteran status, pregnancy status, religion, sexual orientation, or other protected status should be reported to campus officials, who will act to remedy and resolve reported incidents. When discriminatory harassment is sufficiently severe, pervasive, or persistent and objectively offensive that it unreasonably interferes with, limits, or denies the ability to participate in or benefit from the College's educational or employment program or activities, sanctions can be imposed for the creation of a hostile environment.
13. **Retaliatory Discrimination or Harassment.** Exists when an individual harasses, intimidates, or takes other adverse actions against a person because of the person's participation in an investigation of discrimination or sexual misconduct or their support of someone involved in an investigation of discrimination or sexual misconduct. Retaliatory actions include, but are not limited to, threats or actual violence against the person or their property, adverse educational or employment consequences, ridicule, intimidation, bullying, or ostracism.
14. **Alcohol.** Use, possession, or distribution of alcoholic beverages or paraphernalia except as expressly permitted by law and the College's Alcohol Policy.
15. **Drugs.** Use, possession, or distribution of illegal drugs and other controlled substances or drug paraphernalia except as expressly permitted by law and the College's Drug Policy.
16. **Marijuana.** Use, possession, or distribution of marijuana for medical or recreational purposes, even if it otherwise meets the qualifications of the California compassionate use act, proposition 215, or the adult use of marijuana act, proposition 64. This includes all cannabis products, including those with CBD.
17. **Prescription Medications.** Abuse, misuse, sale, or distribution of prescription or over-the-counter medications.
18. **Failure to Comply.** Failure to comply with the directives of College officials or law enforcement officers during the performance of their duties and/or failure to identify oneself to these persons when requested to do so.
19. **Financial Responsibilities.** Failure to promptly meet financial responsibilities to the institution, including, but not limited to knowingly passing a worthless check or money order in payment to the institution or to members of the institution acting in an official capacity.
20. **Arrest.** Failure of any student to accurately report an off-campus arrest for any crime (including noncustodial or field arrests) by any law enforcement agency to the Office of Student Affairs within seventy-two (72) hours of release.
21. **Other Policies.** Violating other published College policies or rules, including all Residence Hall policies found in the Hallway Handbook.
22. **Health and Safety.** Creation of health and/or safety hazards (dangerous pranks, hanging out of or climbing from/on/in windows, balconies, roofs, etc.).
23. **Violations of Law.** Evidence of violation of local, state, or federal laws, when substantiated through the College's conduct process.
24. **Infectious Disease.** Violation of College requirements or public health orders in place to reduce the risk of spreading infectious disease or failing to follow any applicable federal, state, and/or local public health orders.

# Overview of The Student Conduct Process

This overview gives a general idea of how the College's campus conduct proceedings work, but it should be noted that not all situations are of the same severity or complexity. Thus, these procedures are flexible, and are not exactly the same in every situation, although consistency in similar situations is a priority. The campus conduct process and all applicable timelines commence with notice to an administrator of a potential violation of College rules.\*\*

*\*\* In Title IX related issues, the "administrator" is any "responsible employee" defined by Title IX and/or campus policy.*

**NOTICE:** Once notice is received from any source (impacted party, Resident Assistant, 3rd party, online, etc.), the College may proceed with a preliminary inquiry/investigation and/or schedule an initial educational meeting/conference with the responding student to explain the conduct process to the responding student and gather information.

To assure continued compliance with Title IX and/or any other state or federal anti-discrimination/harassment/retaliation laws, if state or federal statutory provisions, regulatory guidance, or court interpretations or guidance provided by any authorized regulating agency change, or conflict with college policy and/or procedure including but not limited to the hearing procedures set forth in this Code of Student Conduct, the College's policy and/or procedure will be deemed amended as of the time of the decision, ruling, legislative enactment or guidance. Further, the procedures set forth in this policy may be modified or changed to protect the due process rights of the parties and/or to comply with Title IX and/or any other state or federal anti-discrimination/harassment/retaliation laws or regulations.

## Overview of Step 1

### Preliminary Inquiry and/or Educational Conference

The College conducts a preliminary inquiry into the nature of the incident, complaint, or notice, the evidence available, and the parties involved. The preliminary inquiry may lead the College to determine that there is insufficient evidence to pursue the investigation, because the behavior alleged, even if proven, would not violate the Code of Student Conduct, (e.g.: for reasons such as mistaken identity or allegations of behavior that falls outside the code). The preliminary inquiry may also lead to a more comprehensive investigation, when it is clear more information must be gathered. It may lead to a formal complaint of a violation and/or an educational conference with the responding student.

When an initial educational meeting/conference is held, the possible outcomes include as follows:

- a decision not to pursue the allegation based on a lack of or insufficient evidence. The matter should be closed and records should so indicate;
- a decision on the allegation, also known as an "informal" or "administrative" resolution to an uncontested allegation where the student accepts responsibility (see immediately below); or
- a decision to proceed with additional investigation and/or referral for a "formal" resolution.

If a decision on the allegation is made and the finding is that the responding student is not responsible for violating the Code, the process will end. In sexual misconduct and other discrimination complaints, the alleging party may request that the Dean of Student Affairs and the Title IX Coordinator reopen the investigation and/or grant a hearing. This decision shall be in the sole discretion of the Dean of Student Affairs and the Title IX Coordinator and will only be granted for extraordinary cause. If the College's finding is that the responding student is in violation and the responding student accepts responsibility within three days of the formal or informal hearing/educational conference, the College considers this an

“uncontested allegation.” The administrator conducting the initial educational conference will then determine the sanction(s) for the misconduct.

If the sanctions are rejected, the College will conduct a sanction-only hearing, conducted by the Student Conduct Committee which recommends a sanction to the Dean of Student Affairs. The sanction is then reviewed and finalized by the Dean of Student Affairs and is subject to appeal (see appeals section, below) by any party to the misconduct. Once an appeal decision is made, the process ends.

If the administrator conducting the educational conference determines that it is more likely than not that the responding student is in violation, and the responding student rejects that finding in whole or in part, then it is considered a contested allegation and the process moves to Step 2.

## Overview of Step 2

### Formal Hearing

In a contested allegation, additional investigation may then be commenced and/or a hearing may be held when there is reasonable cause to believe that a rule or rules have been violated. A formal notice of the complaint will be issued, and a hearing will be held before a panel or an administrator. A finding will be determined and is final except in cases that involve Title IX or other discrimination allegations. In those cases, the hearing results serve as a recommendation to the Dean of Student Affairs or designee, who will review and finalize the finding. If the finding is that the responding student is not responsible, the process ends. Applicable appeals options are described below.

## Overview of Step 3

### Review and Finalize Sanction(s)

If the student is found responsible for the charges/violations, sanctions will be recommended by the Student Conduct Committee or administrator to the Dean of Student Affairs or designee when applicable, who will review and finalize the sanctions, subject to the College appeals process by any party to the complaint.

## Student Conduct Authority

- 1. Authority.** The Dean of Student Affairs is vested with the authority over student conduct by the Board of Trustees or President. The Dean of Student Affairs or designee serves as the Chief Conduct Officer and oversees and manages the student conduct process. The Dean of Student Affairs may appoint administrative hearing and appeals officers as deemed necessary to efficiently and effectively supervise the student conduct process.
  - The Dean of Student Affairs or designee will assume responsibility for the investigation of an allegation of misconduct to determine if the complaint has merit.
- 2. Gatekeeping.** No complaint will be forwarded for a hearing unless there is reasonable cause to believe a policy has been violated. Reasonable cause is defined as some credible information to support each element of the offense, even if that information is merely a credible witness or the impacted party's statement. A reporting party wholly unsupported by any information will not be forwarded for a hearing.
- 3. Conflict Resolution Options.** The Dean of Student Affairs or designee has discretion to refer a complaint for mediation or other forms of appropriate conflict resolution. All parties must agree to mediation and to be bound by the decision with no review/appeal. Any unsuccessful mediation can be forwarded for formal processing and hearing; however, at no time will complaints of sexual



misconduct/assault or physical violence be mediated as the sole institutional response. The Dean of Student Affairs may also suggest that complaints that do not involve a violation of the Code of Student Conduct be referred for mediation or other appropriate conflict resolution.

4. **Interpretation and Revision.** The Dean of Student Affairs will develop procedural rules for the administration of hearings that are consistent with provisions of the Code of Student Conduct. Material deviation from these rules will, generally, only be made as necessary and will include reasonable advance notice to the parties involved, either by posting online and/or in the form of written communication. The Dean of Student Affairs may vary procedures with notice upon determining that changes to law or regulation require policy or procedural alterations not reflected in this Code. The Dean of Student Affairs may make minor modifications to procedures that do not materially jeopardize the fairness owed to any party. Any question of interpretation of the Code of Student Conduct will be referred to the Dean of Student Affairs whose interpretation is final. The Code of Student Conduct will be updated annually under the direction of the Dean of Student Affairs with a comprehensive revision process being conducted every five years.

## Formal Conduct Procedures

### 1. College as Convener

Otis College is the convener of every action under this code. Within that action, there are several roles:

- Respondent: The responding student is the person who is alleged to have violated the code.
- Complainant: The party bringing the complaint, who may be a student, employee, visitor or guest, may choose to be present and participate in the process as fully as the responding student.
- Witnesses: There are witnesses, who may offer information regarding the allegation. There is an investigator(s) whose role is to present the allegations and share the evidence that the College has obtained regarding the allegations.
- Advisor: Advisors serve as support people to the students, and may be chosen only from within the current College community, but cannot be another peer/student. Parents/Family members may not serve as advisors unless it is granted by the Dean of Student Affairs for an advisor from outside the community to be able to participate. Advisors may not make a presentation or represent the party bringing the complaint or responding to the student during the hearing.

### 2. Group Violations

A student group or organization and its officers and membership may be held collectively and individually responsible when violations of this code by the organization or its member(s) take place at organization- sponsored or co-sponsored events, whether sponsorship is formal or tacit; have received the consent or encouragement of the organization or of the organization's leaders or officers; or were known or should have been known to the membership or its officers.

Hearings for student groups or organizations follow the same general student conduct procedures. In any such action, individual determinations as to responsibility will be made and sanctions may be assigned collectively and individually and will be proportionate to the involvement of each individual and the organization.

### 3. Amnesty

#### 1. For Reporting Parties

The College provides amnesty to reporting parties who may be hesitant to report to College officials because they fear that they themselves may be accused of minor policy violations, such as underage drinking, at the time of the incident.

#### 2. For Those Who Offer Assistance

To encourage students to offer help and assistance to others, the College pursues policy of

amnesty for minor violations when students offer help to others in need (bystander intervention). At the discretion of the Dean of Student Affairs, amnesty may also be extended on a case-by-case basis to the person receiving assistance. Educational options will be explored, but no conduct proceedings or conduct record will result.

***Bystander Intervention:*** Appropriate ways to address situations and intervene as a bystander may include the following:

- Where the student is not complicit, by leaving the area where the violation was occurring where a risk of serious harm exists, merely leaving will not be appropriate; or
- Creating an effective distraction, intervening, or confronting the violation in an effort to stop it; or
- Contacting the appropriate staff members or authorities to address the violation.

### 3. For Those Who Report Serious Violations

Students who are engaged in minor violations but who choose to bring related serious violations by others to the attention of the College are offered amnesty for their minor violations. Educational options will be explored, but no conduct proceedings will result.

Abuse of amnesty requests can result in a decision by the Dean of Student Affairs not to extend amnesty to the same person repeatedly.

4. Amnesty does not apply to more serious allegations such as physical abuse of another or illicit drug distribution. The decision not to offer amnesty to a Respondent is based on neither sex nor gender, but on the fact that collateral misconduct is typically addressed for all students within a progressive discipline system, and the rationale for amnesty—the incentive to report serious misconduct—is rarely applicable to Respondent with respect to a Complainant.

### 5. Safe Harbor

The College has a Safe Harbor rule for students. The College believes that students who have a drug and/or addiction problem deserve help. If any College student brings their own use, addiction, or dependency to the attention of College officials outside the threat of drug tests or conduct sanctions and seeks assistance, a conduct complaint will not be pursued. However, if a student's alcohol and/or other drug addiction/dependency results in behavior that threatens the safety and security of the surrounding community, a student conduct process may be pursued. A written action plan may be used to track cooperation with the Safe Harbor program by the student. Failure to follow the action plan will nullify the Safe Harbor protection and campus conduct processes will be initiated.

## 4. Reporting Alleged Violation(s)

Any member of the College community, visitor, or guest may report a policy violation(s) by any student for misconduct under this Code.

Reports may also be given to the Dean of Student Affairs (or designee) and/or to the Title IX Coordinator, when appropriate. Additionally, these administrators may act on notice of a potential violation whether a formal allegation is made or not. All allegations can be submitted by the impacted party or a third party, and should be submitted as soon as possible after the offending event occurs. The College has the right to pursue an allegation or notice of misconduct on its own behalf and to serve as convener of the subsequent campus conduct process. The Dean of Student Affairs (or designee) will assume responsibility for the investigation of the alleged violation as described in the section below.

## 5. Investigation

The Dean of Student Affairs will investigate any other allegation under this Code. The Title IX Coordinator or designee(s) will investigate any complaint that falls under Title IX (e.g. sexual misconduct) or involves any other form of discrimination. The investigator(s) will take the following steps:

- Initiate any necessary remedial/interim actions on behalf of the impacted party (if any);

- Determine the identity and contact information of the party bringing the complaint, whether that person is the initiator of the complaint, the alleged impacted party, or a College proxy or representative;
- Conduct an immediate preliminary investigation to identify a complete list of all policies that may have been violated, to review the history of the parties, the context of the incident(s), any potential patterns and the nature of the complaint;
- If the impacted party is reluctant to pursue the complaint, determine whether the complaint should still be pursued and whether sufficient independent evidence could support the complaint without the participation of the impacted party;
- Notify the impacted party of whether the College intends to pursue the complaint regardless of their involvement, and inform the impacted party of their rights in the process and option to become involved if they so choose;
- Preliminary investigation usually takes between 1–7 business days to complete;
- If indicated by the preliminary investigation conduct a comprehensive investigation to determine if there is reasonable cause to believe that the responding student violated College policy, and to determine what specific policy violations should serve as the basis for the complaint;
- If there is insufficient evidence through the investigation to support reasonable cause, the allegations will be closed with no further action;
- A comprehensive investigation usually takes between one day and two weeks; In Title IX cases, this can be longer.
- Meet with the Party bringing the complaint to finalize the Party bringing the Complaint's Statement, which will be drawn up by the investigator or designee as a result of this meeting;
- Commence a thorough, reliable, and impartial investigation by developing a strategic investigation plan, including witness list, evidence list, intended timeframe, and order of interviews for all witnesses and the responding student, who may be given notice of the interview prior to or at the time of the interview;
- Prepare the notice of alleged policy violation(s) on the basis of the reasonable cause determination, which may be delivered prior to, during or after the responding student is interviewed, at the discretion of the investigator(s);
- Interview all relevant witnesses, obtain statements from each, and have each witness sign their statements to verify them;
- Obtain all documentary evidence and information that is available;
- Obtain all physical evidence that is available;
- Complete the investigation promptly by analyzing all available evidence without unreasonable deviation from the intended timeline;
- Make a finding, based on a preponderance of the evidence (whether a policy violation is more likely than not);
- Present the investigation report and findings to the responding student, who may:
  - accept the findings,
  - accept the findings in part and reject them in part,
  - or may reject all findings;
  - Share the findings and update the party bringing the complaint on the status of the investigation and the outcome.

#### **6. Findings OPTION 1:**

The Respondent is Found "Not Responsible"

Where the responding student is found not responsible for the alleged violation(s), the investigation will be closed. The party bringing the complaint, if any, may request that the Title IX Coordinator (in cases involving sexual misconduct) and/or the Dean of Student Affairs (for general conduct), as applicable, review the investigation file to possibly re-open the investigation or convene a hearing. The decision to re-open an investigation or convene a hearing rests solely in the discretion of the Title IX Coordinator or the Dean of Student Affairs in these cases, and is granted only on the basis

of extraordinary cause.

**Option 2A:**

The Respondent Accepts “Responsibility”

Should the responding student accept the finding that they violated College policy, the Dean of Student Affairs or designated committee will determine a necessary sanction(s). In cases involving discrimination, sanctions will act to end the discrimination, prevent its recurrence, and remedy its effects on the impacted party and the College community. If the responding student accepts these recommended sanctions, the sanctions are implemented and the process ends. This outcome is not subject to appeal.

**Option 2B:**

The Respondent Accepts a “Responsibility” but Rejects the Sanctions Recommended. If the responding student accepts the “responsible” findings, but rejects the recommended sanctions, they will have a right to Appeal, based on the appeal guidelines detailed below.

**Option 3A:**

Responding Student Rejects the Allegations Completely

Where the responding student rejects the alleged violation(s) that of College policy based on the initial meeting outlining the allegations against them, a formal hearing will be convened within fourteen business days, barring exigent circumstances.

Prior to and at the hearing, the Dean of Student Affairs will provide all reports to the Student Conduct Committee, the committee will hear from the parties, and any necessary witnesses. The investigation report will be considered by the committee, which renders an independent and objective finding. Full committee procedures are detailed below.

If the committee finds the responding student not responsible for all violations, the Dean of Student Affairs will inform the parties of this determination and the rationale for the decision in writing in a timely manner. This determination is subject to appeal by any party to the complaint. Appeal review procedures are outlined below.

If the panel finds the student responsible for the alleged violation, it will recommend a sanction/responsive action to the Dean of Student Affairs, who will, conferring with the Title IX Coordinator as necessary, render a decision within five (5) business days of the hearing and timely notify the parties, in writing. An appeal may be filed within five (5) business days after the delivery of the formal letter of the findings by any party to the complaint, as detailed below.

**Option 3B:**

Responding Student Accepts “Responsibility” in Part and Rejects Allegations in Part

Where the responding student rejects in part the allegations that they violated College policy, there will be a committee hearing solely on the disputed allegations within fourteen days, barring exigent circumstances. For all findings holding a responding student responsible for a violation, the process will follow the same process outlined in Option 3A. If the committee finds the responding party “Not Responsible” on any of the contested allegations, the process will move to the Sanctioning Phase on only the uncontested allegations, to an administrative hearing on the sanctions.

**7. Special Hearing Provisions for Sexual Misconduct, Discrimination and Other Complaints of a Sensitive Nature**

All hearings under this section will be conducted by the Student Conduct Committee. For sexual misconduct, discrimination, and other complaints of a sensitive nature, whether the alleged impacted individual is serving as the party bringing the complaint or as a witness, alternative

testimony options may be provided, such as placing a privacy screen in the hearing room or allowing the alleged impacted party to testify from another room via Skype, Zoom, conference call, or similar technology. While these options are intended to help make the impacted party more comfortable, they are not intended to work to the disadvantage of the responding student.

The past sexual history or sexual character of a party will not be admissible by the other parties in hearings unless such information is determined to be highly relevant by the panel Chair. All such information sought to be admitted by a party or the College will be presumed irrelevant until a showing of relevance is made, in advance of the hearing, to the Chair. Demonstration of pattern, repeat and/or predatory behavior by the responding student, in the form of previous findings in any legal or campus proceeding, or in the form of previous good faith allegations, will always be relevant to the finding, not just the sanction. The parties will be notified in advance if any such information is deemed relevant and will be introduced in the hearing.

The party bringing the complaint in any complaint alleging sexual misconduct or other behavior falling within the coverage of Title IX will be notified in writing of the outcome of a hearing, any sanctions assigned and the rationale for the decision.

#### **8. Notice of Hearing**

Once a determination is made that reasonable cause exists for the Dean of Student Affairs (or designee) to refer a complaint for a hearing, notice will be given to the responding student. Notice will be in writing and may be delivered primarily through email to the student's Otis College email account. Other methods of delivery can include: in person by the Dean of Student Affairs (or designee); or mailed to the local or permanent address of the student as indicated in official College records; or emailed to the student's personal email. Once mailed, e-mailed and/or received in-person, such notice will be presumptively delivered. The letter of notice will:

- Include the alleged violation and notification of where to locate the Code of Student Conduct and College procedures for resolution of the complaint; and
- Direct the responding student to contact the Dean of Student Affairs (or designee) within a specified period of time to respond to the complaint. This time period will generally be no less than two days from the date of delivery of the summons letter. A meeting with the Dean of Student Affairs (or designee) may be arranged to explain the nature of the complaint and the conduct process. At this meeting, the responding student may indicate, either verbally or in writing, to the Dean of Student Affairs (or designee), whether s/he admits or denies the allegations of the complaint.

#### **9. Interim Actions**

Under the Code of Student Conduct, the Dean of Student Affairs or designee may impose restrictions and/or separate a student from the community pending the scheduling of a campus hearing on alleged violation(s) of the Code of Student Conduct when a student represents a threat of serious harm to others, is facing allegations of serious criminal activity, to preserve the integrity of an investigation, to preserve College property and/or to prevent disruption of, or interference with, the normal operations of the College.

Interim actions can include separation from the institution (Interim Suspension) or restrictions on participation in the community for no more than ten (10) business days pending the scheduling of a campus hearing on alleged violation(s) of the Code of Student Conduct. Other examples of interim actions can include but are not limited to:

- Housing relocation/reassignment
- Class schedule accommodations
- No trespass orders
- No contact orders

A student who receives an interim suspension may request a meeting with the Dean of Student Affairs or designee to demonstrate why an interim suspension is not merited.

Regardless of the outcome of this meeting, the College may still proceed with the scheduling of a campus hearing.

During an interim suspension, a student may be denied access to College housing and/or the College campus/facilities/events. As determined appropriate by the Dean of Student Affairs, this restriction may include classes and/or all other College activities or privileges for which the student might otherwise be eligible. At the discretion of the Dean of Student Affairs and with the approval of, and in collaboration with, the appropriate Chairs(s), alternative coursework options may be pursued to ensure as minimal an impact as possible on the responding student.

- **Order of Exclusion/Stay Away Notices**

Students may be excluded from campus by order of the Dean of Student Affairs; employees may be excluded from campus by order of Human Resources. Individuals who are under an order of exclusion are prohibited from entering the Otis College campus or participating in Otis College activities on or off campus. Individuals who fail to comply with an order of exclusion will be given a Trespass Notice.

To execute an order of exclusion, the Dean of Student Affairs or Human Resources notifies the Chief Safety & Security Officer, who in turn notifies Campus Security. The Campus Security administers and supervises the order of exclusion until such time as the student or employee returns to good standing in the College community, as determined by the Dean of Student Affairs in the case of students and Human Resources in the case of employees. Persons under an order of exclusion may visit campus for brief periods only by written permission of the Chief Safety & Security Officer, the Dean of Student Affairs (for students), or Human Resources (for employees). A Trespass Notice will be issued to any person under an order of exclusion who returns to campus without written permission. The Dean of Student Affairs and Human Resources may appoint a designee to act on their behalf.

## 10. **Hearing Options and Preparation**

The following sections describe the College's conduct hearing processes. Except in a complaint involving failure to comply with the summons of the Dean of Student Affairs (or designee), no student may be found to have violated the Code of Student Conduct solely as a result of the student's failure to appear for a hearing. In all such instances, conduct hearings will proceed as scheduled and the information in support of the complaint will be presented to, and considered by, the Dean of Student Affairs or committee presiding over the hearing.

Where the responding student admits to violating the Code of Student Conduct, the Dean of Student Affairs (or designee) may invoke administrative hearing procedures to determine and administer appropriate sanctions without a formal hearing. This process is also known as an administrative conference. In administrative/educational conference, complaints will be heard and determinations will be made by the Dean of Student Affairs or designee.

Where the responding student denies violating the Code of Student Conduct, a formal hearing will be conducted. This process is known as a committee hearing. At the discretion of the Dean of Student Affairs (or designee), a request by one or more of the parties to the complaint for an administrative/educational conference may be considered. Students who deny a violation for which a committee hearing will be held will be given a minimum of five (5) days to prepare unless all parties wish to proceed more quickly. Preparation for a formal hearing is summarized in the following guidelines:

- Notice of the time, date and location of the hearing will be in writing and may be delivered by one or more of the following methods: in person by the Dean of Student Affairs (or designee); mailed to the local or permanent address of the student as indicated in official College

records; or e-mailed to the student's College-issued e-mail account. Once mailed, e-mailed and/or received in-person, such notice will be presumptively delivered.

- If there is an alleged impacted individual of the conduct in question, the alleged impacted individual may serve as the party bringing the complaint or may elect to have the College administration serve as the party bringing the complaint forward. Where there is no alleged impacted individual, the College administration will serve as the party bringing the complaint forward.
- If a responding student fails to respond to notice from the Dean of Student Affairs (or designee), the Dean of Student Affairs (or designee) may initiate a complaint against the student for failure to comply with the directives of a College official and give notice of this offense. Unless the student responds to this notice within two days by answering the original notice, an administrative conference may be scheduled and held on the student's behalf. As a result, the student may be administratively withdrawn from attending classes or a disciplinary hold may be placed on their College account, deeming them ineligible to register for courses or College housing until such time as the student responds to the initial complaint.
- At least three (3) business days before any scheduled formal hearing, the following will occur:
  - The responding student may deliver to the Dean of Student Affairs (or designee) a written response to the complaint; the respondent can choose to respond in person if they desire.
  - In cases where there is a student-to-student violation (physical/verbal assaults, sexual assault/misconduct, etc.), the responding party will be given the opportunity to submit questions to the Committee to be used for cross examination of either the complainant(s) witnesses, or both.
  - Similarly, the Complainant in the case may submit questions to the Conduct Committee to be used for cross examination of the respondent(s), witnesses, or both.
  - The Dean of Student Affairs has the right to omit any questions of cross examination from either party as long as there is a rationale for the omission(s).
  - The responding student will deliver to the Dean of Student Affairs (or designee) a written list of all witnesses they wish the College to call at the hearing;
  - The responding student will deliver to the Dean of Student Affairs (or designee) all physical evidence they intend to use or need to have present at the hearing and will indicate who has possession or custody of such evidence, if known, so that the Dean of Student Affairs can arrange for its presence;
  - The party bringing the complaint will deliver to the Dean of Student Affairs (or designee) a written list of all witnesses they wish the College to call at the hearing;
  - The party bringing the complaint will deliver to the Dean of Student Affairs (or designee) all items of physical evidence they intend to use or needs to have present at the hearing and will indicate who has possession or custody of such evidence, if known, so that the Dean of Student Affairs can arrange for its presence;
  - The party bringing the complaint and the responding student will notify the Dean of Student Affairs (or designee) of the names of any advisors/advocate who may be accompanying the parties at the hearing;
- The Dean of Student Affairs (or designee) will ensure that the hearing information and any other available written documentation is shared with the parties upon request and at least two (2) days before any scheduled hearing. In addition, the parties will be given a list of the names of all committee members in advance. Should any party object to any committee member, they must raise all objections, in writing, to the Dean of Student Affairs immediately. Committee members will only be unseated if the Dean of Student Affairs concludes that their bias precludes an impartial hearing of the complaint. Additionally, any committee member who feels they cannot make an objective determination must recuse themselves from the proceedings.

## 11. Committee Hearing Procedures

The Dean of Student Affairs will serve as the Chair of the conduct panel with no voting rights, or will appoint one panelist as the Chair for the hearing. The parties have the right to be present at the hearing; however, they do not have the right to be present during deliberations. If a student cannot attend the hearing, it is that student's responsibility to notify the Dean of Student Affairs no less than three (3) days prior to the scheduled hearing to arrange for another date, time and location. Except in cases of grave or unforeseen circumstances, if the responding student fails to give the requisite minimum three (3) day notice, or if the responding student fails to appear, the hearing will proceed as scheduled. If the party bringing the complaint fails to appear, the complaint may be dropped unless the College chooses to pursue the allegation on its own behalf, as determined by the Dean of Student Affairs.

The Dean of Student Affairs (or designee) and the committee will conduct panel hearings according to the following guidelines:

- Hearings will be closed to the public.
- Admission to the hearing of persons other than the parties involved will be at the discretion of the panel chair and the Dean of Student Affairs.
- In hearings involving more than one responding student, the standard procedure will be to hear the complaints jointly; however, the Dean of Student Affairs may permit the hearing pertinent to each responding student to be conducted separately. In joint hearings, separate determinations of responsibility will be made for each responding student.
- The parties have the right to an advisor of their own choosing. Advisors may be chosen only from within the current College community, but cannot be another peer/student. Parents/Family members may not serve as advisors unless it is granted by the Dean of Student Affairs for an advisor from outside the community to be able to participate.
- In the rare instance where civil or criminal court proceedings currently involve a responding student or at the discretion of the Dean of Student Affairs, legal counsel may be permitted to serve as an advisor.
- The advisor may not make a presentation or represent the party bringing the complaint or responding student during the hearing.
- The party bringing the complaint, the responding student, the committee and the Dean of Student Affairs (or designee) will have the privilege of questioning all present witnesses and questioning all present parties (through the Chair, at the discretion of the Chair). Unduly repetitive witnesses can be limited at the discretion of the panel Chair or the Dean of Student Affairs (or designee).
- Pertinent records, exhibits, and written statements may be accepted as information for consideration by the panel and the Dean of Student Affairs. Formal rules of evidence are not observed. The Dean of Student Affairs may limit the number of character witnesses presented or may accept written affidavits of character instead.
- All procedural questions are subject to the final decision of the Dean of Student Affairs.
- Cross examination questions submitted by responding and or complainant parties may be used in cases where there are student-to-student violations. The submitted questions from either party will be facilitated and asked by the Chair in order to maintain a measured questioning process.
- After a committee hearing, the panel will deliberate and determine, by majority vote, whether it is **more likely than not** (preponderance of evidence) that the responding student has violated the Code of Student Conduct. The Dean of Student Affairs (or designee) will be present and available as a resource during all deliberations. Once a finding is determined, if the finding is that of a policy violation, the panel will determine an appropriate recommended sanction(s). The Dean of Student Affairs (or designee) is responsible for informing the panel of applicable precedent and any previous conduct violations or other relevant pattern information about the responding student. The panel Chairperson will prepare a written



deliberation report detailing the committee's finding, as well as the information cited by the panel in support of their finding, and any information the panel excluded from its consideration and why. This report should conclude with any recommended sanctions. This report should not exceed two pages in length.

- The Dean of Student Affairs will consider the recommendations of the committee, may make appropriate modifications to the committee's report, and will then render a decision and inform the responding student and party bringing the complaint (if applicable by law or College policy) of the final determination within seven days of the hearing. Notification will be made in writing and may be delivered by one or more of the following methods: in person by the Dean of Student Affairs (or designee); mailed to the local or permanent address of the student as indicated in official College records; or e-mailed to the student's College-issued email account. Once mailed, e-mailed and/or received in-person, such notice will be presumptively delivered. In cases of sexual misconduct, notice of the outcome will be delivered to all parties simultaneously, meaning without substantial delay between the notifications to each.

## 12. Conduct Sanctions

One or more of following sanctions may be imposed upon any student for any single violation of the Code of Student Conduct:

- Administrative Warning: An official written notice that the student has violated College policies and/or rules and that more severe conduct action will result should the student be involved in other violations while the student is enrolled at the College.
- Restitution: Compensation for damage caused to the College or any person's property. This is not a fine but, rather, a repayment for property destroyed, damaged, consumed, or stolen.
- Fines: Reasonable fines may be imposed. Fines are specified to include: Alcohol and other drug-related activities—fines in increments of \$50 to \$300; Damages—actual repair costs, including labor and materials; Noncompliance with discretionary sanctions - \$15 per hour for service not performed; Unauthorized residence hall room change - \$35; Failure to return a reserved space to proper condition – labor costs and expenses.
- Community/College Service Requirements: For a student or organization to complete a specific supervised Community/College service.
- Loss of Privileges: The student will be denied specified privileges for a designated period of time.
- Confiscation of Prohibited Property: Items whose presence is in violation of College policy will be confiscated and will become the property of the College. Prohibited items that are confiscated will not be returned.
- Behavioral Requirement: This includes required activities including, but not limited to, seeking academic counseling or substance abuse screening, writing a letter of apology, complete online alcohol and other drug courses, etc.
- Mandated Counseling Consultation: The student will meet with an Otis College counselor and follow the recommended mandated session(s). The student will be required to comply with the counselor's written treatment plan, and will sign a formal release documenting their attendance in order to complete this sanction. The details of the treatment plan will be based on the student's individual circumstances, and will not be shared with the Student Conduct Committee or Student Affairs Staff.
- Educational Program: Requirement to attend, present, and/or participate in a program related to the violation. It may also be a requirement to sponsor or assist with a program for others on campus to aid them in learning about a specific topic or issue related to the violation for which the student or organization was found responsible. Examples of an educational program can be but are not limited to online education courses, residence hall program for the building or floor communities, health and wellness programming, etc. Audience may be restricted.

- Restriction of Visitation Privileges: May be imposed on a resident or nonresident student. The parameters of the restriction will be specified.
- College Housing Probation: Official notice that, should further violations of Residence Life or College policies occur during a specified probationary period, the student may immediately be removed from College housing. Regular probationary meetings may also be imposed.
- College Housing Reassignment: Reassignment to another College housing facility. Residential Life personnel will decide on the reassignment details.
- College Housing Suspension: Removal from College housing for a specified period of time after which the student is eligible to return. Conditions for readmission to College housing may be specified. Under this sanction, a student is required to vacate College housing within 24 hours of notification of the action, although this deadline may be extended upon application to, and at the discretion of, the Dean of Student Affairs. This sanction may be enforced with a trespass action if deemed necessary. Prior to reapplication for College housing, the student must gain permission from the Dean of Student Affairs (or designee).
- College Housing Dismissal: The student's privilege to live in, or visit, any College housing structure is revoked indefinitely. This sanction may be enforced with a trespass action if deemed necessary.
- College Probation: The student is put on official notice that, should further violations of College policies occur during a specified probationary period, the student may face suspension or expulsion. Regular probationary meetings may also be imposed.
- Eligibility Restriction: The student is deemed "not in good standing" with the College for a specified period of time. Specific limitations or exceptions may be granted by the Dean of Student Affairs and terms of this conduct sanction may include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - Ineligibility to hold any office in any student organization recognized by the College or hold an elected or appointed office at the College; or
  - Ineligibility to represent the College to anyone outside the College community in any way, including participating in the study abroad program, attending conferences, or representing the College at an official function, event or competition, and so on
- College Suspension: Separation from the College for a specified minimum period of time, after which the student is eligible to return. Eligibility may be contingent upon satisfaction of specific conditions noted at the time of suspension. The student is required to vacate the campus within 24 hours of notification of the action, although this deadline may be extended upon application to, and at the discretion of, the Dean of Student Affairs. During the suspension period, the student is banned from College property, functions, events, and activities. This sanction may be enforced with a trespass action and/or No Contact action as necessary.
- College Dismissal: Permanent separation from the College. The student is banned from College property and the student's presence at any College-sponsored activity or event is prohibited. This action may be enforced with a trespass action and No Contact action as necessary.
- Other Sanctions: Additional or alternate sanctions may be created and designed as deemed appropriate to the offense with the approval of the Dean of Student Affairs or designee.

The following sanctions may be imposed upon groups or organizations found to have violated the Code of Student Conduct:

- One or more of the sanctions listed above; and/or
- Deactivation, derecognition, loss of all privileges (including College registration), for a specified period of time.

### **13. Parental Notification**

The College reserves the right to notify the parents/guardians of dependent students regarding any conduct situation, particularly alcohol and other drug violations. The College may also notify

parents/guardians of nondependent students who are under the age of 21 of alcohol and/or other drug violations.

#### **14. Notification of Outcomes**

The outcome of a campus hearing is part of the education record of the responding student and is protected from release under the Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), except under certain conditions. As allowed by FERPA, when a student is accused of a policy violation that would constitute a “crime of violence” or forcible or non forcible sex offense, the College will inform the alleged party bringing the complaint in writing of the final results of a hearing regardless of whether the College concludes that a violation was committed. Such release of information may only include the alleged student’s/responding student’s name, the violation committed, and the sanctions assigned (if applicable). In cases of sexual misconduct and other offenses covered by Title IX, only, the rationale for the outcome will also be shared with all parties to the complaint in addition to the finding and sanction(s).

In cases where the College determines through the student conduct process that a student violated a policy that would constitute a “crime of violence” or non forcible sex offense, the College may also release the above information publicly and/or to any third party. FERPA defines “crimes of violence” to include

- Arson
- Assault offenses (includes stalking)
- Burglary
- Criminal Homicide—manslaughter by negligence
- Criminal Homicide—murder and nonnegligent manslaughter
- Destruction/damage/vandalism of property
- Kidnapping/abduction
- Robbery
- Forcible sex offences
- Nonforcible sex offences

#### **15. Failure to Complete Conduct Sanctions**

All students, as members of the College community, are expected to comply with conduct sanctions within the time frame specified by the Dean of Student Affairs or designee. Failure to follow through on conduct sanctions by the date specified, whether by refusal, neglect, or any other reason, may result in additional sanctions, administrative “holds” on the student account, and/or suspension from the College. In such situations, resident students will be required to vacate College housing within 24 hours of notification by the Dean of Student Affairs, although this deadline may be extended upon application to, and at the discretion of, the Dean of Student Affairs. A suspension will only be lifted when compliance with conduct sanctions is satisfactorily achieved. This determination will be made by the Dean of Student Affairs.

#### **16. Appeal Review Procedures**

Any party may request an appeal of the decision of the Committee/Administrative Hearing by filing a written request to the Vice President of Student Affairs and Campus Diversity and Inclusion, subject to the procedures outlined below. All sanctions imposed by the original hearing body go into effect once the five (5) business day appeal window has concluded. All parties should be timely informed of the status of requests for appeal, the status of the appeal consideration, and the results of the appeal decision.

## **Grounds for Appeal Requests**

### **Appeal Requests**

Appeals requests are limited to the following grounds:

1. A procedural or substantive error occurred that significantly impacted the outcome of the hearing (e.g., substantiated bias, material deviation from established procedures, etc.).
2. To consider new evidence, unavailable during the original hearing or investigation, that could substantially impact the original finding or sanction. A summary of this new evidence and its potential impact must be included. Appeals must be filed in writing to the Vice President of Student Affairs and Campus Diversity and Inclusion or designee within five (5) business days of the notice of the outcome to the hearing, barring exigent circumstances. Any exceptions are made at the discretion of the Dean of Student Affairs or designee.
3. Sanctions imposed are substantially disproportionate to the violation.

The Dean of Student Affairs or designee will share the appeal by one party with the other party (parties) when appropriate under procedure or law (e.g., if the responding student appeals, the appeal is shared with the complainant, who may also wish to file a response, request an appeal on the same grounds or different grounds). The Dean of Student Affairs will refer the request(s) to the College's designated Appeal Review Officer.

The Appeal Review Officer will conduct an initial review of appeals to determine if the appeal request meets the limited grounds and is timely. They may consult with the Dean of Student Affairs and/or Title IX Coordinator on any procedural or substantive questions that arise.

If the appeal is not timely or substantively eligible, the original finding and sanction will stand and the decision is final. If the appeal has standing, the Appeal Review Officer determines the final outcome. Full rehearings are not permitted. Where new evidence is presented or the sanction is challenged, the Appeals Review Officer will determine if the matter should be returned to the original decision-maker for reconsideration or if they should make a determination. In review, the original finding and sanction are presumed to have been decided reasonably and appropriately, thus the burden is on the appealing party(ies) to show clear error. The Points of Appeal must limit its review to the challenges presented.

On reconsideration, the Points of Appeal or Dean of Student Affairs may affirm or change the findings and/or sanctions. Procedural or substantive errors should be cured, new evidence should be considered, and sanctions should be proportionate to the severity of the violation and the student's cumulative conduct record.

All decisions of the Points of Appeal are to be made within five (5) business days of submission and are final, as are any decisions made by the Dean of Student Affairs or Title IX Coordinator as the result of reconsideration consistent with instructions from the Appeal Review Officers.

## **The Appeals Officers**

The College's Appeal Review Officer/point of Appeals Is Determined to Be the Vice President of Student Affairs and Campus Diversity and Inclusion or Designee.

The Dean of Student Affairs Serves as An Information Source to The Appeal Review Officers, with Responsibility for Conducting Preliminary Investigations, and Ensuring a Fair Process for The Complainant and Responding Student.

## **Other Guidelines for Appeals**

All Parties Will Be Timely Informed of The Status of Requests for Appeal, the Status of The Appeal Consideration, and The Results of The Appeal Decision;

Appeals Are Not Intended to Be Full Re-Hearings of The Complaint (de Novo). in Most Cases, Appeals Are Confined to A Review of The Written Documentation or Record of The Original Hearing, and Pertinent Documentation Regarding the Grounds for Appeal; Witnesses May Be Called if Necessary.

Appeals Are Not an Opportunity to Substitute Their Judgment for That of The Original Decision-Maker Merely Because They Disagree with The Finding And/or Sanctions. Appeals Decisions Are to Be Deferential to The Original Decision-Maker, Making Changes to The Finding only Where There Is Clear Error and To the Sanction only If There Is a Compelling Justification to Do So.

### **Disciplinary Records**

All Conduct Records Are Maintained by The College for Seven (7) Years from The Time of Their Creation Except Those that Result in Separation (suspension or Expulsion, Including from Housing) and Those that Fall Under Title IX, Which Are Maintained Indefinitely.

### **Code of Conduct Violations**

Any Member of The Otis College Community May File a Complaint for A Violation of The Code of Conduct. Violations Should Be Reported on A Code of Conduct Complaint Form and Filed with Any Member of The Student Conduct Committee.

# Academic Integrity

Otis College of Art and Design students are expected to express themselves in their own unique voices and to develop original ideas and perspectives that address the research and/or histories that are connected to a discipline, medium, or format.

Specific practices that support the creation of original work include:

- Brainstorming to generate ideas.
- Seeking out diverse perspectives and credible sources of information.
- Documenting one's process to show progress toward the final product.
- Developing one's skills and expanding one's creative explorations.
- Adhering to guidelines around proper citation.

## Guidelines for Proper Citation and Attribution

### (Acknowledging Sources of Information)

We expect all students engaged in critical work to adhere to proper citation practices and to provide attribution for any ideas or information that are not their own. Proper citations in MLA style and a Works Cited page should accompany all work as needed. You can find detailed citation information on the [Library website](#).

Information that is common knowledge, such as historical facts or widely accepted scientific theories, does not need to be cited.

Text/Media created in generative AI is not considered one's own work. We expect substantial changes to be made to any AI generated material before it is submitted as a response to an assignment. The majority of any submitted work should come from individual students.

- Use of AI must be cited/acknowledged in your process.
- We expect students who utilize generative AI to retain earlier versions of their text/media works in order to demonstrate their original contributions to submitted work. It is also valuable for students to save the prompt histories they have used within the relevant generative AI application(s) – ChatGPT, Midjourney, etc.
- Failure to cite/acknowledge or to retain these work process histories will render students vulnerable to charges of academic misconduct.

## Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct

Plagiarism occurs when a person deliberately uses concepts, language, images, music, or other original (not common knowledge) material from another source without acknowledging that other source and/or without making substantial modifications to that source content enough to view it as original or authentic work. This applies to the production of art and design just as it applies to writing.

While referencing or appropriating may be part of a studio or Liberal Arts and Sciences assignment, it is the student's responsibility to acknowledge and/or substantially modify the original material, including instances in which the material is generated by AI.

Specific examples of plagiarism and/or cheating include but are not limited to:

- Submitting someone else’s work in whole or part (including copying directly from a source without documentation and/or alteration, or turning in studio work that is not your own).
- Submitting work that was primarily produced, revised, or substantially altered by another person or generative AI.
- Cutting and pasting any textual or image-based work from the internet without proper documentation or clarification of sources.
- Failure to cite sources. Proper citations in MLA style and a Works Cited page must accompany all papers. You can find citation information through the Library website.
- Using the writing, editing, or creative services of another person who quantitatively and/or qualitatively revises the paper and/or studio work significantly. An editor often fixes the paper without the writer learning how to do it him/herself. Sometimes the editor changes so much of the paper that it is no longer the student writer’s work and thus plagiarized. A trained tutor helps the writer to learn how to revise the papers and eventually not need the tutor’s assistance.
- Presenting the same (or substantially the same) work for more than one course or within the same course without obtaining approval from the instructor of each course.
- Acting dishonestly or conveying information that the student knows or is known to be false, by actions such as lying, forging or altering any document or record in order to gain an unfair academic advantage.

## **Consequences for Academic Misconduct**

Instances of alleged plagiarism or academic misconduct are reported to the Academic Integrity Committee for review on a case-by-case basis. For an overview of the student conduct process, please review this section of the student handbook titled, [Overview of the Student Conduct Process](#) in addition to [Section VII: Formal Conduct Procedures](#) formal conduct procedures, should an academic integrity case move forward to a formal process. To report a case of academic misconduct please use the [Academic Misconduct Reporting Form](#).

The Chair of the Academic Integrity Committee and Dean of Student Affairs or designee are the first points of contact for the College in processing alleged cases of student plagiarism and/or academic dishonesty. According to the Otis College Code of Conduct, “All forms of academic misconduct, including but not limited to cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, or facilitating academic dishonesty” are direct violations of the code.

Instances of plagiarism will not be tolerated and may result in consequences including, but not limited to:

- A failing grade on the assignment.
- A lowered overall course grade.
- Disciplinary action as determined by the Academic Integrity Committee.
- Notification of academic misconduct to relevant parties.

Students who engage in plagiarism are often given the opportunity to revise their work and resubmit it for evaluation. We view revision as an educational opportunity and encourage students to reflect on their work and learn from their mistakes.

We believe that promoting originality and creativity while also providing guidelines for responsible academic conduct is essential to maintaining academic integrity and supporting our students in their academic goals.

\*\*\* Note: Aspects of this policy were written in conversation with ChatGPT.

*ChatGPT, 13 Feb. version, OpenAI, 16 May 2023, chat.openai.com/chat*

[Report an Academic Misconduct Case](#)

## **More Information**

If you have any questions or would like more information about the process, please contact the Dean of Student Affairs at [studentaffairs@otis.edu](mailto:studentaffairs@otis.edu), or the Provost's Office by contacting Dean of Academic Affairs and Academic Integrity Chair, Dwayne Moser at [dmoser@otis.edu](mailto:dmoser@otis.edu).

The Otis College of Art and Design Code of Student Conduct is adapted from the NCHERM Group Model Developmental Code of Student Conduct and is used here with permission.



# Travel and External Study

Otis College of Art and Design has established clear policies for travel and external study opportunities to ensure that students engage in these experiences safely and effectively. These policies encompass definitions, guidelines, and specific travel procedures to support students participating in study abroad programs, field trips, and other external educational activities.

Definitions within these policies clarify the different types of external study opportunities, including short-term travel courses, semester-long study abroad programs, and domestic field trips associated with academic coursework. External study typically involves any learning experience that takes place outside of the Otis campus, whether in a different city, country, or cultural context.

- [Explore the definitions pertaining to Travel and External Study](#)

Guidelines for external study are designed to ensure that these experiences align with the college's academic goals and provide meaningful educational outcomes. Students interested in participating must adhere to specific eligibility requirements, such as maintaining a certain GPA and obtaining approval from academic advisors. Additionally, the college outlines the expectations for behavior, academic performance, and cultural sensitivity during these programs to ensure that students represent Otis College positively.

- [Explore Travel and External Study guidelines](#)

Travel policies provide detailed procedures for planning and participating in external study trips. These include requirements for securing travel insurance, understanding visa and passport needs, and adhering to health and safety protocols. Students are also guided on how to manage their finances during travel and what resources are available to them in case of emergencies. The college provides support through pre-departure orientations and continuous monitoring of the students' well-being during their time away. These travel and external study policies ensure that students can fully benefit from these enriching educational opportunities while staying safe and prepared.

- [Learn more about the Travel Study policies](#)

## Definitions

### Definitions: Field Trips

A Field Trip is broadly defined as a certain academic activity, and serves educational purposes, that a student is required and/or encouraged to attend and/or participate in as off-campus activity and/or field trip (collectively "Activities"). The "campus" is defined as any Otis College locations, including The Goldsmith Campus. For the purposes of this policy, there are three types of field trips:

1. **Local Field Trip** – Non-overnight domestic travel normally within 100 miles of an Otis College location
2. **Local Overnight Field Trip** – Domestic travel normally within 100 miles of an Otis College location with up to three nights' stay
3. **Regional Overnight Field Trip** – Domestic travel within 1400 miles of an Otis College location and up to four nights' stay

### Definitions: Field Study

Field Study is defined as any independent academic/professional experience or academic research trip that is an ungraded and non-credit bearing element of a course or Department initiative for current students or alumni. The Field Study is linked to student projects or student coursework initiated or recommended by instructors, Directors, or Chairs. Field Study also includes Otis College related collaborations with outside institutions that are ungraded and non-credit bearing and that involve domestic or international travel beyond the conditions of local and regional field trip policy. Contact Matthew Penkala at [mpenkala@otis.edu](mailto:mpenkala@otis.edu) to discuss field study at least a month before it takes place.

For the purposes of this policy, there are three types of field study:

1. **Domestic Field Study** – Domestic travel exceeding the Field Trip parameters that is not a Travel Study course.
2. **International Field Study** – Otis College Collaboration– International travel initiated by instructor, Director, or Department Chair in collaboration with an outside institution
3. **International Field Study** – International travel initiated by instructor, Director, or Department Chair.

*Travel Study courses, which involve international travel or domestic travel beyond the parameters of a field study or field trip, have associated learning outcomes, are graded, and are covered under travel study policies. See For Faculty Leading Programs. Please contact the Travel and External Study representative at [travelstudy@otis.edu](mailto:travelstudy@otis.edu) or (310) 665-6815 for more information about Travel Study courses.*

## Guidelines

### Guidelines for Students on Field Trips

1. Students participating in field trips are expected to adhere to the same standards of behavior as published in the Code of Student Conduct and in the Travel Study Behavior Code of Conduct. Any violation of the regulations or local, state, or federal laws may result in disciplinary action or sanctions by the College.
2. Students, who choose to travel to the site of a field trip early or remain at the site after the planned activity is completed, or who willfully separate from the group, do so at their own risk.
3. Students are responsible for carrying their own personal medication while on a field trip.

### Guidelines for Students on a Field Study

1. Students participating in field study are expected to adhere to the same standards of behavior as published in *The Hoot* and in the Travel Study Behavior Code of Conduct. Any violation of the regulations or local, state, or federal laws may result in disciplinary action or sanctions by the College.
2. Students, who choose to travel to the site of a field study early or remain at the site after the planned activity is completed, or who willfully separate from the group, do so at their own risk.
3. Students are responsible for carrying their own personal medication while on a field study.

### Travel Study Activity Guidelines

- Students are required to comply with foreign laws which often require detailed advanced planning.
- Students are expected to respect local customs during the entirety of every aspect of related travel, foreign and domestic.
- Students are not permitted to be involved in political demonstrations, protests, riots, rallies, or other political gatherings.
- Hitch-hiking of any kind is highly discouraged.

- Solo water (i.e., swimming or boating alone) activities are discouraged.
- Students are expected to manage their health and be aware of safety risks (e.g., contaminated food and water, malaria, automobile traffic, pedestrian risks, rocky or slippery trail, dehydration, etc.).
- Adequate water should be carried on all outings.
- Students should not depart from the established itinerary or explore unfamiliar terrain outside of established geographic parameters while on course.
- Students should always carry with them the name and location of where they are staying, with directions and in the local language, if possible. Contact number of Leader, and/or Program Provider should also appear on the contact card.

## **Small Group/ Solo Travel Guidelines**

“Small Group” or “Solo Travel” refers to time when students may be given time off, or specific assignments where a Faculty Leader or Program Provider may not be present.

- Any unsupervised small group or solo travel that exceeds 8 hours (and may not exceed 24 hours) or anytime students are further than 3 hours from a Leader or Program Provider (while on a faculty-led course), an Intent to Divert from Course form must be completed by the student. The form can be obtained from the trip leader and is at the discretion of the Faculty Leader in agreeing to allow/approve unsupervised travel of this nature.
- No international borders will be crossed without prior approval from the Travel and External Study representative and Otis College of Art and Design.

## **Time Off Guidelines**

If students are going out after dark, it is required that they be in groups of at least two or more and agree to adhere to a clearly set curfew. If there is any confusion about what curfew is or where approved permitted travel may be, students should consult their Travel Study leader prior to any time off.

## **Community-Based Instruction Guidelines**

- Students should make themselves aware of physical demands and hazards involved with the community project.
- It is the responsibility of the student to be knowledgeable of the area, appropriate behavior, hazards and expectations.

## **Motorized Travel Guidelines**

- Students should familiarize themselves of hazards involved with different modes of motorized travel.
- Students are discouraged to drive or ride on motorcycles, scooters, or mopeds.
- If the group is to be divided amongst different vehicles, a clear plan and place to reunite should be established.
- When available, seatbelts are required.
- Students are not permitted to rent any vehicle or drive a car while on a faculty-led travel study course.

## **Cycling Guidelines**

- When available, helmets should be worn for any activity involving bicycling.

- When traveling in traffic, room should be made available in the group's spacing to allow cars to pass safely.

## **Swimming Guidelines**

- Flat-water (ocean, bay, lake, and calm eddies) swimming, the following should be considered:
- Bottom conditions: where are deep-water drop offs etc.;
- Current directions and dynamics;
- Flora and fauna hazards: sting rays, jellyfish, urchins, leeches, etc.;
- Water temperature considerations.
- Diving is discouraged.

## **Snorkeling Guidelines**

- Snorkeling should take place in flat-water conditions only.
- Guidelines for "Swimming" should apply to snorkeling.
- Students should be instructed on proper use of equipment before snorkeling.

## **Boating Guidelines**

- Students should be aware of proper equipment use and related safety considerations prior to launch.
- Solo water activities are discouraged.
- With the exception of sea-kayaking, students should not operate a boat without one qualified boat operator per boat to pilot.

## **Sea Kayaking Guidelines**

The following policies and guidelines revolve around varying conditions. Sound judgment needs to be used when considering currents, tides, wind, weather, local and environmental hazards, as well as the morale, fitness and skill level of the group.

The following should be considered before kayaking:

- Emergency and evacuation access and communication points.
- Potential hazards.
- Environmental hazards.
- Swimming and snorkeling guidelines.
- Basic life saving techniques.

# **Policies**

## **Local and Regional Field Trip Policy**

The Local and Regional Field Trip Policy covers local field trips, local overnight field trips, and short regional overnight field trips in the U.S. This policy also applies to courses with regular off-campus meetings at museums, field sites, or other destinations. Student Affairs outings are exempt from this policy. Travel Study and External Study courses, which involve international travel or domestic travel

beyond the parameters of a field trip as described below, are covered under other policies. Please contact [travelstudy@otis.edu](mailto:travelstudy@otis.edu) for more information about Travel Study courses.

## Policy

In order to ensure that field trips fall within the scope of a course's and the College's mission and that student safety issues are fully addressed, field trips must be authorized in advance and be fully documented through the on-time submission of the forms listed on our website. All field trips must be led by a faculty or staff member, and student participants must adhere to field trip guidelines. Leader responsibilities and guidelines for students are described below.

## Field Study Policy

The Domestic and International Field Study Policy covers domestic travel beyond 1,400 miles of campus and international travel outside the continental U.S. This policy also applies to college enacted initiatives with domestic field sites, or other international destinations. Student Affairs outings are exempt from this policy. Students are responsible for all of the courses in which they are enrolled, including attendance requirements and course work, while participating in any type of field study initiative.

## Policy

In order to ensure that field study falls within the scope of the College's mission and that student safety issues are fully addressed, field study must be requested a month in advance and be fully documented through the on-time submission of forms and required steps listed below. All field study must be initiated and coordinated by the responsible Otis College instructor, Director, or Department Chair initiating the Field Study. Student or alumni participants must adhere to field study guidelines. Leader responsibilities and guidelines for students are described below.

## Travel Study Policy

### Travel Study Operational Policies & Standards of Behavior

- All Otis College of Art and Design Faculty-led Travel Study participants are representatives of the College community. It is expected that they will behave at all times in a manner befitting that responsibility. Course participants also are expected to remember that behaviors that are acceptable in the United States may not be acceptable in the destination visited. Participants are expected to act accordingly, as instructed by course personnel.
- All Faculty-led Travel Study participants are required to be cleared for travel by the Student Health and Wellness Center.
- Course participants are expected to comply with all policies and rules of the Travel Study course and Code of Student Conduct as they currently stand, or as they may change from time to time. This includes, but is not limited to, policies that are written in travel study contracts or other documents, as well as policies that are described orally at the orientation meetings or by the staff.
- Travel Study course participants are expected to attend all course meetings (prior to departure and while at destination) and to participate fully in all aspects of the course. The Travel Study experience is based upon a sense of shared identity, respect, and community. This requires everyone to be participants in all aspects of the course.
- Course participants are not permitted to go to designated areas placed off-limits without the expressed, specific permission of the attending course leader, as well as completing an **Intent to Divert form** in its entirety and obtaining approval.
- Course participants of faculty-led travel study courses and exchange programs will be required to attend the mandatory Pre-Departure Seminar/Orientation, as outlined in provided Travel and

External Study information and websites. Failure to attend the Pre-Departure Seminar/Orientation will result in a hold placed on the student account and could result in the student's dismissal from the course without refund.

## **Student Behavior Expectations**

- Full participation in all activities and developing cultural awareness and cultural sensitivity.
- Engaging with the Course Curriculum.
- Considering the effect of their actions on the entire group and local context/geography.
- Complying to Otis College of Art and Design Policies

## **Managing Behavioral Issues While Abroad**

### **Step One: Informal Verbal Intervention**

- The student will receive open and clear feedback regarding expectations for participation.

### **Step Two: Formal Verbal Intervention**

- The student will be informed that if their behavior continues to not meet expectations, the next step is a **Written Intervention** and Otis College will be contacted.
- The Travel and External Study Office is informed of the problematic behavior at this stage (Step Two).

### **Step Three: Written Intervention: Commitment to Improve**

- Return the agreed contract to the Otis College Travel and External Study representative.
- The student is informed that if the behavioral expectations are unmet, the next step is a **Final Intervention**, which becomes grounds for trip departure. Leaders will work with the student to ensure that all expectations are clear.
- Return the agreed contract to the Travel and External Study representative.
- The Travel Study representative will notify the Dean of Student Affairs and share with them the written commitment. An opportunity to talk to the Dean of Student Affairs is available to the student as they move to the next stage of consequence.

### **Step Four: Written Intervention: Final**

- The final Intervention will outline to the student EXACTLY what behavior is expected, and that noncompliance will lead to trip departure at the student's expense. If a student breaks their Final Intervention contract, the Travel and External Study representative will be contacted. If approved, Otis College will work with the Travel Agency/Program Provider, and emergency contact to change flights and arrange transport home. All related costs incurred from this change in travel plans and arrangements will be added to the student account for reimbursement to the college.

## **Medical Payment Information Abroad**

- Students are obligated to cover their own medical expenses while on an Otis College Travel Study course. Oftentimes, this will mean that students who are in need of purchasing over the counter medications, at the request of a GeoBlue doctor, will need to fill out a "Claim Form" This form is located on the GeoBlue website.
- It is not Otis College's responsibility to provide upfront money for medical care or attention, but faculty or the college will do so to ensure proper and timely care and then follow up for reimbursement. Students are encouraged and instructed to bring at least \$100 to cover any initial or

potential medical care. If Otis College pays for medical care, it is the responsibility of the student to reimburse Otis College first and process their bills or claims with their insurance afterwards.

## **Program Provider Policy**

In addition to following the policy and procedures set forth by Otis College of Art and Design, participants must also adhere to the policies and procedures set forth by Program Provider(s).

## **General Behavior**

As members of the Otis College community, students are expected to behave responsibly at all times. The College expects and trusts its students to be honest in their studio, classroom, and community endeavors. Students are expected to assist in maintaining an environment that supports effective teaching and learning, and a culture of civility and respect for others. Therefore, any behavior that disrupts or interferes with the functioning of a classroom, studio, or College-sponsored off-campus venue may result in students being asked to leave the class. In addition, students may be subject to disciplinary action as per the Code of Student Conduct and/or have their grade lowered in the course.

## **Travel Study Alcohol Policy**

All travel study courses and experiences are considered “dry” and must comply with the Otis College alcohol policy. Alcohol consumption or possession is not permitted during any program-related travel, program-related activities, group meals, or in any form of accommodation (hotel, hostel, apartment housing, etc.), during the entirety of the travel period.

## **Travel Study Drug Policy**

Otis College is a drug-free environment and the College will not tolerate the manufacture, distribution, dispensation, sale, purchase, possession, offer to sell, and/or use of any illegal drugs (as defined by the statutes of the state of California) in any Otis College facility or at any Otis College function. Any student found to have violated this policy will be subject to arrest and disciplinary action in accordance with the Code of Student Conduct.

## **Body Piercing and Tattoos While Abroad**

Due to varying health and sanitation standards in international locales, getting a body piercing (navel, nose, lip, tongue, ear, etc.) and tattoos while on a Travel Study course is not permitted.

## **Travel Study Companion Policy**

Otis College has adopted the following guidelines regarding prospective companions on Otis College Travel Study courses:

- Minors (under the age of 18) are not permitted on Otis College Travel Study courses, either as participants or as companions.
- In general, student participants may not bring companions on Otis College Travel Study courses.
- With the prior approval of the International Education Steering Committee, faculty/staff participants may bring adult companions on the course. If approved, additional companions are responsible for all related costs.
- Individuals not directly connected with or registered in an Otis College Travel Study course may not accompany the course or take part in any of the academic experiences or content (e.g., an Otis

College employee who has no role in the course may not travel with it during any part of the course).

### **Travel Study Removal Policy**

Disregard of or noncompliance with Travel and External Study policies or the Code of Student Conduct will result in the trip departure of students or faculty from Otis College travel study courses. Any course participant who appears to disregard or be in noncompliance with Otis College Travel and External Study policies or the Code of Student Conduct will be subject to immediate removal from the Travel Study course and must return to Los Angeles at the expense of the dismissed person, which includes the travel expense of an accompanying Leader and/or Program Provider to the point of departure. Upon returning to Otis College, the Dean of Student Affairs will investigate all incidents and allegations and, with the Conduct Committee, determine appropriate sanctions.

### **Travel Study Tuition Waiver Policy**

Otis College students at JUNIOR, SENIOR, and GRADUATE level with 19 or more course credits based on enrollment into a travel study course will be given a Travel Study Tuition Waiver that will allow them to exceed 18 credits but no more than 21 credits without being assessed an additional per credit cost of \$2,200 for BFA and \$2,930 for Graduate. This waiver does not apply to program costs – only tuition.



# Campus Safety and Security

## Campus Safety and Security

In support of student wellness and safety, the following information will guide you in the event you or someone you know is in need of assistance. The Otis College community provides you with resources and information to allow informed decision making about your personal safety and health.

**In the event of an emergency or crisis, call 9-1-1.**

## General Safety Tips

Although the areas surrounding the Otis College Goldsmith Campus and MFA studios location are relatively safe, please be cautious and aware of your surroundings.

- There is safety in numbers. Walk in groups or use the buddy system, especially after dark.
- Walk briskly and know your destination. If you see a person or persons who look suspicious, change your path and cross the street.
- Walk in well-lit and well-trafficked areas. Avoid shortcuts that take you through alleys, past heavy foliage, or near other places where someone might be hiding.
- Do not walk while talking on a cell phone or using other electronic devices. You will become a target when others see what you have.
- Do not carry large amounts of cash. Do not wear expensive jewelry that draws attention to you. Carry bags, purses, or valuable equipment such as cameras and computers close to your body or out of sight.
- Vehicles parked on the street can present an easy opportunity for thieves and vandals. Keep valuables out of sight in a locked trunk or leave them at home.

Whenever you live in an urban environment, you need to establish a file with pertinent information that will help you if you are the victim of a crime. Your file should include the following:

1. Credit card numbers and toll-free numbers to report lost or stolen cards;
2. The telephone number of your insurance agent;
3. Your license plate and vehicle identification numbers;
4. Your driver's license number;
5. An extra set of keys;
6. Your bank account numbers and the customer service number for your bank, in case checks are lost or stolen.

## Crime Suppression, Prevention, and Training

Campus Safety and Security uses a variety of crime suppression and prevention methods including foot patrol, and vehicular patrol to monitor college activities 24 hours a day. Otis College Campus Safety Officers are required to obtain the following certifications:

- P.O.S.T. Training, as required by all local municipal police officers
- B.S.I.S. Training and license
- First Aid, CPR/AED

- Authority and Jurisdiction
- Certified Campus Protection Officer

Training for department personnel covers a variety of topics, ranging from emergency response to criminal law and patrol techniques to report writing. All officers receive a minimum reserve police academy training certification by the California Commission on Peace Officers Standards and Training. This requirement may be waived if the officer possesses a minimum of 300 hours of training/education in the field. After training, each officer must complete a 10-week training program.

## **ICE Your Cell Phone**

Enter a phone number into your cell phone's memory with the acronym ice, which stands for in case of an emergency, with the contact person's name and phone number.

## **Anonymous Reporting**

If you would like to report an issue anonymously to Campus Safety or Student Affairs you can do so by reporting an incident report and not including any of your personal information here <https://www.otis.edu/incident-reports>.

**If you need to report an emergency call Campus Safety at 310-665-6965 or 9-1-1.**

## **Clery Act and Crime Report**

The federal government mandates the disclosure of certain crime statistics so that students, employees, and families can be educated about the safety of College campuses. Please be aware that these are statistics for the most severe forms of crime. Students should still be vigilant about their personal safety and take care of their personal possessions.

A Campus Safety Officer or Security Officer is available 24 hours a day. Campus Safety and Security Officers make regularly scheduled rounds of the building and its perimeter. Please contact Campus Safety immediately at 310-665-6965 if you need assistance. If you need the Los Angeles Police Department or paramedic assistance, dial 911.

The daily crime log is available online at <https://www.otis.edu/campus-safety/crime-fire-log> and the reports detail crime statistics, as reported to the Chief Safety and Security Officer for the Goldsmith Campus and the MFA Studios and are provided in accordance with the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Crime Statistics Act. The annual security report (ASR) includes statistics for the previous three years concerning reported crimes that occurred on campus, in certain off-campus buildings, and on public property. The crime report is prepared in cooperation with the local law enforcement agencies surrounding our locations, the Dean of Student Affairs, who supervises residence life and housing and student conduct, and the Chief Safety and Security Officer, who oversees campus security.

To request an individual hard copy of the campus crime statistics, please contact Campus Safety and Security at (310) 665-6965 or email [campussafety@otis.edu](mailto:campussafety@otis.edu). The following crime reports can be found online at <https://www.otis.edu/campus-safety/annual-security-report>.

For additional information regarding timely warnings, policy regarding enforcement authority, and all other campus safety resources, go to <https://www.otis.edu/campus-safety>.

## **Drug-Free Workplace**

Otis College is a drug-free environment and the College will not tolerate the manufacture, distribution, dispensation, sale, purchase, possession, offer to sell, and/or use of any illegal drugs (as defined by the statutes of the state of California) in any Otis College facility or at any Otis College function. Any student found to have violated the Alcohol and Other Drug policy will be subject to arrest and disciplinary action in accordance with the Code of Student Conduct Policy. To read more about the drug free schools act, please go to <https://www.otis.edu/campus-safety/drug-free-schools-act>.

## **Non Motorized Vehicles**

The use of skateboards, hover-boards, bicycles, in-line skates, and any other nonmotorized transportation shall be allowed only as a means of transportation on public sidewalks and streets immediately adjacent to College property. Skateboards, bicycles, in-line skates, and other non motorized vehicles are not permitted for use inside any Otis College facility or building, on the College grounds, or in the parking structure. Bicycles must be placed on the bike racks outside. Violators will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

## **Right to Be Informed**

Otis College faculty, staff, and students as integral members of the academic community, all have the right of free access to information on policies and procedures involving campus security, the reporting of criminal action and other emergencies, and the enforcement authority of security personnel. Otis College has the corresponding responsibility to publish or in other ways make known descriptions of programs regarding campus security and crime prevention as well as statistics on the occurrence of specific crimes. Notification of the annual security report is made by the College's Chief Safety and Security Officer, and the full report is posted on the College website each October at [www.otis.edu/annual-crime-report](http://www.otis.edu/annual-crime-report). Hardcopies are available from the security office.

## **Roof Access Policy**

Otis College specifically prohibits employees (with the exception of safety, security, and operations personnel) and students from being on the roofs of all college buildings including but not limited to the Residence Hall. While safety, security, and operations personnel must comply with this policy in the course of normal operations, they are exempt during emergencies and may provide access to authorized personnel and first responders as needed. Contractors requiring roof access will work with the office of operations/facilities and the office of campus safety and security.

## **Weapons on Campus**

Possession, use, or distribution of explosives (including fireworks and ammunition), guns (including air, plastic, BB, paintball, facsimile weapons, and pellet guns), or other weapons or dangerous objects such as arrows, axes, machetes, nunchucks, throwing stars, or knives (switchblade or belt buckle) with a blade of longer than two inches, including the storage of any item that falls within the category of a weapon in a vehicle parked on College property, are prohibited from being used as part of art projects, displays, installations, and presentations. Artistic and ceremonial display or possession of a weapon may be permitted by filling out an "Exhibition and Facilities Use contract" found online at [www.otis.edu/exhibition-facilities-use-contracts](http://www.otis.edu/exhibition-facilities-use-contracts).

# Earthquake and Fire Safety

## Earthquake Preparedness

Earthquakes are a fact of life in Southern California. The following basic behaviors should become a routine part of a student's life while at Otis College:

1. Maintain a three-day supply of nonperishable food, such as peanut butter, canned tuna, granola bars, and dried fruit.
2. Keep three gallons of bottled water per person in your home.
3. Make arrangements with your family or significant others for an out-of-state contact person. According to the telephone company, it may be impossible to telephone people in California, but possible to call those in other states.
4. Have a flashlight and a pair of sturdy shoes under your bed.
5. Do not place your bed directly under a window and do not hang heavy items, such as pictures or a bookshelf, over your bed.

## Fire Code

National and local fire and safety codes prohibit the use of any corridor, elevators, pathway, fire exit, or common area used for exiting to be obstructed or used for exhibitions of any kind whatsoever. A means of egress is an unobstructed path to leave buildings, structures, and spaces. A means of egress consists of exit access, exit, and exit discharge. These areas include the hallway leading to the restrooms, stairwells, and elevators. This is the "central core" of the building and the fire exit corridor. No exhibition or installation may be allowed that may create an unsafe condition or hazard.

Remember: Tripping is the leading cause for injury when exiting a building from a fire or earthquake; and subsequently, may cause one to be trampled to death or severely injured.

## Fire/ Emergency Evacuation

All students, faculty, and other emergency planning staff are required to participate in fire drills, which are held from time to time. It is of utmost importance to maintain order and follow directions because the alarm system may indicate a real fire condition. Take your valuables and re-enter only when administrative staff so instructs. The evacuation map can be found on the LiveSafe app, under Resources: Emergency & Safety Tips, under Fire.

## Fire Safety

In all cases when an employee, student, or visitor becomes aware of a fire, call the fire department (911) immediately. Activate the fire alarm in the building and proceed to the nearest safe location.

When calling 911, have the following information ready:

1. The name of the building.
2. Location of the fire within the building.
3. A description of the fire, and if known, how it started.
4. The phone number or extension that you are calling from.
5. Do not hang up until you are told to do so. After you call 911, be sure to call Otis College security personnel at (310) 665-6965.

# Emergency Procedures

## Missing Persons

Otis College of Art and Design takes student safety seriously. In an effort to support the campus community and the students within the community, the College has adopted a 24-hour missing person's policy for residential students residing within the Residence Life and Housing Program and a 72-hour missing person's policy for nonresidential students. In accordance with the Higher Education Act, the following should be noted:

## Emergency Contact Information

During each open registration period all students intending to register for classes, for any subsequent term, will be given the opportunity to elect an emergency contact. Residential students will also, on an annual basis, file an emergency contact form with the Residence Life and Housing Office. This information will be used, based on the aforementioned, should a student fall under the College's missing person's policy.

## Official Notification Procedure

1. Any member within or outside the Otis College community must notify the Office of Student Affairs by calling (310) 665-6960 of a missing person.
2. The Office of Student Affairs, at that time, will research and investigate the information received. The office will also request and/or gather any additional information needed from the reporting party.
3. The Office of Student Affairs will make attempts to contact the reported missing person by phone, email, extraction from class, and/or visiting the student's apartment unit, if the student is a residential student.
4. In the event that the reported missing student is not located or contacted, the College will contact the Los Angeles Police Department, Pacific Division, at (310) 482-6334 to report the student as missing.
5. The Dean of Student Affairs (or their designee), after police notification and no later than 24 hours after determining a student is missing, will notify the missing student's emergency contact (notification may be made to more than one person depending on individual(s) student has listed).
6. After the Los Angeles Police Department is notified, they will lead the search in finding the student and the missing person's emergency contact information will be forwarded to the police department. The Dean of Student Affairs (or their designee) will stay in communication with the missing person's emergency contact, as a support.

## Otis College Alert System

All students are required, during the time of registration, to input current contact information through Self-Service online. The Otis College Alert System will email and/or text message students in the event of an emergency on campus (or in the surrounding area). Otis College of Art and Design also uses the *LiveSafe App*. All students should download the app as it has emergency notification as well as other helpful functions. The LiveSafe app has many links to assist the students in many areas such as work orders, parking and other links to helpful school areas. <https://links.livesafemobile.com/OtisLiveSafe>.

## Reporting an Incident, Accident, or Injury

Whenever a student is the victim of injury, theft, or vandalism incident (either on campus or on a field trip), the Dean or the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs should be notified immediately. It is critical that an incident report be filed with the Office of Student Affairs to document any injury, theft, or vandalism incident, both for the victim's sake and for the school's records. To fill out a report online, go to [www.otis.edu/forms/students/student-incident-report](http://www.otis.edu/forms/students/student-incident-report). **In the event of serious injury, call the paramedics immediately by dialing 911.**

For injuries of a less serious nature, first aid kits are located on each floor of the Goldsmith Campus, and graduate studios. You may contact Safety and Security for additional assistance by calling 310-665-6965. Your timely assistance and cooperation will allow the College to become more responsive to emergencies and better able to establish procedures that ensure a safe and secure environment.

## **Campus Safety and Security Escorts**

The Campus Safety and Security Department provides courtesy escort services, either walking or by vehicle, to students, on campus upon request, and if staffing permits. While traditionally thought of as "safety escorts," the Department does not require a requestor to justify the request in the interest of safety. Courtesy escorts are ordinarily not provided to and/or from campus and are limited to on-campus requests only, unless approved by the shift supervisor.

Otis College does not employ the use of students or civilian volunteers to provide courtesy escorts and only utilizes officers for providing this service. Officers should view courtesy escorts as an opportunity for positive interaction with a member of our community and should not convey a negative attitude to the requestor.

## **General Emergency Information**

**Otis Campus Safety 24 Hours Phone Line 310-665-6965**

LiveSafe Link: <https://links.livesafemobile.com/OtisLiveSafe>

800- 273-TALK or 988 SUICIDE LIFELINE  
800- 564-6600 SUBSTANCE ABUSE HOTLINE  
800- 799-SAFE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE  
800- 656-4673 SEXUAL ASSAULT HOTLINE

# Financial Policies

Otis College of Art and Design has established financial policies to help students manage their financial responsibilities effectively, covering key areas such as financial aid, student accounts, and student balances.

The college offers a range of financial aid options, including scholarships, grants, loans, and work-study opportunities, to support students in financing their education. These financial aid packages are based on both need and merit, with specific eligibility requirements and deadlines that students must meet to qualify. The Financial Aid Office works closely with students to ensure they understand their aid packages and any obligations tied to them, such as maintaining satisfactory academic progress.

- [Learn more about Financial Aid policies](#)

Student accounts at Otis College serve as the central hub for all financial transactions related to a student's enrollment. This includes tuition, fees, housing, and other charges. Students are responsible for regularly monitoring their accounts to ensure all charges are accurate and that they meet payment deadlines. The college provides various payment options to accommodate different financial situations, including payment plans that allow students to spread out their tuition payments over the semester. Clear communication is emphasized, with regular statements and reminders sent to students to keep them informed of their account status.

- [Learn more about Student Accounts policies](#)

Managing student balances is a crucial aspect of maintaining good standing at Otis College. Students must ensure that their accounts are settled by the specified deadlines to avoid late fees, holds on their accounts, or even the risk of being dropped from classes. In cases where students face financial difficulties, the college encourages them to reach out to the Financial Aid Office or Student Accounts Office to explore possible solutions, such as emergency funds or adjustments to their payment plans. These policies are designed to help students stay on top of their financial obligations while pursuing their education at Otis College.

- [Learn more about Balance policies](#)

## Financial Aid Policies

### Financial Aid Resources

Financial aid is an important resource for educational funding. Financial assistance in the form of grants, loans, scholarships, and/or work-study awards helps to bridge the gap between a student's own resources and the cost of attendance.

Every student interested in receiving some form of federal, state, or institutional financial assistance should apply for financial aid. Domestic students must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form to be considered for federal and state aid. New domestic students are required to complete the FAFSA\or the California Dream Act Application (CADAA). Students selected for verification must provide additional documentation if requested by Financial Aid.

Students interested in receiving federal and state aid must complete the FAFSA annually to establish their eligibility for financial aid. Students with a completed FAFSA are considered for all types of assistance

(grants, loans and work-study). Information regarding the financial aid application process and cost of attendance can be found online at [www.otis.edu/finaid](http://www.otis.edu/finaid).

Scholarships are awarded based on merit and financial need. Otis institutional scholarships offered at the time of admission are tuition specific, non-refundable and renewable for up to 8 semesters for undergraduate and up to 4 semesters for graduate students. The number of semesters depends on the student's academic level/number of transferred units determined during the admission process. To maintain eligibility for these awards the student must be enrolled full-time (undergraduate - a minimum of 12 units, graduate - a minimum of 9 units), maintain a minimum 2.0 cumulative GPA, accept award(s) and complete required paperwork prior to the beginning of the semester. If all or any of the above conditions are not met, the student loses eligibility for the offered scholarship award. Students may also lose eligibility if they drop below full time prior to completing 4 weeks. Students receiving financial aid are required to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress.

## **Satisfactory Academic Progress (sap)**

Students are required to maintain SAP in their educational program as described in the school catalog "The Hoot". SAP is evaluated based on qualitative and quantitative measurements (GPA and completed courses) at the end of the academic year. To remain eligible for federal, state and most institutional aid, a student must meet the SAP criteria as specified below:

### **Qualitative Measurement: GPA Requirement**

- Undergraduate students are required to maintain a 2.0 minimum cumulative Otis College GPA on a 4.0 scale at the end of each academic year. Repeated courses are included in the calculation of GPA. Grade of incomplete is not included in the calculation of GPA. The Incomplete grade reverts to an F if not completed by the due date and it will impact GPA. (Exception: See the Foundation grade replacement policy.)
- Graduate students are required to maintain a Pass or Low Pass on all their classes

### **Quantitative Measurement: Maximum Time Frame and Pace Requirement**

- Maximum Time Frame (credit completion): Undergraduate students must complete their degree within 180 credits (120 credits x 150%). Students can receive federal aid for 150% of the length of their degree program. State grants have a maximum time frame of four years. Otis renewable scholarships are available for eight semesters.
- Pace: Undergraduate students must complete at least 67% (120/180) of the units they attempt at the end of each academic year. Transfer credits are included in the calculation as attempted and completed hours.
- Students with failing grades can receive federal aid for repeated coursework. Students can use federal financial aid once to repeat a course with a passing grade. Repeated courses are included in the calculation as attempted hours.
- Grades of incomplete are counted as attempted but not completed. If a grade of incomplete is not changed to a passing grade within the timeframe outlined in the catalog, it may impact the student's ability to meet the pace requirements and disqualify this student from receiving federal aid.
- Students with SAP impacted by changes in major are expected to complete all degree requirements before reaching 180 attempted credit hours. Financial Aid staff reviews SAP impacted by changes in major on a case-by-case basis.

### **Additional Institutional Requirements (Otis Scholarships): Unit Requirement**

Students are required to be enrolled full-time to maintain eligibility for institutional awards.



- Undergraduate students are required to complete at least 12 credits per semester
- Graduate students are required to complete at least 9 credits per semester
- Students who drop below full-time enrollment prior to completing four weeks in a semester will lose eligibility to keep their institutional award(s) for the semester.

## **SAP Evaluation Process**

Satisfactory Academic Progress is evaluated at the end of each academic year. A student who does not meet one or more SAP requirements will be placed on Unsatisfactory SAP status and will lose eligibility for financial aid. A student who has lost eligibility for financial aid due to the Unsatisfactory SAP status can request reinstatement of financial aid by submitting a written appeal to the Financial Aid Office.. An academically dismissed student regains eligibility for financial aid, for a probationary period of time, if they are readmitted by the Academic Standing Committee and have an approved SAP Appeal.

## **Appeal Process/ Regaining Eligibility**

Students who fail to meet the SAP standard(s) can submit a written appeal to the Financial Aid office. The appeal must explain the reason(s) that led to the SAP failure and the changes that will allow the student to meet the SAP standards in the future. Students are notified of the SAP Appeal decision via Otis College student email. Students with approved SAP appeals are placed on Probation Status and are eligible to receive financial aid for one academic year. Students on Probation Status must meet SAP requirements at the end of their probationary period to keep their eligibility for financial aid.

Students have the responsibility to respond to Financial Aid communication regarding suspended financial aid eligibility. Appeal requests must be sent to the Financial Aid Office prior to the appeal deadline stated in the Otis SAP status notification. Students may also regain eligibility by meeting the SAP standards while taking the coursework at their own expense.

## **Extended Degree Completion for Students with a Documented Disability**

Any student, with a documented disability\*, who need to take more time beyond the standard time (4 years for BFA, 2-year MFA, and four consecutive semesters MFA Graphic Design) to complete a degree will continue to be awarded their Otis College scholarship (including renewable appeal). If a student is enrolled part-time, the Otis College scholarship will be prorated per-unit. Students interested in additional Otis College scholarships can appeal. Students receiving external financial assistance need to work with their aid providers.

\*Students with a documented disability need to be registered with the Disability Services office.

## **Student Accounts Policies**

### **Tuition and Housing Refunds**

The official date of withdrawal used in calculating refunds will be the student's last date of attendance as determined by the Registrar. Students dismissed from Otis College for disciplinary reasons forfeit the right to claim refunds of tuition, deposits, housing, and fees. Students who withdraw will have their tuition and fees reduced according to the following schedule. Students are responsible for any outstanding balances after adjustments are made.

## Refund

If you withdraw or take a Leave of Absence in the fall\* or spring and are completely moved out of Otis College Student Housing Program by 5:00 p.m.

Before classes begin	100%
Friday of the first week	90%
Friday of the second week	75%
Friday of the third week	50%
Friday of the fourth week	25%
After the fourth week	0%

Schedule is based on the full academic year cost of the Otis College Student Housing Program.

\*The Housing Refund policy applies to all new students admitted in the spring semester.

## Meal Plan Refunds

The day that a student moves out of housing will determine the last day of a student's meal plan. A refund will be issued back on the remaining days left in the board plan.

Dining Dollars are not refunded, nor do they carry over from year to year.

## Tuition and Fees for 2024-2025

Undergraduate Tuition per semester	\$26,370
Undergraduate Per Credit Tuition (under 12 or over 18 credits)	\$2,200
Graduate Tuition per semester	\$26,370
Graduate Per Credit Tuition (under 9 or over 18 credits)	\$2,930
Technology Fee per semester	\$143
Health Center Fee per semester	\$230
Student Activity Fee per semester	\$143
Student Health Insurance Fees	
*Fall	\$1,080
*Spring/Summer (estimated costs—subject to change)	\$1,636

## Course Based Fees for 2024-2025

Studio Course Materials Fees per semester vary—see schedule

## Housing Costs and Fees for 2024-2025

Location and Room Type	Fall Semester	Spring Semester	Academic Year
Residence Hall Semester Cost	\$6,670	\$6,670	\$13,340
Park West Semester Cost – Shared Apartment	\$7,825	\$7,825	\$15,650
Park West Semester Cost – Private Apartment	\$15,650	\$15,650	\$31,300
Additional Fees	Amount		
Application Fee – new students	\$150 (nonrefundable)		
Application Fee – returning residents	\$50 (nonrefundable)		
Damage Deposit (Park West Only)	\$300 (refundable once a student moves out, less with any damages/charges)		

\*Students who sign up for the Otis College Student Housing Program, sign up for both Fall and Spring semesters and are billed accordingly. Students who are admitted in Spring and secure on-campus housing for spring, have the ability to sign a summer contract as well.

## Meal Plan Costs\* (Fall/Spring Academic Year)

Meal Plan Type	Fall Semester Cost	Spring Semester Cost	Academic Year
10 Meal Plan+100 Dining Dollars*	\$2,332	\$2,144	\$4,476
14 Meal Plan+150 Dining Dollars*	\$3,122	\$2,850	\$5,972
17 Meal Plan+150 Dining Dollars	\$3,596	\$3,280	\$6,876

\*All foundation students are required to have a meal plan (at least a 14 meal plan in Residence Hall & 10 meal plan at Park West)

\*All students above foundation level living in the Residence Hall are required at least a 10 meal plan.

## Miscellaneous Fees

Charge Type	Charge Amount
Unofficial Academic Transcript	No charge
Official Academic Transcript	\$5.40
Rush Official Academic Transcript	\$25
Returned Check Charge	\$25
Parking Violation minimum amount	\$35
Late Registration Fee	\$275

## Owl Dollars (Students)

Owl Dollars loaded onto your OneCard remain on your OneCard until they are spent or until you are no longer enrolled as an Otis student. Refunds are not permitted while you are enrolled therefore carefully consider how much money you place on your card. Unused funds roll over from semester to semester as long as you are enrolled as an Otis student.

The minimum amount of Owl Dollars you can place per transaction is \$1.00 and the maximum is \$500. The maximum total amount of funds a student can have on their OneCard is \$2,500. A refund of Owl Dollars can be processed ONLY if you have more than \$10 on your OneCard and you are no longer an Otis College student (due to graduation or withdrawal/leave of absence).

If you meet these requirements, please complete a [OneCard Refund Application](#). The Business Office will review your application and move the approved amount to your Student Account. The funds will be used to pay any outstanding charges on your Student Account. If a credit balance remains once all charges are paid, a refund will be issued within 2-4 weeks. Applications must be received within 90 days of graduation or withdrawal/leave of absence from Otis College.

## Balances

### Student Accounts and Balances

Students must pay all outstanding charges in full or finalize payment arrangements prior to registering for the next term. To determine the upcoming term's balance, students should use the [Student Financial Calculator](#). The balance due is the difference between the total amount of outstanding charges and the total net amount of awarded financial aid.

Tuition balances may be paid using any of the following methods:

- Online: eCheck transfer or credit card;
- Cash, personal check, cashier's check, money order, wire transfer or Flywire;
- Received or anticipated disbursement of financial aid;
- Tuition Pay Payment Plan; or
- Any combination of the above.

Additional Information:

- Delinquent accounts are referred to an outside collection agency.

Questions regarding payment of student account balances and financial aid should be directed to The One Stop.

### Returned Payments

The fee for unpaid/returned payments is \$25.00. All unpaid/returned payments must be paid with cash, cashier's check, money order, wire transfer, or online with a credit card, within five business days. The student's check/e-check payment privileges will be terminated for one year if two check/e-check payments are rejected by the payee's financial institution. All further payment transactions must be in the form of cash, cashier's check, money order, wire transfer, or credit cards.

### Return of Financial Aid at The Time of Withdrawal and Leave of Absence

Students who take a leave of absence or withdraw from Otis College may lose all or part of their financial aid. The Financial Aid Office adheres to the Department of Education Return of Title IV fund calculation. The amount of earned financial aid may be prorated based on the last day of attendance. Students must complete at least 60% of the semester to earn 100% of the disbursed federal funds. The last date of attendance is confirmed by the Registrar and used as an official withdrawal date. Returns are processed in the following order:

- Federal Direct Loan (Unsubsidized)
- Federal Direct Loan (Subsidized)
- Federal Direct Parent/Grad PLUS Loan
- Federal Pell Grant
- Federal SEOG
- Cal Grant

The student is responsible for any outstanding balance caused by the returned funds.