

# Section Six: University Policies

- A. Policy on University Property
- B. Policy on Sexual Harassment
- C. Policy with Respect to AIDS
- D. Policy on Students with Disabilities
- E. Policy on Release of Information about Students
- F. Policy on Exit from the Aquinas Programme

St. Thomas University recognizes its obligation to provide and maintain an environment that fosters the growth and development of the intellect, character, and self-esteem of all those with whom it comes in contact. It is assumed that all people of good faith will subscribe to such aims and will guide their own behaviour in ways that will permit these ends to be achieved. The freedom that is an integral part of the University environment carries with it the concomitant duty and responsibility to behave in a manner that respects the rights and autonomy of others.

To ensure that it can provide a safe and secure environment, St. Thomas University declares that it will not tolerate any behaviour that threatens this environment and that it will take immediate action to remedy such situations. These remedies include not only administrative procedures and procedures set out in collective agreements but also such procedures as may be available through the campus security Department, through the criminal justice system, and through federal and provincial human rights legislation.

## A. Policy on University Property

The property of St. Thomas University has been acquired and erected for academic purposes and is specifically devoted to education and research. The Board of Governors of St. Thomas University is entrusted by law with the responsibility for ensuring the success of these ends.

To protect the property of St. Thomas University and to assist the Board of Governors in its role as trustee, it shall be deemed, and the Board assumes, that each of the following is a breach of university regulations and is ground for consideration of suspension or expulsion:

1. Unauthorized use or occupation of any part of the property of the University.
2. Prevention of access to any part of the property of the University by any person not so authorized.
3. Interruption by any unauthorized person of any authorized activity, service, or event on the property of the University.
4. Violence or threat of violence to any person.
5. Prevention of movement on the property of the University by any unauthorized person.
6. Damage or destruction of any part of the property of the University.

## B. Policy on Sexual Harassment

Harassment on the basis of sex is a violation of acceptable standards of conduct at St. Thomas University and is subject to disciplinary measures.

The intention of the policy is twofold: (A) to provide a means to resolve specific incidents of sexual harassment, and (B) to provide an educational tool for increasing awareness of and sensitivity to the negative impact of sexual harassment.

Complaints from or against students or employees of the University alleging a violation of this policy may be filed with one of the sexual harassment advisors appointed by the University.

Upon receipt of an informal complaint of sexual harassment, the advisor shall discuss the situation with the parties involved and try to reach a mutually agreeable solution.

A formal complaint of sexual harassment is lodged with the advisor, who will inform the Hearing Committee. The Committee will conduct a hearing and submit a report to the President. This report will contain recommendations for action (from warnings up to and including dismissal or expulsion). The President will then impose whatever disciplinary sanctions are considered to be warranted in the circumstances. (Copies of the Sexual Harassment Policy are available in the Student Affairs Office.)

## C. Policy with Respect to AIDS

The University's policy with respect to AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome) includes the following general provisions:

1. All members of the University community have a responsibility to avoid the risk of HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) infection and transmission. All who consider it likely that they have been exposed to such infection are urged to seek medical advice concerning their condition.
2. The University will not discriminate against any member of the University community on the grounds of HIV infection. The identity of any person in the University community with HIV infection will be held in strict confidence.
3. The University will provide education and appropriate information on AIDS and related diseases to students and others in the University community. The University has an advisory committee on AIDS policy.

## D. Policy on Students with Disabilities

St. Thomas University welcomes students with disabilities and commits itself to work with each student to develop a programme which will allow their individual learning needs to be met. In making this commitment to students with disabilities, it is understood that St. Thomas University has limited resources and must work with existing staff, resources, and budgets in attempting to meet each student's specialized learning needs. St. Thomas University will work towards promoting itself as an accessible institution.

1. Letters of acceptance to St. Thomas University will contain an invitation to students

with a disability to contact the Director of Student Affairs for the purpose of indicating their special learning needs.

2. It is the responsibility of students with disabilities who require special considerations in order for their learning needs to be met to identify themselves in regards to the procedures in this policy.
3. Students may be asked to substantiate their special learning needs through professional reports.
4. The Director of Student Affairs will maintain a “Register of students with disabilities” which will contain the names and special learning needs of all students who have identified themselves. The Director of Student Affairs shall forward copies of the appropriate material to the student’s file in the Registrar’s Office.
5. Students whose names are in the “Register” should contact the Director of Student Affairs to make arrangements for an individualized registration.
6. In cooperation with each student, the Director of Student Affairs will call a meeting of the professors in the courses for which the student is registered. At this meeting the student’s special learning needs will be described and the University’s ability to meet these needs will be determined. A record of the meeting and the understandings reached at the meeting will be maintained and distributed to all stakeholders.
7. Students whose names are in the “Register,” or the professors of these students, may request, at any time, that the Director of Student Affairs reconvene the meeting described in “6” above.

## E. Policy on Release of Information About Students

The University has adopted a detailed policy on the collection, maintenance, and security of the information contained in the individual student’s records. The general principle underlying the policy is that the student has a right to privacy and the release of information about the student is guided by the University’s respect for the welfare and privacy of the student. The various data items on the student record have been classified under three general categories for disclosure: (a) confidential, (b) restricted, (c) public.

The student may apply to the Registrar’s Office for the following:

1. a detailed policy statement on the breakdown of the various data elements in each of the categories and the conditions governing the release of academic information;
2. procedures for the student to request inspection of the data held on the personal student record;
3. procedures for the student to petition that public or restricted data be classified as confidential and thereby not released without the student’s explicit consent;
4. an interpretation of the implementation of any aspect of the policy concerning the release of student information.

### I. Confidentiality, Security, and Control of Student Academic Records

**Definition:** The student academic record is the official academic record of the student used for admission to the University and the academic performance while at St. Thomas University. This record includes all information however recorded or stored, whether in printed form, on film or on a computerized database, which constitutes a record of the student's admission and academic standing.

The academic records are the property of the University. The Registrar's Office shall retain custody of the academic records and shall be responsible for their security and maintenance. For purposes of this policy, data items on the student academic record have been classified under three general categories for disclosure:

1. confidential, 2. restricted, 3. public.

The University does retain the right to publish aggregate student data.

#### *1. Confidential*

Except as provided in this policy, a student's academic record is confidential and privileged information and is not released to any third party without the explicit consent of the student concerned being first obtained. In general, such information may be inspected by the student by application to the Registrar's Office. The student has the opportunity to correct or comment on the accuracy of any information therein. The student's access would be restricted in cases such as letters of reference which have been submitted in confidence. The referees, however, would be identified.

#### *2. Restricted Information*

Some information may be required by and shall be provided to various internal or external institutional offices or service offices. The federated campus library system, for example, requires access to the student's registration status, addresses, and phone numbers. Normally, this access would be limited to specific information screens on the computerized student information system of St. Thomas University. The Registrar's Office would authorize the access and monitor use of the restricted information, without the authorization of the student.

#### *3. Public Information*

This information may be released without authorization of the student. Such public items would include: whether or not a student is registered at St. Thomas; full or part-time status; programme; year of study; whether or not a student has graduated and with what credential. In exceptional cases, the student may petition the Registrar's Office to restrict or deny access to these public information items.

## **II. Internal Access**

Faculty members and members of staff of the University have access to the student's academic record as may be required in the legitimate performance of their duties as determined by the Registrar on the understanding that such information shall not be released to others. All persons with access to the student record are required to respect confidential information about students which they acquire in the course of their work. Professors would not normally have access to the student's complete transcript without permission.

## **III. Student Transcripts**

Students have the right to obtain unofficial copies of their transcript of marks from St. Thomas University. Proper request forms and any required fees must accompany the request to send an official copy of the transcript to another institution or employer. Diplomas, final grades, unofficial, and official transcripts will be withheld for students and former students who have not cleared their financial obligations to the University.

## F. Policy on Exit from the Aquinas Programme

Students who wish to exit from the Aquinas Programme at Christmas may petition the instructors to have credit awarded for the work done in Semester 1. The petition must be received by December 21.

The instructors will make a decision to award 0, 3, 6, or 9 credit hours for the work performed to that point. The decision shall be communicated to the student by the first day of classes in Semester 2.

In the case of 3 credit-hour courses, students will receive credit for any courses passed and a final grade will be assigned by the instructor. In the case of 6 credit-hour courses, any credits conferred shall appear on the transcript either as general credit in the designated discipline (with no grade) or as "unassigned arts" credit (with no grade).

A student who wishes to appeal a decision as to the number of credit hours to be awarded shall lodge that appeal with the Vice-President (Academic) by March 1. The appeal will be heard by the Aquinas Programme Committee.