

'25/'26

Student Handbook



Dear AUBG Students,

Welcome (back) to the American University in Bulgaria!

AUBG is a liberal arts university grounded in respect, integrity, and a shared passion for learning and creating. Our community is shaped by trust and mutual respect, and it thrives on inquiry, creativity, purpose, and belonging. We believe that education is not only about gaining knowledge but also about shaping character and opening the mind to new ways of thinking.

At AUBG, we celebrate the richness of human experiences, nurture intellectual and personal growth, and embrace the free exchange of ideas that bind us together as a community and prepare us for lives of meaning and impact.

This Student Handbook reflects those values. It is not merely a collection of rules, but a guide created especially for you – to help you thrive academically, personally, and socially. Within its pages, you will find an overview of your rights and responsibilities as a valued member of our community – whether you are on campus, off campus, or online – along with resources designed to support you throughout your AUBG journey. Think of it as your compass toward active engagement, purpose, and belonging. The Handbook reflects the many dimensions of student life, both inside and beyond the classroom. Its policies and procedures are thoughtfully designed to help you contribute fully to our community and benefit from all that AUBG has to offer. Remember – this is *your* Handbook, a key that unlocks the full AUBG experience.

Do not hesitate to reach out if you have questions, thoughts, or ideas about the Student Handbook, our policies and guidelines, the co-curricular program, the support services AUBG provides, or community life on campus in general. You are always welcome to connect with my team by email at StudentLife@aubg.edu, contact me directly at swien@aubg.edu or [schedule an in-person or online meeting](#) with me.

The Academic Year 2025-26 holds countless opportunities to learn, to create, and to build lasting connections within our community. Approach it with curiosity, courage, and openness, and you will make the most of every moment.

I believe in you!

Sabina A. Wien
AUBG Dean of Students

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

STATEMENT OF STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Academic institutions exist for the transmission of knowledge, the development of students, and the general well-being of society. Free inquiry and free expression are indispensable to the attainment of these goals. As members of the academic community, students are encouraged to develop the capacity for critical judgment and to engage in a sustained and independent search for knowledge.

Freedom to teach and freedom to learn are inseparable parts of academic freedom, which itself depends upon appropriate opportunities and conditions in the classroom, on campus, and in the larger community. Intrinsic to creating and preserving these conditions is the need for community-wide respect and civility.

The American University in Bulgaria believes that the policies, procedures, rights, and safeguards outlined in this document are indispensable to achieving these goals and that the responsibility to secure and to respect general conditions conducive to the freedom to learn is shared by all members of the University community.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Choosing to enroll at the American University in Bulgaria obliges each student to act in accordance with all University policies and to uphold at all times standards of conduct that will reflect credit upon themselves, their communities, and the University. Students are required to respect the rights and privileges of others, to abide by the legal framework of the Republic of Bulgaria and the city of Blagoevgrad, and to abide by the rules and regulations of the University.

At the University, a culture of civility and mutual respect is expected to prevail. Instances of uncivil behavior and discourteous conduct that violate University policies, including but not limited to acts of discrimination, hate speech, incitement to animosity, hatred or violence, harassment, intimidation, bullying, or any other form of violence or threats of violence, are to be promptly communicated to the designated disciplinary bodies for official proceedings.

Academic honesty is also expected of every student. Students who commit acts of academic dishonesty violate the University's academic integrity policies and will be sanctioned according to university procedures. Violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to: giving or receiving unauthorized aid or unfair advantage for any form of academic work ("cheating"); copying the language, structure, ideas, and/or thoughts of another and presenting them as one's own or presenting AI-generated content as one's own original work ("plagiarism"); making untrue statements, spoken or written, regarding any circumstances relating to academic work ("falsification"); and attempting any act that, if completed, would constitute academic dishonesty.

STUDENT RIGHTS AND PROTECTIONS

Freedom of Inquiry and Expression

Students and student organizations shall be free to examine and to discuss all questions of interest to them and to express opinions publicly and privately. They shall be free to support

causes by orderly means that do not disrupt the regular or essential operation of the University. Students and student organizations are required to clearly communicate to the academic and civic community that their public expressions, opinions, and/or demonstrations solely their own and not those of the University or local community.

Students have the rights and responsibilities intrinsic to a free academic community, including the free expression of views based on the pursuit of knowledge; freedom of thought; and the right to function as citizens independent of the University. Students must also recognize that these rights pertain equally to all other members of the academic community.

Freedom from Discrimination

The University maintains an unwavering commitment to non-discrimination, refraining from any bias in all recognized areas of university life. All members of the community are expected to uphold the values of fairness and equal opportunity, civility and respect.

Additionally, all areas of student life are governed by the jurisdiction of Bulgaria's national laws and the overarching framework of international laws within the European Union. These legal parameters encompass crucial safeguards against discrimination, actions fostering hostility or violence, cases of harassment, and instances of assault. All these elements play a pivotal role in upholding the dignity and well-being of every individual.

PRIVACY NOTICE FOR ENROLLED STUDENTS

This privacy notice applies to students enrolled with the American University in Bulgaria (AUBG).

This privacy notice outlines how and why AUBG collects, uses, and stores your personal information in carrying out its academic program, and your rights concerning the personal information we hold.

What information do we collect about you and how do we collect it?

1. When you enroll at AUBG, we create a record in your name with a unique student number, login ID, and university e-mail address.
2. We hold general information about you including your name, date and place of birth, unique identification number, gender, home address, citizenship, and phone number.
3. We hold your photograph for the purposes of identification, monitoring attendance in class, and carrying out the assessment and examination of students.
4. We hold information about your academic record at AUBG, including which courses you have transferred from other universities, which courses you have enrolled in at AUBG, your grades in courses, your academic standing, your majors and minors, your term grade point average, and your cumulative grade point average.
5. We hold information about your assessment, examinations, and course results.
6. We hold information about you as a receiver of financial aid or a scholarship.

7. We hold information about your breaches of AUBG's academic and conduct policies, including, but not limited to, breaches of the class attendance policy, breaches of the academic integrity regulations, and instances of not adhering to standards of civility and campus regulations.
8. We hold information about decisions made by the Academic Standing Committee to give you an academic warning, to place you on probation, to suspend you, to dismiss you, and/or to reduce your financial aid and/or scholarship.
9. We hold information about your applications for funding to support your projects and research.
10. You may give us information about special categories of data, including your physical or mental health and disabilities so that we can provide support and enable access to student support services, or make adjustments to study, assessment, and examinations.
11. You may give us information about your personal or academic circumstances where this is relevant to the assessment of your academic standing and continued receipt of financial aid and scholarships.
12. We may make video recordings of our graduation ceremonies for live stream and download.

Note: When we obtain personal information from third-party sources, we will ensure that the third party has lawful authority to provide us with your personal information.

What is the basis for our processing your information and how we use it?

1. We may process your personal data because it is necessary for the performance of a contract with you or in order to take steps at your request prior to entering into a contract. In this respect, we may use your personal data for the following:
 - a. to provide our core teaching, learning, and research services to you, as outlined in the AUBG Undergraduate Academic Catalog and Student Handbook;
 - b. to uphold academic standards in accordance with AUBG's academic integrity regulations;
 - c. to uphold academic standards according to AUBG's regulations governing warnings, probations, suspensions, and dismissals;
 - d. to administer financial aid and scholarships according to eligibility requirements;
 - e. to provide financial support for your projects and research according to eligibility requirements;
 - f. to provide library, IT, and information services;
 - g. to provide student support services, including disability and additional learning support, career, advising and tutoring services, medical and psychological counseling services, sports and athletics provisions;
 - h. to ensure students' safety and security;
 - i. to manage student accommodation;
 - j. to deal with any concerns or feedback you may have; or,

- k. to process personal data for other purposes for which you provide the information to us.
- 2. We may also process your personal data because it is necessary for the performance of our tasks carried out in the public interest as set out in our mission statement and values, which can be found at <https://www.aubg.edu/about-us/>, or because it is necessary for our legitimate interests. In this respect, we may use your personal data for the following:
 - a. to provide you with educational services not listed in the AUBG Undergraduate Catalog or Student Handbook but which are part of our academic and educational mission;
 - b. to monitor and evaluate the performance and effectiveness of the university, including training and/or monitoring our staff and faculty performance;
 - c. to maintain and improve the academic, corporate, financial, estate, and human resource management of the university;
 - d. To ensure fairness and equal opportunity throughout the university.
 - e. to promote our services (e.g., to provide information about summer schools, student exchange programs, or other events happening on- and off-campus);
 - f. to seek advice on our rights and obligations;
 - g. to recover money you may owe to AUBG; or,
 - h. to support our fundraising efforts.
- 3. We may also process your personal data in relation to compliance with our legal obligations. In this respect, we may use your personal data for the following:
 - a. to maintain academic records (including for archival purposes);
 - b. for diplomas and degree verification;
 - c. for alumni degree conferral requested by state or private institutions;
 - d. for financial audits;
 - e. for compliance with our regulatory and legal obligations;
 - f. for compliance with anti-money laundering laws and safeguarding requirements;
 - g. for prevention and detection of crime; or,
 - h. for criminal investigations, including assisting with criminal investigations carried out by the police and other competent authorities.
- 4. We may also process your personal data where:
 - a. it is necessary for medical purposes (e.g., medical diagnosis, provision of health or social care or treatment, or a contract with a health professional);
 - b. it is necessary to protect your or another person's vital interests; or,
 - c. we have your specific or, where necessary, explicit consent to do so.

How do we control and care for your data?

AUBG is striving to improve and upgrade its control systems through the pseudonymization of the collected and processed data, access controls defined within the university, and most

importantly, due care by our staff and faculty members. We implement all measures against inadvertent or deliberate manipulation, loss, or destruction, and access by unauthorized persons.

With whom do we share your information?

1. We may share your information with public authorities as part of our legal obligations.
2. We may share your information with third parties for the purpose of assessment and examinations, such as monitoring for breaches of the academic integrity regulations. We will notify you, when appropriate, for a transfer of your personal information to a third party.
3. When we need to transfer your personal information to third parties for other purposes, you will be notified and asked for consent where the data transfer process requires us to do so.
4. In all cases, we will share your personal information with attention to the third party's level of technical and organizational ability to manage personal information as required by the GDPR standards.
5. We may share your information with third parties, such as software providers, for the purpose of transcripts or other official request/record forms.
6. In compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), we will not release student academic information to parents, spouse, or others unless the student gives written permission. The university may share academic records with your parents if you are under eighteen years of age.

For how long do we keep your personal information?

1. A number of factors determine the length of time including our purpose for using the information and our legal obligations.
2. We keep identifiable records only for as long as we have a legal or legitimate purpose:
 - a. We keep academic transcript data indefinitely, in order to verify your academic record, diploma, and degree.
 - b. We keep information pertaining to administering course assessment and examinations for one year after the end of the current academic year.
 - c. We keep evidence of breaches of the academic integrity regulations for five years after you graduate or leave the university.
 - d. We keep state exams for five years after the completion of the academic year.

Your rights

1. You have the right to:
 - a. access and review the personal information that we hold about you;
 - b. correct inaccuracies in the personal information that we hold about you;
 - c. request data transfer to other parties.

2. In certain circumstances, you have the right to:
 - a. restrict or object to processing concerning your data;
 - b. withdraw consent, without affecting the lawfulness of processing based on consent before this withdrawal;
 - c. lodge a complaint with the supervisory authority (i.e., the Commission for Personal Data Protection, address: 2 Prof. Tsvetan Lazarov Blvd., Sofia 1592).

Contacting Our Data Protection Officer

We may modify or amend this Privacy Notice. The most current version will always be available on our website and, where appropriate, notified to you by e-mail.

You may address your concerns or inquiries to our Data Protection Officer (DPO) Gugushev & Partners Law Office with address at 1000 Sofia, No.11A Aksakov Street, floor 5, office 3, e-mail: dpo@aubg.edu.

Other privacy notices are available online at www.aubg.edu.

Please visit <https://www.aubg.edu/internal-rules-for-data-protection/> for our Internal Rules for Data Protection.

STUDENT PARTICPATION IN GOVERNANCE

University-wide regulations do not prohibit the creation and implementation of specialized rules or regulations governing academic, business, or contractual matters, nor rules or regulations published by administrators, staff, students, or faculty for the control of specific facilities or programs. However, no specialized rules or regulations may be enacted that contravene or undermine University-wide policies, and all University community members will be bound by University-wide policies at all times.

Students are encouraged to participate in the formulation of both University-wide and program- or office-specific regulations to the extent that such involvement can be reasonably and practicably accomplished.

Student Rights in the Governance of the University

The student body shall have clearly defined means, including membership on appropriate committees and administrative bodies, to participate in the formulation and application of institutional policies affecting student affairs. (See also Student Government)

Confidentiality/Non-disclosure Agreement

To protect the confidentiality of sensitive information, all students involved in student government, university committees, serving as student assistants, or any other role with access to confidential data must sign a Confidentiality/Non-disclosure Agreement prior to commencing their duties.

A breach of this Agreement will be treated as a violation of University regulations. Incidents involving Agreement violations must be reported to the Dean of Students and may be addressed through the Student Conduct Council. The specific consequences will depend on the impact of the breach on the University's confidentiality and integrity. Depending on the nature and severity of the breach, sanctions may include, but are not limited to, disciplinary actions such as warnings, probation, suspension, or expulsion. In addition, other consequences as outlined in the Confidentiality/Non-disclosure Agreement may also be pursued.

Student Participation in Academic Policymaking

Student interest and participation in the formulation of academic policies is encouraged within the teaching/learning context of the University community. The University provides for student participation in academic policymaking through representation on the Curriculum Committee, the Information Resources Committee, and the Academic Policy Committee.

Student Government (SG)

The University recognizes the right of students to form and democratically elect their governing body. Student Government is the directly elected representative body of the AUBG students. According to its Constitution, the Student Government consists of a Senate of twelve members, a President, a Vice President, a Treasurer, and a Student Representative to the AUBG Board of Trustees. All Student Government officers and senators must be full-time students. They must maintain good academic and disciplinary standing with the university throughout their term of service. The electorate for university-wide student government positions shall consist of the entire student body. The SG has one faculty advisor and works in close cooperation with the Dean of Students. It meets every week of classes.

The SG seeks to improve the quality of student life by voicing the opinions of the student body before the faculty, administration, and the Board of Trustees. It meets every week of classes. The SG receives a consolidated budget each year, which it allocates among the various student clubs and organizations taking into account their requests and potential.

It meets every week of classes. More information about AUBG's Student Government can be found in the [SG Constitution](#).

STUDENT RIGHTS IN THE CLASSROOM

Student performance shall be evaluated solely on an academic basis and not on opinions or conduct in matters unrelated to academic standards. The professor, in the classroom and in conference, should encourage free discussion, inquiry, and expression.

No provision for the rights of students can be considered valid if it suspends, invades, or impinges upon the professional rights of the faculty. It is inappropriate for any student or student organization to act in way that interferes with a faculty member's professional responsibilities or diminishes a faculty member's ability to carry out professional responsibilities. Students with concerns about courses, assignments, grades, or teaching methods should first address them with the faculty member involved as a matter of courtesy.

Protection of Freedom of Expression

Students shall be free to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion. However, students are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled and demonstrating knowledge of that content in any required assignment or other form of assessment.

Protection from Improper Academic Evaluation

Students are responsible for maintaining the standards of academic performance established for each course in which they are enrolled. Students have protection against arbitrary or capricious academic evaluation via the policies and procedures governing academic integrity. A student who alleges an instance of academic evaluation that violates those policies shall be heard and the allegation reviewed by the Academic Integrity and Appeals Council (for more information, see Disciplinary Bodies).

Protection from Disclosure

Information about student views, beliefs, and political associations shall be considered confidential. Faculty and staff acquiring that knowledge shall protect that information from disclosure as part of their professional obligations. Judgments of student ability and character may be provided by faculty to other persons only if there is clear and present need or with the consent of the student.

STUDENT AS A CAMPUS CITIZEN

Student Organizations

Freedom of Student Association

The students at AUBG are free to organize and to join organizations that promote their common and lawful interests, subject to University and national regulations. Affiliation with any extramural association or national organization or political party, so long as it is an openly declared affiliation, shall not of itself bar a student group from University recognition. However, the University may limit or refuse recognition of student groups that would qualify as a violation of rules limiting on-campus political activities.

The administration, faculty, and staff shall not discriminate against any student because of membership in any student organization that meets the conditions or rules of this section.

Registration, Recognition, and Disclosures

All student organizations shall be registered and recognized in accordance with Student Government regulations. Registration and recognition may be withdrawn from organizations that violate University or Student Government regulations. Registration and recognition procedures shall require the submission and approval of each organization's [constitution](#) and the identification of responsible officers and all members.

Use of Campus Facilities

Meeting rooms and other campus facilities shall be made available, on an equitable basis, to all registered student organizations when such facilities are not reserved for other University purposes and provided that the use of such facilities is in keeping with the best interests of the

University. Such usage must follow all University policies and procedures, including but not limited to use of equipment, fees, regulation of assemblies, and alcohol consumption.

Student-Sponsored Assemblies

The University is committed to the protection of free speech, the freedom of assembly, and the right to lawful protest on campus. All members of the University community must recognize their responsibility to uphold the right of free speech and to permit invited guests to speak without inappropriate interruption or demonstration. Each member of the University community is entitled to hear all sides of controversial issues discussed on campus.

Students have the right to conduct orderly demonstrations provided these actions do not disrupt normal University functions; do not encompass the physical takeover or occupation of buildings, offices, classrooms, hallways, or other parts of buildings without the authorization of the President and/or Provost; and do not otherwise violate established University policies or undermine the University mission.

While all students have the right to comment, dissent, and protest, these rights shall not be exercised in any manner that infringes on the rights of others. No one group or organization holds a monopoly on dissent or the unilateral authority to prohibit the voicing of other views. However, free speech does not abrogate students' accountability as citizens acting under the laws and protections of a larger society, and the University is entitled to reflect these constraints in its own regulations.

All assemblies must be scheduled with the approval of the Dean of Students in cooperation with the Office of Communications and Marketing and the Conferences and Events Office. The routine procedures required by the University before a guest speaker is invited to appear on campus shall be designed only to ensure that facilities are properly scheduled, that there is adequate preparation for the event, and that the occasion is conducted in accordance with AUBG's policies and the University's mission.

Political Assemblies

Aligned with the legal framework of Bulgaria, the University is a nonpolitical institution. The University will not support or endorse assemblies of a political nature. Formal or informal student groups who wish to organize or participate in such assemblies may not do so on AUBG property nor in any way imply that the University supports or endorses the assembly or any political viewpoint.

The sole exception to this rule applies to political assemblies convened exclusively for educational objectives. Such assemblies must be endorsed and/or co-organized by AUBG faculty or relevant offices. In these instances, all pertinent political groups shall be extended equal invitations to partake, fostering an environment of balanced and inclusive participation.

Non-Political Assemblies

Students have the right to host non-political assemblies, to select speakers, and to discuss issues of their choice. Assemblies cannot infringe upon the rights of others. The sponsoring student organization must clarify to the academic and larger community that sponsorship of guest speakers does not necessarily imply University endorsement of views expressed.

The University reserves the right to prohibit assemblies when, in the judgment of the President and/or Provost, the clear likelihood exists that the assembly will fail to meet one or more of these conditions.

Pamphlets and Petitions

Student organizations and individual students shall have the right to distribute pamphlets and collect names for petitions, provided that the distribution and collection do not disrupt normal University functions and do not otherwise violate established University policies or undermine the University mission.

Student Media

Student media shall be governed by the canons of responsible journalism. The University shall not directly censor student media nor require advance approval of copy. Any committees for the supervision of such publications or media shall have student members.

For student media financially dependent on the University, the University shall provide sufficient editorial freedom and financial autonomy for the student publications to maintain their integrity of purpose as vehicles for free inquiry and free expression in an academic community, including the delegation of editorial responsibility to students. All student media financed by the University must explicitly state on the editorial page that the opinions expressed are those of the members of the publication team and not necessarily those of the University or the student body.

Editors and managers of student media shall be free from arbitrary suspension or removal resulting from student, faculty, staff, or public disapproval of editorial policy or content. Editors and managers will be subject to removal for violations of established University policies and procedures or for the violation of laws. Such removal shall be deemed a form of disciplinary action and shall be enacted through the appropriate disciplinary body.

STUDENT AS AN OFF-CAMPUS CITIZEN

In their off-campus lives, students shall not be considered under the control of the University in matters not related to University functions, nor shall the University or Student Government be held responsible for the off-campus activities or personal conduct of its individual students.

Political Activities

No disciplinary action shall be taken by the University against a student for engaging in such off-campus activities as political campaigning, picketing, or participating in public demonstrations, provided that such activities do not violate other existing University policies, including but not limited to any form of violence, incitement to violence, incitement to hatred, or endangerment of others.

Violations of Local and National Ordinances

Students who violate a local ordinance or any law risk the legal penalties prescribed by civil authorities. The University reserves the right to disciplinary action against those students whose

behavior off University premises violates civil laws or otherwise indicates that they pose a serious danger to themselves or others, including any form of violence, incitement to violence, incitement to hatred, or endangerment of others.

STUDENT AS AN ONLINE CITIZEN

Both student rights and student responsibilities apply to online citizenship.

Students who violate University policies – including but not limited to policies on harassment, discrimination, incitement to hatred or violence, bullying, sexual harassment, incitement to sexual harassment or violence, or otherwise endangering others – on social media or other public online platforms will be subject to sanctions via appropriate University disciplinary bodies (for more information, see Disciplinary Bodies).

Students who violate University policies via private platforms or accounts – including but not limited to email, messaging, texting, downloading, streaming and online postings – but whose intended targets or audiences include University members will also be sanctioned if evidence of such violations is brought before appropriate disciplining bodies.

STUDENT RIGHTS IN DISCIPLINARY CASES

Certain rights shall be guaranteed to a student who is subject to AUBG's disciplinary proceedings in which possible sanctions include expulsion, suspension, permanent reprimand, or other stigmatizing action. These include:

- the right to a hearing held in good faith that proceeds without unnecessary prejudicial delay;
- the right to receive a notice of charges, given reasonably promptly and with sufficient particularity that the student may reasonably investigate the charge(s) and prepare a defense;
- the right to be accompanied in all proceedings by an advisor of the student's own choosing and at the student's own expense, or, if such advisor is unavailable, to have an advisor provided by the disciplinary body;
- the right to present evidence, to know prior to the hearing the contents and the names of the authors of any written statements that may be introduced, to rebut unfavorable inferences that might be drawn from such statements, to produce witnesses, and to cross-examine witnesses;
- the right to not self-incriminate and to not have silence taken as an indication of guilt;
- the right to have judgment and sanction based upon a reasonable evidence, though rules of evidence required by courts of law shall not be required;
- the right to appeal judgment or sanction to a higher authority within the administrative processes provided; and
- the right to have hearings recorded and to be given access to those records as part of any appeals process.

Following an alleged act of student misconduct, and until final disposition of the charges, the status of the student shall not be altered, including the right to be present on campus and to attend classes suspended, except for reasons relating to the physical, mental, or emotional safety of individuals or of University property or for reasons relating to the protection of the normal functions of the University.

UNIVERSITY STUDENT LIFE SUPPORT SERVICES

ACADEMIC ADVISING AND SUBJECT TUTORING

The Center for Learning and Academic Success (CLAS) offers assistance to students at all levels and in all academic programs in selecting appropriate courses. Each new student is assigned a First-Year Advisor who provides guidance on course selection, General Education requirements, academic programs, academic policies and procedures, and student support services. Students also receive long-range academic and career planning assistance through the Center for Learning and Academic Success and through Major and Minor Advisors within the faculty.

CLAS provides learning support services such as subject tutoring, learning-style tests, self-assessment tests, and study skills workshops. To schedule an appointment with a peer subject tutor, students should visit <https://aubg.mywconline.com>.

BOOKSTORE

The AUBG Bookstore supplies course materials required for courses offered in each semester and provides Blagoevgrad's English-reading community with classics, modern fiction, art books, and travel guides. The Bookstore also stocks a wide range of office supplies, gifts, stationery, and AUBG souvenirs.

CAREER COACHING, GRADUATE PROGRAMS GUIDANCE, AND JOB PLACEMENT SERVICES

The AUBG Career Center supports students and alumni in exploring career paths, developing professional skills, and connecting with employers and graduate programs.

Career Planning and Guidance

The Career Center provides every student – from first-years to seniors – with personalized support at each stage of their academic journey. At Orientation, students are introduced to *SIG/3*, an advanced online career planning system that helps them explore interests, strengths, and career paths. A key service is the opportunity to meet one-on-one for career coaching sessions, where students receive tailored guidance on exploring options, setting goals, and preparing for future opportunities. Sessions should be booked in advance via email at CareerCenter@aubg.edu. In addition, the Center organizes workshops and seminars on career exploration, résumé writing, and interviewing techniques, ensuring that students are well-prepared for professional success.

Employer Connections

A Career Opportunities Newsletter featuring job postings, internships, graduate school and scholarship opportunities, career resources and tips, upcoming events, and additional upskilling

opportunities is distributed regularly to students and alumni. Alumni may request to be added to the mailing list by emailing the Career Center.

The Job and Internship Fair, held each spring, provides opportunities for internships, part-time, and full-time positions while giving employers direct access to AUBG's diverse talent pool. The Civil Society Forum (formerly the NGO Fair), held each fall, connects students and alumni with not-for-profit organizations, supporting career exploration in advocacy, community development, and other cause-driven fields.

Career Resources

The Career Center maintains an up-to-date library of information on graduate schools, scholarships. It also offers a specialized collection of preparatory textbooks for the GMAT and GRE, which students may borrow, along with guidance on test preparation and registration.

In addition, the Career Center keeps credential files for both current students and alumni, supporting them in their applications and professional development.

CULTURE AND CONNECTION PROGRAMS

The University welcomes students from around the world and values the richness of its international community. To foster an atmosphere of mutual respect and appreciation of cultural similarities and differences, all incoming students participate in a "Culture and Connection Training" during New Student Orientation. A variety of culture-focused events are also organized throughout the academic year, including Culture and Connection Week.

The AUBG hosts the Epsilon Alpha chapter of [Phi Beta Delta Honor Society for International Scholars](#).

DEAN OF STUDENTS OFFICE SUPPORT

The Dean of Students Office, comprises the Dean of Students, the Assistant Dean of Students, and the Dean of Students Office Administrative and Program Coordinator, seeks to enhance the student-life experience through mission-driven co-curricular and extracurricular educational, community-building, and recreational programs. It supports student initiatives that embody AUBG's core Liberal Arts values and principles, including community building, civic engagement, mutual respect, integrity, ethical leadership and entrepreneurship, and sustainability. Additionally, the office oversees the Pre-Orientation and Orientation programs for new students.

Students are encouraged to address the Dean of Students Office with any questions regarding co-curricular programs as well as student life policies and procedures. They can also inquire about the various forms of student support services and resources available, ranging from forming new student clubs to seeking assistance with emotional distress. Communication with the Dean of Students is privileged and private, and the Office of the Dean of Students is designated as a safe space within AUBG.

AUBG holds institutional memberships in NASPA, Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education, the European University College Association and the HEDS Consortium through the Dean and Assistant Dean of Students.

Dean of Students Support

The Dean of Students provides leadership to the Student Affairs Department, which is dedicated to offering the student body academic, personal, and career development support, health and well-being services, accessibility and equal opportunity support, meaningful residential life programs, and opportunities in sports and athletics. The Dean of Students fosters collaborative relationships among students, faculty, and staff to cultivate a culture of respect, support, and belonging within the AUBG community. The Dean of Students collaborates with the supervisory heads of Student Affairs and other departments to review, amend, and confirm non-academic policies, processes, and sanctions. In addition, the Dean of Students and the Dean of Students Office team, engage directly with students to ensure they understand their rights and responsibilities.

The Dean of Students, supported by the Assistant Dean of Students, works closely with the Student Government, student clubs and organizations, and individual students to represent their interests.

Additionally, the Dean of Students serves as a key facilitator for addressing non-academic issues, ensuring a holistic and enriching student experience. While the Dean of Students facilitates non-academic policies and procedures, they do not serve as a voting member of any disciplinary body. The Dean of Students ensures that all formal complaints are reviewed by the appropriate disciplining body; oversees and serves as source to the Student Conduct Council, ensuring that members receive training, processes are followed, and the rights of students and other AUBG community members are preserved. The Dean of Students ensures that the members of the Sexual Harassment Hearing Panel are properly trained. The Dean of Students counsels both students filing complaints and students against whom complaints have been filed to understand all policies and processes, preserving student privacy, integrity, and the right to a fair hearing. Oral and written communication with the Dean of Students is privileged and private. For confidential communication during working hours, students can contact the Dean of Students in person, or via email at swien@aubg.edu, or by phone at +359 73 888 520 or +359 886 616 868. Click [here](#) to book a meeting with the Dean of Students.

DINING SERVICES

The Griffin Restaurant offers a salad & sandwich bar, a pasta bar, pizza on demand, vegetarian, non-vegetarian and vegan dishes, desserts, and beverages. Cafés offering coffee, drinks, pastries, and light snacks also operate in the ABF Student Center, the Skaptopara 1 Residence Hall, and the Main Building.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND ACCESSIBILITY SUPPORT

The Equal Opportunity and Accessibility Support Office ensures that all students have equitable access to the full AUBG experience. It provides accommodations and individualized support for students with disabilities, promotes a safe and welcoming campus environment, and upholds the university's non-discrimination policies. Through education, training, advocacy, and collaboration with campus departments and external partners, the program develops strategies to remove barriers, prevent and address discrimination and harassment, and foster a culture of respect and inclusion. In this way, it advances AUBG's commitment to holistic student development while ensuring compliance with institutional policies and legal standards.

Student Disability Support Program

AUBG complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and the European Union standards on non-discrimination and equal opportunity for the disabled in the work and academic environment. According to the [ADA](#), a person with a disability is someone “who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity. This includes people who have a record of such an impairment, even if they do not currently have a disability. It also includes individuals who do not have a disability but are regarded as having a disability.” This broad scope includes, but is not limited to, students with visual, auditory, or motor impairments, students with documented learning disabilities, students undergoing medical treatments affecting class attendance or assignments, and students necessitating tailored accommodations for course assessments or housing accommodations.

AUBG will make every reasonable effort to be accommodating to students with documented disabilities who need academic and/or housing accommodations. A reasonable accommodation entails making modifications and/or adjustments to a course, program, service, activity or facility that enables a student with a disability to have an equal opportunity to attain the same level of performance or enjoy equal benefits and privileges as their non-disabled counterparts, thereby maintaining parity in their experiences.

Reasonable accommodations include, but are not limited to, making facilities accessible, providing adaptive equipment, and providing student assistants to support the student in and/or outside the classroom. AUBG has ultimate discretion to choose among effective accommodations.

Students are responsible for providing relevant information and requesting academic and/or housing accommodations through the AUBG Accessibility and Equal Opportunity Office. To request relevant information and academic and/or housing accommodations, please email: DisabilitySupport@aubg.edu.

Please send relevant health-related supportive documentation to medical@aubg.edu.

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING SERVICES

The Health and Well-Being Center at AUBG, comprising the Medical Center and the Counseling Center, offers comprehensive physical and mental health services to students, faculty, and staff. It operates in accordance with the highest professional standards and ensures strict confidentiality, aligning with both Bulgarian legislation and the standards set by the [American College Health Association](#). The Health and Well-being Center provides a range of services, including consultations, crisis intervention, preventive care, and health education to promote well-being. In addition to that, it offers a Health and Well-being Center Peer Educators Program which trains and empowers students to become leaders in promoting health and well-being within the AUBG campus community.

Counseling Services

The University sees psychological counseling as a helping profession, concerned with fostering the well-being of individuals, families, and communities. The Counseling Center provides private,

confidential, free counseling for students and guidance and referrals to other members of the University community.

The Counseling Center is overseen by a psychologist who provides support for students struggling with adapting to University life, cultural awareness, stress, anxiety, depression, substance abuse, homesickness, and other issues. The professional staff of the Counseling Center provides private, confidential counseling for students to assist them in assessing and improving their choices with regards to personal goals.

Students are encouraged to participate in workshops that promote interpersonal growth and development: They are held throughout the year and are provided by fellow students who are completing the Counseling Center Peer Education Program.

The University is committed to keeping our students safe and treating them equally regardless of sex or gender identity or expression and to the inclusion and support of women and gender-nonconforming persons in higher education, from their immediate on-campus health and safety to the advocacy of their rights as future employees and active citizens.

Safe and private support for victims of harassment and violence and information relevant to gender-specific needs, such as community and campus support groups and international gender-based groups is available through the Counseling Center. It also serves as a safe study space for women, gender-nonconforming, and other underrepresented groups on campus, as well as for any person seeking to study and explore issues of gender and identity.

The Counseling Center is open Monday through Friday during regular working hours in Skaptopara 1 Residence Hall, rooms 1122–1123. After-hours support is also available. To arrange a session, please book an appointment in advance, preferably by emailing counseling@aubg.edu or calling +359 73 888 517 or +359 73 888 527.

Dental Services

More than 50 dentists practice in Blagoevgrad. Contact information is available at the Medical Center. Payment for services is the student's responsibility.

Medical Services

Physical health and medical care are the primary focus of the AUBG Medical Center, which serves the needs of AUBG students, faculty, and staff. The Center is staffed with a physician and two nurse practitioners who are readily available to offer prompt evaluation and treatment for common medical issues. It is equipped to provide routine diagnoses, basic laboratory tests, treatment for common ailments, and immunizations. In instances where necessary, students may be referred to local outpatient clinics, hospitals, or medical specialists for consultations and additional tests. Additionally, in case of emergencies, the doctor and nurses are capable of conducting home visits. The professional staff at the Medical Center also assume responsibility for epidemic control activities and protocols.

The Medical Center also offers services related to students' health insurance coverage. It assists students in navigating and understanding their health insurance policies to ensure they receive

appropriate coverage. Furthermore, the center organizes and conducts health educational programs covering various topics. These programs aim to enhance students' knowledge and promote a healthier lifestyle through informative sessions and workshops.

The Medical Center is located in the Skaptopara 1 Residence Hall and is open Monday through Friday from 8 am to 6 pm; e-mail: medical@aubg.edu. The phone numbers of the office are +359 73 888 207 and +359 73 888 210.

In addition, both the doctor and the nurse make home visits in case of emergency and can be contacted by phone 24/7 at:

- Dr. Ventsislav Daskalov: +359 73 888 207 or +359 887 361 454
- Veneta Petkova, Senior Nurse Practitioner: +359 73 888 210 or +359 889 526 894
- Svetla Vretenarova, Nurse Practitioner: +359 896 653 880.

Emergency Services (ER) can be contacted 24/7 by dialing 112.

IT SERVICES

IT services are an integral part of the University and are intended to meet students' academic computing needs and to provide computing security for the University community. The Office of Communications and Computing (OCC) maintains a number of computer labs that are accessible to students, as well as the campus network and Wi-Fi services and hardline Ethernet available in the Residence Halls. All personal computers must be registered with OCC in order to connect to the University network. Students are responsible for adhering to the [policies and procedures](#) established by OCC.

LIBRARY

The Panitza Library facilitates the creation, application, and dissemination of knowledge through the provision of information resources, services, and instruction in a supportive research environment. It is open 88 hours per week, Monday through Sunday, during the semester, and offers extended working hours during final exam weeks. The Library supports AUBG's curriculum and fosters students' personal growth and the development of life-long learning skills.

The Library offers a comfortable environment for individual and group study that provides printing and scanning rooms, computer kiosks, and other study facilities. The Library houses a collection of 118,000 books; more than 10,000 volumes of periodicals; 260,000 e-books; 40,000 electronic journal titles, magazines, and newspapers; a growing collection of audio-visual materials; and many electronic databases. Electronic resources are conveniently organized through the library website and are available for research and study around the clock, both on-site and remotely.

The Information Literacy program offers training in developing research skills both through in-class and online instruction as well as individual trainings. The Reference service offers professional help to Library patrons in locating and retrieving information. Patrons can contact reference librarians in person and through instant messaging and e-mail. The Interlibrary Loan service augments the library holdings by supplying documents from partner and consortium libraries to meet the expanding research needs of AUBG faculty and students.

OFF-CAMPUS STUDENT LIFE SUPPORT

The Off-Campus Student Life Support Office enhances the university experience for students living off-campus by providing guidance, resources, and activities that promote their successful integration into campus life.

SAFE SPACES

The University respects all aspects of people and does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, nationality, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender expression, socio-economic position, religion, age, body shape, or physical ability. As part of this mission, various locations within the campus have been designated as “Safe Spaces” to actively reiterate that students, faculty, and staff in those spaces will provide assistance to any person regardless of identity.

Designated Safe Spaces include: the offices of the Dean of Students and Dean of Faculty, the Medical Center, the Counseling Center, and the offices of Residence Life staff. In addition, individual community members, including faculty and staff, may choose to designate their work space as a Safe Space. The latter must be coordinated with the Dean of Students.

SPORTS ACTIVITIES

The Sports and Athletics Center oversees a variety of sports facilities on campus, including the ABF Sports Hall and the outdoor tennis courts, basketball court, and football pitch. Sports activities are funded by the Sports and Athletics Center, which pays for coaching salaries, facilities costs, and other equipment fees. All sports equipment is stored in the Sports and Athletics Center, which is located in ABF Student Center, and the Center’s employees and student assistants are responsible for maintenance and check-out.

The ABF Student Center houses a fully equipped fitness center, an indoor running track, and a sports hall for basketball, volleyball, football, and other team sports. Intramural clubs and teams have been formed by AUBG community members in aerobics, baseball, softball, basketball, football, American football, volleyball, tennis, karate, boxing, dancing, hiking, swimming, skiing, snowboarding, and many others.

STUDENT LEADERSHIP AND ENGAGEMENT

The Student Leadership and Engagement Office plays a crucial role in enhancing student life beyond the classroom at AUBG. It mentors and supports student clubs, organizations, and individuals in event planning and project management, fostering their engagement in campus activities and community initiatives. Collaborating closely with the Dean of Students Office, other relevant departments, and community partners, the office provides resources and guidance on policy implementation to promote student leadership development. Additionally, it contributes to university events and orientation programs, emphasizing the importance of ethical leadership skills, and ensures efficient administrative operations to facilitate meaningful student participation across campus activities.

STUDY ABROAD AND EXCHANGE PROGRAMS

The University has agreements with several US and international colleges and universities to provide opportunities for students to study abroad. Through the ERASMUS+ program, students can study at another European institution for one semester. The University is also a member of

the International Student Exchange Program (ISEP), the OSUN Undergraduate Mobility Program, and has an additional established exchange agreement with the University of Maine – Orono.

Students in good academic and conduct standing, and who meet the GPA and other requirements set by the host institution or program, may apply for study abroad after completing two semesters of study at AUBG. The study abroad may begin after the successful completion of the third semester. Transfer students must complete 60 credit hours in residence at AUBG before being eligible for study abroad.

Costs for travel, books, and other expenses vary from program to program and are the responsibility of the student. Details on study abroad opportunities are available at the Erasmus and Study Abroad Office.

TESTING

The English Language Institute (ELI) is a certified IELTS Registration Center. Official IELTS exams can be administered on the ELI premises only if a minimum number of candidates register for the same date. For more information, please contact the ELI at eli@aubg.edu.

The University offers paper-based GRE Subject Tests as a regular Test Center and the LSAT as a non-published Test Center. The SAT Test Center code is 56502. For more information, please contact the Admissions Office at admissions@aubg.edu.

The AUBG Career Center is *not* a GMAT or GRE testing site, but it provides an up-to-date collection of GMAT and GRE prep books available for students to borrow. For more information, contact CareerCenter@aubg.edu.

WRITING SERVICES

The AUBG Writing Center is located in the ABF Student Center. Its goal is to assist AUBG students – from ELI EAP learners to AUBG seniors – in improving their writing through free one-on-one peer-to-peer tutorials and group workshops. Students can visit the Writing Center at any stage of the writing process to receive help with tasks such as brainstorming and generating ideas, essay and sentence structure, crafting a thesis statement, and writing rough and final drafts. Additionally, the Writing Center can assist students in preparing for essay tests, understanding assignments, finding research materials, and more.

In the Writing Center, students can find instructional books and handouts that focus on various writing tasks. Online resources are also available in the [AUBG Student Hub](#).

The Writing Center opens during the second week of classes and closes one week before the last day of classes. To schedule an appointment with a peer writing tutor, students should visit <https://aubg.mywconline.com>.

STUDENT LIFE

CAMPUS BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

The campus is divided into two locations: the Main Building, located on Blagoevgrad's central square, and the Skaptopara Campus, located on the south end of town near the rail station. The Main Building and the grounds of the Skaptopara campus are open for use by all University community members. The area around the residence halls has spaces designed for outdoor recreation, including park benches, a gazebo, and barbecue grills.

The Main Building (MB) is the original location of the University; it currently houses administrative and faculty offices and serves as one of the University's two academic buildings. The Main Building is shared with South-West University "Neofit Rilski" and is owned by the City of Blagoevgrad. It is open 24/7, and the University maintains a security presence in the building at all times.

The Skaptopara Campus is the site of all three Skaptopara Residence Halls, the Balkanski Academic Center (BAC), and the America for Bulgaria Foundation (ABF) Student Center. BAC houses the Panitza Library, the Andrey Delchev Auditorium with 150 seats, and administrative and faculty offices, such as the Dean of Faculty Office and the E-learn Office and serves as the University's second academic building. The ABF Student Center houses the Bookstore, and the Griffin Café, the Dean of Students Office, the Advising and Writing Centers, the Career Center, the International Students Office, the Exchange and Study Abroad Office, and the Residence Life Office, the Admissions Office, the Registrar's Office, the Financial Aid and Student Loans Office, the Running Track and the Fitness Center, the Office of Marketing and Communications, the Center for Information, Democracy, and Citizenship, and the Griffin Canteen. The ABF Student Center is home to the Dr. Carl Djerassi Theater Hall, a state-of-the-art theater with a seating capacity of 350. This theater serves as a venue for student theatrical, musical, and dance performances, as well as conference presentations and panel discussions.

The University takes great pride in hosting the esteemed AUBG Choir and the annual student-run musical within this facility. The Sports Hall and outdoor sports facilities, such as the tennis courts, the football pitch, and the basketball court host a variety of sports events and competitions. These, as well as other events taking place on campus, including concerts, guest lectures, art shows, and other special events that are open to the public. They not only enrich the university community but also contribute to the wider community of Blagoevgrad.

University facilities are available for use by faculty, staff, and students with prior reservation.

STUDENT CLUBS, OTHER STUDENT-RUN ORGANIZATIONS AND ACTIVITIES

A lively spirit of discovery and adventure extends beyond the classroom, with opportunities for students to participate in a wide range of co-curricular activities.

AUBG students are encouraged to form groups based on shared interests and to establish clubs and organizations to pursue their shared goals in a focused way. The variety of activities, clubs, and student organizations varies from year to year according to the talents and interests of the student body.

To receive university support and be eligible for funding, clubs must undergo an annual recognition process by the Student Government (SG). Clubs must meet a minimum student enrollment, demonstrate active pursuit of their stated goals, and have a constitution, a faculty and/or staff advisor, and a slate of officers filed with SG.

The University has an award-winning Choir and is home to several student theater groups. Athletic clubs and teams are open to students interested sports.

Student club and organization activities are also supplemented by the Department of Residence Life, which sponsors panel discussions, parties, dances, information weeks, civic engagement activities, movies, and other events.

The University is also an important part of the Blagoevgrad community, hosting concerts, guest lectures, art shows, conferences, and other special events, many of which are open to the public.

Club Policies

Students govern their clubs according to constitutions reviewed and filed under the leadership of Student Government. Club officers change annually.

All clubs or activities that use University facilities and/or equipment; receive University funding; are recognized by Student Government; and/or use the University logo and/or name must:

- function in keeping with the declared mission and educational goals of the University and University standards of behavior, including respect for all persons, regardless of race, ethnicity, nationality, sex, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, body shape, or physical ability;
- maintain a majority membership of AUBG students, faculty, and staff;
- have a faculty or staff advisor, who will be present at all functions occurring in University spaces and will attend the majority of meetings;
- have officers in good academic and disciplinary standing;
- follow the laws of Blagoevgrad and the Republic of Bulgaria and the policies of the University and accept responsibility for any violation of those laws and regulations, including damage to University property occurring during meetings, events, or programs; and
- register as a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) or other entity **only** with a signed Memorandum of Understanding with the University clarifying facilities use, funding, use of the University name and/or logo, the organization's relationship to the University, and how the organization fits into the University mission.

All official clubs' activities may get funded by Student Government through its budgetary process. Clubs must meet the minimum student enrollment, demonstrate active pursuit of their stated goals, and have a constitution, registered faculty or staff advisor, and slate of officers filed with Student Government before funds can be granted. For more detailed club information, please contact the Student Government.

Club Equipment

Student Government keeps an inventory of all equipment purchased through University funds and stores that equipment in the Student Government office. Student clubs can borrow this equipment with the permission of Student Government. The cost of equipment repair and/or

replacing missing items will be charged to the account of the student signing out the equipment. The club will not receive further funding if items are not accounted for at the end of each year.

MOTOR VEHICLE AND PARKING REGULATIONS

University regulations, in addition to national and local traffic laws, apply to all persons operating or parking a motor vehicle at the university.

Registration and Liability

Students are required to register their vehicles with the Security Office. The student in whose name a vehicle is registered is responsible for any liability or damage claims, tickets, fines, and towing costs arising in connection with the possession or operation of the vehicle. The University is not responsible for any thefts or damage that may occur to a vehicle while it is parked on campus.

Parking

The Parking Control program is intended to maintain a reasonable measure of parking control on campus, to ensure safety and security for all members of the University community, to keep fire lanes clear at all times, and to provide a neat and attractive campus by forbidding parking on the sides of roads, on sidewalks, and on lawns.

All vehicles that park in a university-operated parking lot must display a Campus Parking Permit or an approved Visitor's Permit. Permits may be obtained through the AUBG Security Office by providing evidence of vehicle ownership and a valid driver's license. All parking permits must be displayed in the manner designated by the Security Office. Any vehicle parked on campus without a properly displayed permit will be ticketed and may be towed at the owner's expense.

The AUBG parking area is the ABF Student Center lot. Currently, this parking lot has free access for all AUBG community members.

All campus roadways are city property. They are considered fire lanes unless otherwise posted. Parked vehicles that could in any way impede fire trucks or other safety equipment will be towed at the owner's expense. City signs indicate additional no-parking areas from which parked cars may also be towed at the owner's expense.

Motorcycles and mopeds may not be placed or stored in or under any University buildings.

Sanctions

University security guards will monitor parking lots frequently and have the authority to enforce University parking regulations. Guards will issue tickets for violations including:

- failure to correctly display an approved parking permit;
- parking in a fire lane, loading zone, or no-parking zone;
- parking in a handicapped zone without valid handicap designation;
- parking off-street or on a sidewalk;
- unauthorized use of designated spaces;
- blocking traffic; and
- reckless driving.

Each parking violation entails a EUR 50 fine. Students accumulating more than three parking violations per academic year will have parking privileges permanently revoked and may be subject to further disciplinary action for failure to comply with University policies.

All vehicle fines are to be paid to the cashier in the Business Office and must either be paid or appealed within ten days, after which time the right to appeal is forfeited. Appeal forms and procedures are available through the Security Office. If a ticket is not paid within ten days, the fine will double. After thirty days, the Accounting Office will proceed to collect the delinquent bill through approved channels.

Towing

Vehicles will be towed if they are blocking fire lanes, if they are parked illegally in a handicapped zone, or if the responsible party has accumulated multiple tickets and/or other violations.

SECURITY

Guards

University Security Guards are available 24/7 at the front desks of the residence halls and at the security desks of all other campus building during opening hours. Security guards do building rounds twice per hour. Students should report any security concerns, including suspicious persons or behavior, as soon as possible. Local police will handle investigations as appropriate. For further information, contact the Director of Security.

ID Cards

AUBG Student ID cards provide access to residence hall accommodation and the main academic buildings. Students must keep their ID cards with them at all times. Giving or lending an ID card to someone else is a breach of campus safety and may result in a Student Conduct Council hearing.

Lost IDs should be reported to a Residence Hall Director or Security personnel immediately; failure to report loss of an ID card endangers campus security in general and roommates in particular. A labor charge plus the cost of ID card replacement and room rekeying will be billed to the individual student.

Incident Reports

Incident Reports can and should be submitted by *any* member of the University community regarding any policy violation. Reports should be submitted to the appropriate Residence Hall Director, the Director of Residence Life, or the Dean of Students as soon as possible, preferably within 12 hours of the incident.

Incident Report Forms are available from all Resident Assistants, at Residence Hall front desks, and on the Student, Faculty and Student Hub.

SPORTS FACILITIES

Sports facilities are available for the use of the University community. All users must show an AUBG ID to the attendant to access the facilities. Persons unaffiliated with the University, including guests of students, may not use the facilities, except summer groups who have booked

events or training through the University Events Office. Students have priority over faculty and staff use, although special times may be dedicated to faculty or staff use.

University community members use sports facilities and equipment at their own risk, and the University assumes no liability for personal injury.

Operating hours are posted at each facility, and facility supervisors are available for assistance during those hours. All sport facilities and equipment are under the direction of the Sports and Athletics Center Manager, who is also responsible for maintenance and upkeep. For additional information, contact the Sports and Athletics Center.

RESIDENCE LIFE

The mission of the Office of Residence Life is to promote the personal, social, emotional, and physical well-being of each student, with the residential experience being integral to an American-style liberal arts education. Residence hall programs, staffing patterns and procedures create a living-learning environment by supporting the University mission and values. Students who live, work, study, and develop together will be better prepared for the challenges of life after graduation.

STATEMENT ON RESIDENCE LIFE COMMUNITY VALUES

Residence Life believes that fostering a respectful and supportive living-learning community is essential. Students living on campus learn to work with people from a variety of backgrounds to achieve common goals; to challenge stereotypes and patterns of intolerance; and to respect all individuals, regardless of race, ethnicity, nationality, sex, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, body shape, or physical ability.

RESIDENCE HALLS OVERVIEW

All residence halls are equipped with Wi-Fi, elevators, vending machines, a reception desk, laundry services, kitchen facilities, computer labs, and study areas. All residence halls are smoke free and provide disability access and 24-hour security.

Skaptopara 1 houses up to 276 students either in single rooms with private bathrooms or in apartment suites of two double rooms with shared bathrooms for four suitemates. Skaptopara 1 has a multipurpose activity room, party room, music practice rooms, an aerobics room, café, and club storage rooms. The Health and Wellbeing center can also be found in Skaptopara 1.

Skaptopara 2 houses up to 312 students in single, double rooms and apartment suites. Skaptopara 2 also has a sound lab, editing room, an aerobics room, multipurpose room, games and recreation room, and club storage rooms.

Skaptopara 3 houses up to 124 students in double rooms, each with a private bathroom and air conditioner. Skaptopara 3 has a recreational space with computers, table tennis, foosball, as well as meeting and storage rooms.

RESIDENCE LIFE STAFF

Resident Assistants (RAs), Residence Hall Directors, the Director of Residence Life, and the Assistant to the Director of Residence Life represent student needs and concerns in the halls. On site, Residence Life is supported by AUBG cleaning staff, groundskeepers, security guards, facilities and maintenance personnel, and dining services staff.

Residence hall staff are University officials charged with upholding all University policies and Bulgarian laws. Students may not interfere with mistreatment, or otherwise abuse and undermine a staff member's authority.

Director of Residence Life

The Director of Residence Life has direct oversight of all residence halls and their occupants; serves as the disciplining body for fineable residence life policy violations and liaises with other Student Affairs offices to ensure the welfare of students living on campus. The Office of Residence Life is located in the ABF Center (office # 6204)

Residence Halls Directors

Residence Hall Directors (RHDs) reside and have offices in the residence halls to better address student concerns and to respond to emergencies after hours. Hall Directors are on duty seven days a week from 3:00 pm to midnight on rotating shifts. During their scheduled shifts, the RHDs can be found in offices located on the ground floor of each hall: Skaptopara 1- #1101, Skaptopara 2 - #2120, and Skaptopara 3 - #3101.

In cases of emergency, students should either notify the resp. Residence Hall Director directly or notify the guards, who will then contact the RHD.

Residence Hall Guards

AUBG's Security Guards are stationed at all residence hall front desks. The Security Guards are responsible for checking the ID cards of people entering the buildings, being available for student emergencies, dealing with parking issues, and monitoring for suspicious activities. They report directly to the Security Office and will assist in any emergency.

Resident Assistants

Resident Assistants (RAs) are students who are employed to serve the on-campus living community. RAs can assist fellow students with informal counseling, roommate mediation, policy enforcement, planning activities and parties, and community building. As a group, RAs regularly organize programs, workshops, and activities to help with stress relief and to enhance out-of-classroom learning experiences. RAs are also responsible for registering guests at the front desks of each Residence Hall.

RAs undergo extensive training in teamwork, community awareness, wellness and educational programs, peer support, conflict mediation, crisis management, and first aid. RAs live on each floor of the residence halls and are on call from 11:00 pm to 8:00 am on rotating shifts. RAs for the current year are listed in the Student Handbook directory and on the University website.

RAs are primarily selected each Spring and possible Fall semester based on their maturity level, social skills, enthusiasm, and desire to serve. Students interested in becoming RAs should apply through the Office of Residence Life.

Senior Resident Assistants

Senior RAs are assigned to Skaptopara 1 and 2. Senior RAs perform all standard RA functions in addition to serving as liaisons between the Residence Hall Directors and other RAs. Senior RAs will also assist students who, with their assigned RA, have been unable to resolve housing issues with between roommates or suitemates.

General Concerns

All other concerns not addressed above should be directed to the Office of Residence Life.

RESIDENT BEHAVIOR

Residence Life policies and procedures are provided to maintain an atmosphere conducive to community life in an academic environment. Since the residence halls house individuals with a wide variety of lifestyles, goals, and needs, students must recognize that they are responsible for constructively enhancing and contributing to the living-learning environment. Students are encouraged to understand and appreciate each other's differences. Students are held individually responsible for their behaviors, including the requirement to act at all times in accordance with University policies.

HOUSING POLICIES

Residential living is a significant part of the Liberal Arts education experience. AUBG provides student housing in the Skaptopara 1, 2, and 3 Residence Halls. The residence halls offer double rooms and apartment suites, and a limited number of single rooms. All rooms and suites are wired for internet access, and each residence hall has study rooms, coffee and snack machines, as well as lounges with TV sets. Skaptopara 1 and 2 have a self-service laundry. In addition, there is also a café in Skaptopara 1.

Residence Life policies and procedures are designed to carry out and support the educational mission of AUBG as a residential university.

All first-year students and sophomores (0-56 academic credits) are required to live on campus.

Exempt from this policy are:

part-time students;

- students with more than 3 violations of Residence Life policies per semester, as well as students who were previously banned from university housing;
- students who have immediate family housing in the Blagoevgrad area;
- married students - only after approval by the Director of Residence Life;
- students who have documented medical reasons – only after approval by the Residential and Off-campus Living Committee chaired by the Director of the Health and Well-being Center.

Fulltime students with 57+ academic credits, ERASMUS+ exchange students and English Language Institute (ELI) students from the English for Academic Purposes (EAP) Program may apply for AUBG housing, based on availability of beds.

All AUBG students eligible and looking for AUBG housing undergo a Room Selection and Assignment Procedure, which is announced by the Residence Life Director twice a year.

All students living in campus housing sign a contract agreeing to abide by the University housing regulations aimed at ensuring a clean, safe, and respectful living-learning environment consistent with the educational mission of the University. Violations of the housing regulations and other AUBG policies may result in fines, termination of housing contract and/or judicial sanctions

Arrival

All students must register with Residence Life within 48 hours of arrival. Bulgarian Immigration police have the right to inspect residence hall rooms for unregistered occupants and levy a large fine for failure to comply with this law; non-Bulgarian residents who are not properly registered may be deported.

Breaks

During the official University Winter Break, AUBG will close the residence halls, shut down services such as heating and hot water, and/or close other buildings. Students not traveling home for the break should make alternate housing arrangements for this time period well in advance.

Only International Students waiting for transportation, and who have made advance arrangements with their Residence Hall Directors, are allowed to stay a limited number of additional days after the end of final exams. These students will be billed at a rate of EUR 15 per night.

Guests

Residents living on campus are allowed two free nights per semester to bring over a guest to stay in their room or in a guest room. After the second free night, the cost to stay becomes EUR 15 per night. Please note: The two free nights only apply to the resident's room. If the guest wishes to be in a guest room, the resident/guest will directly be charged EUR 15 per night.

The resident's guest must also register at the front desk upon their arrival with a proper photo ID. Furthermore, any violations or infractions of the university's policies committed by the guest will be held at the expense of the resident.

If the guest is to stay in the resident's room, the Resident Hall Director must be informed at the latest 24 hours in advance in an email containing additionally the agreed consent of the resident's room/suite mates. The procedure for a guest room is the same. A temporary card will be issued for the guest if they have chosen to stay in a guest room to allow them access. However, in case of damage or loss of the card, the resident will be held responsible.

Contracts and Contract Termination

Each student living on campus will complete a contractual agreement for housing (“housing contract”) and retain occupancy in the residence hall for the entire academic year.

Refunds for housing fees are only available through the first two weeks on campus and will only be given if the student leaves the University or suffers a verified medical emergency. No refunds (including those for medical emergencies) will be given after Fall/Spring break.

The Director of Residence Life is entitled to terminate the current housing contract of any student found to be in violation of any policies regarding Residence Life. The Director will deliver a written notice, which will include a list of the student's violation(s) and the date and time at which contract termination will become effective (normally three days from the date of the letter). If a student presents a clear and present danger to individuals or property, or continues to violate policies, Residence Life reserves the right to remove the student immediately. Contracts terminated for policy violations are binding; the terminated student will be responsible for paying housing bills through the end of the semester, even though no longer living on campus.

Departures

Before departing housing for any official break, leave of absence, or graduation, students must:

- clean the refrigerator;
- clean the room;
- remove all food except unopened boxes and cans;
- dispose of all trash;
- unplug all electrical appliances and lamps as a fire precaution;
- turn off all lights; and
- close and lock all windows and doors as a theft prevention measure.

Students who will not be returning to the University must also:

- sign up for a check-out time with the RA or Residence Hall Director (failure to do so will result in a EUR 25 fine);
- complete the room inspection process with the RA or Residence Hall Director;
- return all keys (or be charged for replacements); and
- vacate the residence hall within 24 hours of the last final exam.

Residence hall officials will enter rooms during breaks to conduct health and safety inspections. Fines will be issued for unclean rooms. There will be no other official notice of entries during the breaks.

Evacuations and Fire Drills

Evacuation procedures are posted in each campus building. Whenever a fire alarm goes off, all students must immediately exit the building. Each student must know the exit closest to their rooms and where to assemble outside the building during any disaster or fire drill. Failure to evacuate will result in a fine.

Remember that in the event of a fire, the worst enemies are smoke, heat, and gases. Before opening a door on the evacuation route, smell for smoke and check the door to see if it is hot.

Students caught in smoke should get down on the floor and crawl while using a towel or a cloth to make breathing less difficult.

Exclusion from Housing

Violations of University policies are also violations of the student housing contract. Students accumulating three or more policy violations in a semester, or five or more violations total while enrolled as a student, will be permanently removed from on- campus housing.

The Office of Residence Life also reserves the right to ban from on-campus housing students who have violated University policies regardless of the total number. Such bans are at the discretion of the Director of Residence Life, who will consider the severity of the violation; the perpetrator's prior disciplinary record; the physical, mental, or emotional harm or threat of harm posed to others as a consequence of the violation; and the attitude of the perpetrator towards University staff who are pursuing violation sanctions through appropriate University processes.

Family Housing

Family housing is currently not available on campus. Married students who can provide documentation are not required to live on campus.

Inspections and Repairs

The University reserves the right to enter and inspect residence hall rooms and to regulate the use of the premises in accordance with University and Residence Hall rules and regulations and local laws, including fire safety and cleanliness. University personnel may also enter any room given reasonable suspicion of violations. Except in the case of a fire safety emergency, inspections made by university personnel may not include a search of personal effects without student consent; law enforcement officers with appropriate legal status can inspect personal effect without consent.

Students are held financially and legally responsible during their occupancy for the condition of their individual rooms and assigned items.

Late Arrival

Students must take occupancy of rooms on the first day of classes each semester. Unclaimed rooms may be reassigned unless the Office of Residence Life has received and approved a written student request for late arrival. Students who have flight or visa problems will be accommodated as much as possible but should be aware that early arrival and late stays will entail additional charges.

Leave-of-Absence Housing

Housing space will only be reserved for students on a leave of absence if the student officially notifies both the Registrar and the Department of Residence Life two months in advance of return to campus. A returning student must also be fully registered for classes or else will be excluded from room choice. A student who leaves the University will not have housing priority when returning, unless a current resident specifically requests the returning student as a roommate during room selection.

Students returning from a leave of absence who do not sign in by the first day of classes may be reassigned to a different room unless late arrival has been pre- approved by the Director of Residence Life.

Off-Campus Living

Currently, students from Blagoevgrad who live with their families will not be assigned to campus housing. AUBG students may live in the University housing if they are registered for classes depending on room availability and room selection policies, which may be subject to change.

Part-Time Students

Part-time students (i.e., those enrolled in fewer than 12 credit hours per semester) will not be allowed to live in on-campus housing unless space permits.

Room Changes

All room changes must be completed within the first three weeks of classes each semester and must be made through the Office of Residence Life. Students changing rooms must also follow the processes listed under *Departures*, and all room, linen, and key exchanges and check out/in inventory forms must be officially completed with the Residence Hall Director. The Office of Residence Life reserves the right to make room assignments and reassignments as necessary.

Room Consolidation

All students are expected to have the standard designated number of roommates for the living space. Rooms with free beds are not considered “at capacity,” and residents of those rooms will be consolidated to create at-capacity rooms and suites. Students will not be allowed to live in a room that is under capacity unless they choose to pay a premium price for a single room.

During the first three weeks of school, students in under-capacity rooms can invite roommates and have their invitation approved through the Residence Life office. After that time, the Office of Residence Life may assign a new resident to that space.

Room Decoration and Personalization

The following limitations on room personalization are designed to minimize remodeling costs as students move in and out of accommodations and to preserve the integrity of the living-learning environment:

- Do not remove room furniture or add lounge furniture to a private room.
- Do not use furniture in a way not intended.
- Do not block windows when rearranging furniture.
- Do not damage the walls while moving furniture.
- Use only approved appliances and/or lamps.
- Use only materials that do not leave a residue or damage the walls to mount decorations; do not use nails, wallpaper, glue, stickers, or heavy tape.

All decorations visible to the public must reflect the values and mission of the University. Tobacco, alcohol, forbidden substances, or other signs that create an uncomfortable living environment for the community are not acceptable in windows or on the outside of room doors.

Interior decorations must also not create a hostile living environment for roommates or suitemates. Decorations that do create such an environment, including but not limited to those of a pornographic or discriminatory nature, may be subject to sanctions under university policies of harassment and discrimination.

All signs must be affixed without destroying or leaving residue on the outside of doors.

Room Selection

All new students are randomly assigned housing and receive room assignments upon arrival at the Skaptopara residence halls. Any special room requests must be submitted to the Office of Residence Life before July 10. For returning students, room selection for the coming academic year is held in the previous spring semester; rooms are assigned through.

Residence Life reserves the right to fill any room places that become vacant over the summer months. Students who learn that an assigned roommate will not return should notify the Director of Residence Life as soon as possible if they wish to request another roommate; otherwise, the open space will be filled by the next student in line.

Students who choose to sign up as a roommate or suitemate to RAs do so at their own risk. If the RA loses or resigns the position, the new RA has the right to choose different room- or suitemates, and the original roommates will be randomly reassigned.

Room Use

Students continuing in residence may leave belongings in their rooms at their own risk during the fall, winter, and spring breaks. No items may be left in rooms from May through August, as rooms will be used for summer camp and conference groups.

Storage

Students may store up to two boxes in their residence hall over the summer. Storage for students living off-campus or on leave of absence is not available. The University and Residence Life Staff are not responsible for items left in summer storage.

All items in storage **must** be in cardboard boxes, clearly labeled with the student's name, student email, ID number, and fall residence hall address. No plastic bags or other items will be stored. All storage boxes must be checked in through the Residence Hall Director and RAs. Once items are put into storage, access will not be available until three days before the beginning of fall classes.

Two weeks after the start of Fall semester, the storage rooms will be cleaned. Anything left unclaimed will be donated, sold, or otherwise disposed of.

SERVICES AND EQUIPMENT

Computer Services

Each residence hall has a computer where students can print. In addition, some Residence Halls have computer labs. Lab users must respect the rights of other students, and noise violations will

result in fines. Labs are not for online gaming or listening to music. No eating, drinking, or smoking is allowed in the labs, and students should clean the area when leaving.

In addition to the labs, each room is wired for Internet services via the University network; Wi-Fi is also available throughout the residence halls. Students may use this computing system by registering their computer at the IT Office in BAC or online through the IT Office portion of the University website.

Equipment

All Residence Hall equipment and its inventory are the responsibility of the Residence Hall Director, in association with the Security Guards. The Security office will investigate theft or damage of equipment; incidents may also be reported to the Blagoevgrad police. Items assigned to student rooms must be accounted for at the end of each academic year, and missing or damaged equipment will be charged to the responsible student(s).

Residence Halls have games and housekeeping equipment that can be signed out from the front desk. Items normally available are board and card games, irons, ironing boards, vacuums, and television remotes.

Furniture

Most student rooms have a bed, desk, drawers, fridge, wardrobe, and bookshelf for each occupant. No University furniture may be taken outside onto the grounds or only the decks, balconies, or terraces unless designed and designated for outside use. Student room furniture cannot be moved into the lobbies or other shared spaces. Students who see furniture that has been left outside should notify Residence Life staff immediately.

Residents should help prolong the life of university equipment. Do not sit on ping-pong or pool tables or put food or drinks on them. Do not block door and window exits with furniture.

Laundry

Self-service laundry machines are available in Skaptopara 1 and 2. Self-service laundry machines and services are provided by a non-AUBG company. Nonetheless, students must follow the regulations of the self-service laundry provider.

All non-emergency concerns should be directed to the telephone number listed in the laundry rooms. If the machines pose an imminent danger, such as a fire risk, contact Security and Residence Life staff immediately.

Additional laundry and dry-cleaning services are also available in town.

Linens

A pillow and a blanket will be assigned to each resident. Damages to these items will be charged to individual students. All other linens and towels must be provided by the student.

Mail Services

Mail will be delivered to the residence halls daily. Print mail and notifications of package arrivals are delivered under suite/ bedroom doors. All room changes should be prompt to avoid the mistaken delivery of mail. Mail received in error should be returned to the front desk for redelivery. Please note: The University mailing address is **not** the same as the street address of the Residence Halls.

The on-campus mailing address for students is:

Student First and Last Name

Skaptopara 1, 2, or 3

Svoboda Bachvarova 2 (Skapto 3), 4 (Skapto 1), or 6 (Skapto 2)

American University in Bulgaria

2700 Blagoevgrad

Bulgaria

Maintenance

Requests for maintenance should be made through the AUBG [online Repair Request Platform](#) or through the repair request books held at the front desk of each residence hall. Repair requests automatically authorize entry of repair staff. Routine maintenance or repairs requires 24-hours' notice.

Please report all emergency repairs to the Office of Residence Life, the Residence Hall Director, or a guard so that appropriate personnel may be called.

Emergency repairs can be made without student authorization by Office of Residence Life or the Facilities Manager if there is a threat of immediate and/or substantial damage to the room and/or its contents.

Medical Emergencies

Residence Life staff and Security Guards are available to assist residents in contacting emergency medical services at any time. In each residence hall, a Security Guard is on duty 24/7 at the front desk; a Resident Assistant is on duty each evening from 7:00 pm until midnight and on call from midnight to 8:00 am; and a Residence Hall Director is on duty from 3:00 pm to midnight.

Music Instruments

Residents who wish to play musical instruments in the residence halls must use the practice rooms that are available during posted hours. Practice room keys may be checked out at the front desk. The practice rooms contain two pianos and one drum set for resident use.

Power Failure

The electrical power in Skaptopara is designed to shut off when the fire alarm is activated. The power may also go out due to an overload of the circuits. Students experiencing a power outage should immediately contact the security guard, who will contact an electrician for repairs. Students should keep a flashlight available in case of power outages; candles are not allowed.

Telephones

Landline telephones are not available in student rooms. Each residence hall has two front desk telephones where students may receive calls at the following numbers:

Skaptopara 1 +359 73 888 512, +359 73 888 513

Skaptopara 2 +359 73 888 543, +359 73 888 544

Skaptopara 3 +359 73 888 573, +359 73 888 574

Guard and office telephones are not available for student use. Cell phones and cell phone providers are available throughout Blagoevgrad.

Trash Collection and Recycling

Students may either take their garbage out to the dumpsters located behind the residence halls or leave their garbage tied in bags in any of the lobby trash bins. Lobby bins are emptied several times a day by the cleaning staff. Additional trash bags are available at the front desk. Recycling bins are located in all buildings on campus. Please remember to recycle paper, plastic, metal, and glass. Information on recycling is available from the Office of Residence Life.

Water Shortage

During times of drought or periodic pipe-cleaning, water may be limited or unavailable, often without prior notice. The Office of Residence Life will do its best to notify students in advance of water shortages.

Educational Wellness Programs and Activities

RAs plan a variety of educational wellness events for on-campus residents; topics may include social issues, exploring spirituality, physical health, emotional health, intellectual pursuits, cultural events, and vocational explorations. Students are encouraged to participate in these events and to suggest topics of interest to their RAs.

SHARED SPACES

Common Areas

A common area is defined as any space that is not an individual student room and includes bathrooms, hallways, stairways, lounges, and lobby areas. Anyone who observes someone damaging common area property should notify the RA or Residence Hall Director immediately. Individuals who damage a common area will be held financially responsible and will be billed immediately. When damage occurs to a common area and the individual(s) responsible cannot be determined, the occupants of the room, suite, hall, floor, or building where the damage occurs will be billed.

There is a designated cooking area in each of the residence halls. The Skaptopara 1 kitchen is on the fourth floor of Block A. The Skaptopara 2 kitchens are on the fourth floor of Block C. The Skaptopara 3 kitchen is on the third floor. Keys and reservation schedules are available at the front desk of each residence hall.

Roofs and Railings

Students are never allowed on any building roofs or railings. Any student who climbs on the roof or railings of a university building will be removed from university housing and referred to the Conduct Council.

Study Rooms

Study rooms are available in each residence hall. Students should return study rooms to their original configurations and remove all trash after use. Do not remove furniture from these areas. Please see the Covid-19 Regulations for further information.

Television Lounges

Each residence hall has at least one television lounge equipped with cable service. No pornographic or erotic shows may be shown on these televisions. The television is available 24/7 and may be used by leaving an ID with the guard in exchange for the remote control. Students may reserve the main television in advance for a special event through their Residence Hall Director.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

The following University-wide policies are designed to maintain the intellectual and ethical integrity of the University and its community and to protect the rights and ensure the safety and well-being of all AUBG community members. Students who violate these policies undermine these goals and will be sanctioned appropriately according to established procedures.

VIOLATION CATEGORIES

Fineable Violations

Fineable violations will be referred to the Residence Hall Director or the Facilities Office for assessment and billing for financial sanctioning. The student will be notified by email and will have 5 working days from the sending date of the email to file an appeal with the Director of Residence Life or the Dean of Students, as appropriate. After 5 working days, the right of appeal is forfeit and the bill is forwarded to the Accounting Office. The process should be completed within two weeks of the incident or inspection to ensure timely notification and payments.

Fines listed are subject to change without prior notice.

Judicial Violations

Judicial violations will be referred to one of the University's disciplinary bodies: the Director of Residence Life (for residence life-related violations), the Academic Integrity and Appeals Council, the Student Conduct Council, or the Sexual Harassment Hearing Panel. Sanctions include, but are not limited to: an official warning, additional fines, suspension of privileges, educational sanctions, community service hours, dismissal from on-campus housing, revocation of housing contract with no financial refund, or university probation, suspension, or expulsion. Many policies have minimum mandatory sanctions.

Any violation that endangers the lives of others will result in immediate suspension or expulsion from the University.

Students have the right to appeal judicial sanctions. Sanctions given through Student Conduct Council, the Sexual Harassment Hearing Panel, or the Academic Integrity and Appeals Council must follow the appeals process specified under that body's proceedings. Students may appeal other disciplinary sanctions through the Office of the Dean of Students; such appeals must be filed within 5 working days of the sanction assignment.

MULTIPLE-POLICY VIOLATIONS

One incident may violate multiple policies; sanctions for such incidents will be cumulative, not concurrent.

Violations in which an individual or group is targeted based on sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender expression, race, ethnicity, nationality, socio-economic position, religion, age, body shape, physical or mental ability will also be prosecuted under the applicable University anti-discrimination policy and will be subject to the additional listed mandatory sanctions.

Students accumulating two or more violations in one semester will be referred to the Student Conduct Council for possible additional sanctions.

DISCIPLINARY BODIES

Academic Integrity and Appeals Council

Faculty members who detect a violation of academic integrity (Reporting Instructors) have the authority to assign sanctions per their own course policies and to report all violations of Academic Integrity to the Office of the Dean of Faculty. Students have the right to appeal the violation and/or sanction.

Student grounds for appeal are limited to evidence that

- the alleged violation did not occur;
- the action committed does not constitute a violation of Academic Integrity; or
- the assigned sanction violated the limits detailed in the specific course policies.

Should a student choose to appeal the violation and/or sanction, the case will be heard by the Academic Integrity and Appeals Council (AIAC). The AIAC is a disciplinary committee comprised of seven members: three faculty members, and one alternate (nominated by Faculty Assembly); one staff member; and three students and one alternate (selected by Student Government). At the first meeting of the Council, a Chairperson (who must be a faculty member elected by the faculty members of the Council) and Vice-Chairperson (who must be a student) will be elected. The chairperson is a non-voting member except in a tie. All terms will be for one academic year.

The Dean of Faculty serves as a non-voting advisor to the Council, who oversees the procedure and provides information. When a student appeals a decision of the Dean under Administrative Authority, the Council Chair fills the role of overseeing the procedure. All members of the AIAC are trained in University academic integrity policies and procedures by the Dean of Faculty.

The AIAC will review forensic evidentiary materials to determine:

- whether there is reasonably sufficient evidence that the incident occurred;

- whether the incident is in contravention of University academic integrity policies and/or course-specific academic integrity policies that are themselves within the bounds of University policies;
- whether the violation has been assigned its appropriate level; and
- whether the sanction assigned by the Instructor falls within any sanction limits given in the course policies.

The AIAC will consider only forensic evidentiary materials. Under no circumstances will the AIP hear appeals based on, or evidence referencing

- student or instructor behaviors outside of the violation incident;
- issues of character; or
- emotional appeals including, but not limited to, claims of financial exigency, consequences for academic standing, or potential suspension or expulsion from the University.

Violation, sanction, and appeals procedures can be found in the [Undergraduate Academic Catalog](#). Questions about these procedures should be referred to the Dean of Faculty.

Student Conduct Council (SCC)

AUBG views the relationship between students, faculty, and staff as a partnership. These constituencies are seen as working cooperatively to achieve a common goal. The University is conscientious in its efforts to ensure representation of students, faculty and staff on most of its committees. One of the committees established and working in a sensitive area is the Student Conduct Council.

The Student Conduct Council (SCC) oversees the processes by which allegations of various student misbehaviors outside the sphere of academic performance are reviewed and, when appropriate, sanctioned, thus ensuring the transparent and rigorous application of the University's codes of conduct.

The Student Conduct Council examines alleged student violations of University regulations by receiving reports submitted to the SCC by University officials, employees, students, or members of the general public. There are no statutes of limitation on reporting violations of conduct policy.

The Dean of Students serves as advisor to the Student Conduct Council, ensuring that processes are followed, and the rights of students and other AUBG community members are preserved. The Dean of Students does not serve as a voting member of the Student Conduct Council. Members of the Student Conduct Council complete University-provided training in conduct policies and procedures prior to participating in any conduct hearing.

Information about conduct-related University policies and hearing procedures are provided in this Handbook. Detailed and up-to-date information about the SCC hearing process, including the Student Misconduct Complaint Form, can be found in the [AUBG Student Hub](#). To discuss the Student Conduct Council hearing and appeals processes, or to submit a report to the SCC, contact the Dean of Students.

I. Responsibilities of the Student Conduct Council:

The Council examines all possible student violations of University regulations that are brought to its attention by University officials, employees, students, or members of the general public. Complaints must be submitted to the Dean of Students as a written and signed statement, which briefly states the charge. The Dean of Students sends forward the complaint to the Chairperson of the SCC. The Chairperson of the SCC convenes the SCC hearing.

Upon concluding that there is significant basis for proceeding, the SCC shall notify the student(s) in writing of the charge(s), the date(s) of alleged occurrence(s), the University regulations(s) alleged to have been violated, the date, place, and time of the hearing, and the names of the members of the SCC.

A student may be suspended from the University or have privileges revoked pending the outcome of the disciplinary proceedings if on the recommendation of the SCC to the President, the student's continued presence or use of privileges at the University is likely to cause harm to the faculty, staff, students or other specified persons or groups, or University property. The SCC will make a judgment on interim suspension based on the review of the alleged conduct.

II. Composition of the Student Conduct Council:

A. The Council shall consist of seven members and three alternate members:

- three faculty members, nominated by the Faculty Assembly, each of whom has served as a University instructor for a minimum of one year previous to Council membership; and one alternate faculty member who meets the same criteria;
- three students selected by the Student Government who are of sophomore standing or higher, have no recorded infractions of conduct codes or of academic integrity, are not currently on disciplinary or academic probation, and are not currently under review by the Council; and one alternate student member who meets the same criteria; The SCC has the right to suspend or dismiss from the Council a member who has been convicted of a violation of University rules.
- two staff members who has been employed by the University for a minimum of one year previous to Council membership; and one alternate staff member who meets the same criteria.

Members of the Student Conduct Council complete University-provided training in conduct policies and procedures prior to participating in any conduct hearing.

B. At the first meeting of the SCC, convened by the Dean or Assistant Dean of Students, a Chairperson (who must be a faculty member) and Vice-Chairperson (who must be a student) will be elected. The Chairperson is a nonvoting member except in a tie. All terms will be for one academic year.

C. The Dean of Students serves as a non-voting advisor to the SCC, who oversees the procedure and provides information, ensuring that processes are followed, and the rights of students and other AUBG community members are preserved.

III. Administrative Hearing before the Student Conduct Council

The SCC Chairperson shall apprise the student of all evidence and s/he shall have a reasonable opportunity to prepare her/his defense before the hearing.

A. Hearing Preliminaries

1. The SCC Chairperson shall make arrangements for keeping a video- or audio-recorded record of the proceedings of the Council hearing. In case of appeal, the student(s) may have access to the recordings in the Dean's Office for purposes of review relating to the appeal. Such recordings shall be kept by the Office of the Dean of Students together with all records of all hearings until all rights to appeal have been exhausted, at which time such recordings will be destroyed. These recordings will be deemed to be Student Education Records and may not be disclosed publicly. The Chairperson is ultimately responsible for maintenance of records.
2. The hearing shall normally be open but it may be closed at the request of the accused student or the complainant. The SCC Chairperson may also close the hearing - or any portion - in order to protect witnesses or other parties.
3. If the student or the complainant is not present at the hearing, the Council shall first attempt to determine the reason for that person's absence. The Council may proceed in a normal manner, may hear only a portion of the testimony, and adjourn to a later date, or may continue the entire hearing at a later date. The Council may not consider the absence of a party as relevant to whether the accused committed the alleged violation(s).
4. Misrepresentation, including false or incomplete statements, made by the student or the complainant will be seen as a policy violation and may be grounds for more serious sanctions.

B. Hearing Procedures

1. The examination and hearing procedures will include:
2. The opportunity for both the student accused and the complainant to call one character witness (character witness to be defined as a witness who has no knowledge of the incident under examination but instead is acquainted personally with the party who calls her or him);
3. The opportunity for both the student accused and the complainant to be accompanied at all times during the hearing by a member of the AUBG community who will not appear as a witness. This person will not speak for the party but instead will act as advisor or support person. For the purpose, AUBG community means another student or member of the faculty or staff.
4. All parties will make available to the Council and to each other a list of the names of witnesses they intend to call and photocopies of all written statements or other documents they intend to use at the hearing. These copies must be provided to the chair of the Council and to the parties min. 1 day before any hearing.
5. An impartial interpreter may assist the Council, the parties, and the witnesses during the hearing.
6. All witnesses will remain outside the hearing room until after they have given their testimony. No witness (including character witnesses) will be allowed to hear any part of the hearing until his or her appearance is finished.

7. At any time during the proceedings, members of the Council may question witnesses or parties to the proceeding.
8. The student should be given an opportunity to testify and to present evidence and witnesses. S/he should have an opportunity to hear and question adverse witnesses. In no case should the SCC members consider statements against her/him unless the student has been advised of their content and of the names of those who made them, and unless the student has been given an opportunity to rebut unfavorable inferences that might otherwise be drawn.
9. Responsibility for recognizing and permitting persons to speak lies exclusively with the Chairperson.
10. Persons disruptive to any stage of the hearing may be evicted at the discretion of the Chairperson.
11. During the hearing the Council may consider any relevant information, shall not be bound by the strict rules of legal evidence, and may take into account information that is of value in determining the issues involved. Efforts will be made to obtain the most reliable information available.
 - If the student defendant or person supporting the complaint against the student claims that evidence was improperly obtained, the burden of proof that it was improperly obtained must rest with the person so charging. Evidence proven to have been improperly obtained shall be disregarded and dismissed by the Council.
 - The Council may not consider information obtained directly or indirectly through a search of student's person, effects, or room without her or his permission, unless obtained pursuant to a warrant. If specific permission has been previously obtained from the President of AUBG, student(s) rooms shall not be entered unless one occupant is present, and it should not be searched until every possible effort has been made to procure the attendance of the student(s) whose possessions are to be searched. The student(s) must be informed for the reasons for entry or search.
 - Nothing in this section shall be deemed to prohibit routine inspection or maintenance of a student's room; and nothing in this section shall be deemed to prohibit forcible entry of any place or constraint of any person in order to prevent harm or damage to person or property when made with reasonable belief that such damage or harm is occurring, has just occurred, or is about to occur.
12. After all parties have presented their respective information, the Council shall go into closed session to determine whether the student has committed the alleged violation and, if so, the sanction(s) to be imposed. A member should vote against the accused student only if convinced by a clear preponderance of the information presented that the accused student has committed the act(s) as charged. Decisions are determined by a majority vote.
13. The Council vote on the disposition of the matter will be by secret ballot. The Chairperson and the Vice-Chairperson are responsible for counting the ballots.
14. After making its decision, the SCC Chair shall inform the President and the student in writing of the disposition of the case as soon as possible. Any disciplinary sanctions imposed by the Council shall be operative immediately upon notification, unless otherwise specified, or

unless the student appeals the decision. In this case, the sanctions will be stayed unless deemed necessary for protection of the student or other persons.

15. The notice to the student of the finding of the Council shall include:

- The charges are found to be true or not true.
- The disciplinary sanction to be taken.
- The student's right to appeal and the expiration date for the filing of that appeal.
- Minority report and recommendations, if any.

Some possible sanctions are:

- a disciplinary warning;
- revocation of privileges for a certain amount of time;
- bar from living in the residence halls;
- bar from dining services;
- disabling of computer account;
- bar from participation in the Commencement Ceremony;
- bar from participating in University service (Student Assistant positions, etc.)
- fines for damages;
- community service;
- disciplinary probation (can be combined with other sanctions);
- suspension for a semester or a year,
- disciplinary dismissal
- expulsion.

The following factors should be considered when determining the appropriate sanction:

- level of intent,
- extent of harm or actual damage,
- level of honesty and cooperation.

IV. Right of Appeal beyond the Student Conduct Council

A. In the event a student is disciplined by the SCC, the student may request a review by the President or her/ his designee. Such a request for review must be made within seven calendar days of notification of the imposition of the sanction. The appeal shall be in writing and limited to:

- Review of the procedures followed.
- Appropriateness of the sanction.

B. In the event the defendant produces new evidence, the President shall determine whether the evidence warrants a new hearing by the Council.

The President may not impose a more severe sanction. The decision of the President or her/his designee shall be final and shall be communicated to the student in the same manner as set forth above.

A record of the final disposition of the case should go to the Dean of Students who will inform others, if appropriate.

Director of Residence Life

The Director of Residence Life has direct oversight of all fineable offenses. Students committing fineable offenses may also be referred to Conduct Council at the Director's discretion.

Sexual Harassment and Discrimination Hearing Panel

The Sexual Harassment and Discrimination Hearing Panel (SHDHP) hears cases of reported sexual harassment, sexual violence, incitement to sexual violence, and interference with University staff providing support services to sexual violence and harassment victims.

The SHDHP is comprised of seven members and three alternate members:

- **two faculty members**, nominated by the Faculty Assembly, each of whom has served as a University instructor for a minimum of one year previous to SHDHP membership; **one alternate faculty member** who meets the same criteria;
- **three students**, selected by the Student Government, who are of sophomore standing or higher, have no recorded infractions of conduct codes or of academic integrity, are not currently on disciplinary or academic probation, and are not currently under review by the SHDHP; **and one alternate student member** who meets the same criteria. The SHDHP has the right to suspend or dismiss from the Panel a member who has been convicted of a violation of University rules.
- **two staff members** who have been employed by the University for a minimum of one year previous to Council membership; and **one alternate staff member** who meets the same criteria.

At the first meeting of the SHDHP, convened by the Dean or Assistant Dean of Students, a Chairperson (who must be a faculty or a staff member) and Vice-Chairperson will be elected. The Chairperson is a nonvoting member except in a tie. All terms will be for one academic year.

Members of the SHDHP will be trained in both University sexual harassment and assault policies and procedures and in EU and US laws and best practices pertaining to the investigation of sexual harassment and assault cases on university campuses; this training will be completed before any member hears a case as part of the hearing panel.

There are **three Sexual Harassment Complaint Facilitators**, including the Dean of Students, the Dean of Faculty and one faculty or staff member. They serve as points of contact and guide students through the reporting process, offering assistance and support. Complaint Facilitators do not vote on the Hearing Panel.

Students seeking assistance in filing an official report of sexual harassment, sexual violence, or incitement to sexual violence must reach out to one of the Sexual Harassment Complaint Facilitators, whose responsibility will be to guide the student through the complaint, hearing, and appeals processes and who can accompany the reporting student throughout the process.

The SHDHP will follow strict procedures designed to ensure the safety and privacy of both the victim and the accused in any case brought before it. Detailed policies, including definitions of sexual harassment and sexual violence, can be found in the Sexual Harassment and Violence portion of this Handbook. Detailed and up-to-date information on the hearing process, including the Sexual Misconduct reporting Form, can be found in the [AUBG Student Hub](#).

CAMPUS-WIDE POLICIES

Below is a list of AUBG policies the violation of which will result in financial and/or judicial sanctions. Each entry contains detailed policy description, referral to additional policy information (if applicable), the type of sanction imposed for violation, and the sanctioning body (if applicable).

Academic Integrity

All academic policies are published in the AUBG Undergraduate Catalog and on the University website. Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with these policies, including those on academic standing, course attendance, fees, grading, graduation requirements, and registration procedures.

Students are also responsible for maintaining the highest standards of academic honesty by adhering to all University guidelines for academic integrity. For detailed policies, including violation levels and minimum sanctions, see the University website and the Academic Integrity portion of the Undergraduate Catalog.

Alcohol

The legal drinking age for purchasing and consuming alcoholic beverages in Bulgaria is 18 years old. On AUBG grounds – in the residence halls, the other campus buildings and outdoors – alcohol may be consumed in a social setting and in moderation, provided all other policies, such as Consideration Hours (for residence halls), Quiet Hours, and the no-smoking policy are followed, proper conduct is maintained, and non-alcoholic beverages are offered, too.

The use of alcoholic beverages on University property shall be planned, requested, and controlled through the University Dining Services or Residence Life. The use of alcoholic beverages in Residence Halls not controlled through Dining Services or Residence Life will be considered not in compliance with campus procedures.

The common areas in the residence halls may be used for parties or other student group activities that include moderate consumption of alcohol in a social setting only if the Residence Hall Director has granted permission through a Party Permit. The Party Permit holder, whether an individual or a student organization, will be deemed the event Host and will be held responsible for any violations of these and other University policies during the event.

- **Judicial sanction:** assigned by Director of Residence Life, who may also refer incident to the Conduct Council.

Antennas and Cables

The residence halls are wired for all cables within the rooms. No cables or antennas may be attached to the outside of the building or through windows, hallways, or doorways to other rooms.

- **Financial sanction:** confiscation of item(s) and EUR 25 fine per person per incident.

Appliances

Bulgarian fire safety law forbids heaters and cooking appliances of all types in sleeping areas and bathrooms. The list of illegal appliances includes microwaves, toaster ovens, tea and coffee boilers, electric heaters (especially with open coils), hot plates, appliances operating on gas or flame, items with high electric output, and those with open electric wires.

Any other appliances (e.g., irons, curling irons, hot pots, lamps, extension cords) in residence hall rooms are subject to approval by the Residence Hall Director. Students should show appliances to the Residence Hall Director upon check-in for inspection.

If your room is cold, please report it to the Residence Hall Director so that proper adjustments may be made. Do not use space heaters.

- **Financial sanction:** confiscation of item(s) and EUR 25 fine per room.

Balconies/Ledges

No items may be thrown from balconies. Violations will be referred to the Director of Residence Life for appropriate sanction.

Smoking is allowed on the Skaptopara balconies or decks only where ashtrays are provided. (If students do not use the ashtrays, this privilege may be revoked.) For your safety, please be careful while on the balconies.

Food, shoes and other items are not allowed on the outside room ledges.

- **Financial sanction:** EUR 25 per person per incident plus additional assigned by the Director of Residence Life.

Bicycles

There are bike racks outside the Skaptopara halls. Students may store bicycles only in these areas, not in the lounge areas, locked to heaters, or in corridors. Bicycles may not be brought into bedrooms unless tires are cleaned first and there is space in the room for storage.

- **Financial sanction:** EUR 25 per incident.

Damage to Non-residential Facilities

Damages cause an increase in student bills and often interrupt services. Damage will be classified as either *accidental* or *malicious*. Accidental damage occurs through unintentional, chance events. Restitution will be assessed for accidental damage and charged to the student's account. Malicious damage is intentional, including but not limited to damage resulting from alcohol use or disruptive behavior. Malicious damage charges will be assessed to students involved and judicial procedures will follow.

No waivers, scholarships, or University funds will be applied for student damages.

- **Financial and Judicial sanctions:** Conduct Council. Minimum sanction: cost of replacement or repair, EUR 25 per person per incident, plus additional as assigned. Violations may also be referred to the Blagoevgrad Police for criminal proceedings.

Damage to Residential Facilities

It is the residents' responsibility to care for the condition of their individual rooms and bathrooms. Residents are held financially and legally responsible during their occupancy for the condition of their individual rooms and assigned items. The janitorial staff will clean public areas including bathrooms, gyms, computer labs, corridors, and elevators.

To avoid damage charges in Skaptopara rooms, do not use nails, staples, glue, tape, adhesive, tacks, nails, on walls.

- do not drag boxes, furniture, or other abrasive items across the carpets and tiles.
- do not dry clothing on wood surfaces, over carpeting, or outside room windows; use drying racks in the bathrooms.
- put toilet paper in the trash bins, not in the toilet, to prevent septic system clogs on the Skaptopara campus.
- do not make structural modifications to residence hall facilities, including painting.

Charges for damage to individual student rooms and doors will be assessed immediately upon the determination of the cost of repairs or replacement and will be assigned to the individual responsible for the damage. When no individual can be identified, charges will be assigned to all occupants of the room or area where the damage occurred.

After room checkout at the end of each semester, a damage bill will be given to the Accounting Office for all missing items and damages to individual rooms. Students desiring to know this amount prior to leaving must speak with their Residence Hall Director at checkout. Students wishing to appeal damage/charges may send a written appeal to the Residence Hall Director within two weeks of the close of each semester.

No waivers, scholarships, or University funds will be applied for student damages.

- **Financial and Judicial sanctions:** cost of replacement, repair, and/or clean up plus EUR 25 per person per incident. Violations may also be referred to the Blagoevgrad Police for criminal proceedings.

Disruptive Behavior

Acts that compromise the physical facilities, the peace, safety, and/or health of other residents, or the educational purposes of the University are prohibited. Some disruptive acts contravene additional University policies and will receive multiple cumulative sanctions. Disruptive behavior includes physical or verbal abuse, assault, harassment, threats, excessive noise, destruction, public intoxication, and boisterousness.

Disruptive behavior also includes the willful disruption of class proceedings, including but not limited to: repeatedly entering and exiting the classroom without permission of the Instructor; arriving late to and/or leaving early without the permission of the Instructor; persisting in

speaking or otherwise interrupting class proceedings without being recognized by the Instructor; behaving in any way that poses a reasonable threat to the physical, mental, or emotional safety of other persons in the classroom; or otherwise interfering with an Instructor's ability to manage the classroom environment or learning experience. Faculty may have course-specific sanctions for such disruptive behaviors; however, Faculty have the right to pursue sanctions through the Conduct Council.

- **Judicial sanction:** Conduct Council. Violations may also be referred to the Blagoevgrad Police for criminal proceedings.

Drugs and Other Prohibited Substances

The possession and/or use of illicit drugs and drug-related paraphernalia on campus is strictly forbidden by University policy. The possession and/or use of illicit drugs and drug-related paraphernalia is also strictly forbidden by Bulgarian law.

Drug-related paraphernalia includes, but is not limited to: hookahs, bongs, syringes (except as part of prescribed medical treatment), glass pipes, water pipes, chillums, and freebase kits.

Students found to be possessing, using and/or distributing illicit drugs will be removed from campus housing. Such students are liable to further University disciplinary sanction and will be referred to the Security Office, Student Conduct Council. Violations may also be referred to the Blagoevgrad Police for criminal proceedings.

- **Judicial sanction:** removal from housing plus additional from Student Conduct Council.

Evacuations

Students are required to comply with all evacuations, including fire drills. Periodic fire drills will occur to teach safe evacuation techniques.

- **Financial sanction:** EUR 100 fine per person per incident.

Events

Students must request a space booking and/or obtain an event approval or a party permit for any event gathering of more than five people occurring on campus property. Event approvals and party permits for the residence halls can be obtained through the Office of Residence Life.

The Party Permit holder, whether an individual or a student organization, will be deemed the event Host and will be held accountable for any and all violations of University policy and Bulgarian law during the event that are committed by event organizers or guests. Such violations will be prosecuted separately from a failure to obtain a Party Permit.

All parties, functions, and events must end by *Quiet Hours*.

- **Judicial sanction:** EUR 100 fine per event plus additional as assigned by Director of Residence Life, who may also refer incident to Conduct Council.

Event approvals and booking regulations for venues outside the residence halls are overseen by various offices in charge of the respective venues. Detailed information and up-to-date procedures can be found in the [‘How to Organize an Event’](#) section of the Student Hub.

Fire Safety

Fire alarms: Any student who, due to malicious intent, causes a false alarm in the Residence Halls is endangering the lives of others.

- **Judicial sanction**: the first violation will result in suspension for one semester; the second violation will result in expulsion.

Fire safety equipment: Improper use of fire fighting, detection, and/or alarm equipment is prohibited.

- **Judicial and financial sanctions**: EUR 100 fine per person per incident and immediate removal from on-campus housing.

Flames in University buildings: Ignition of combustible materials for the purpose of cooking, heating, lighting, or display is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, the use of candles, matches, tobacco products, and incense.

- **Financial sanction**: EUR 25 per person for first violation; EUR 100 per person for subsequent violations.

Flammable materials: Furniture, decorations, and other items that are easily flammable in the resident's room or public area may be prohibited at the discretion of the Residence Hall Director. Cloth or other flammable materials should not be placed on, over, or near light bulbs. Fire safety inspections may be made without notice in residence halls and student rooms.

The use of or possession of firecrackers, fireworks, gunpowder, fusion caps, primers, chemicals, sparklers, or any type of explosives on University property is strictly banned.

- **Financial sanction**: EUR 50 per person for first violation; EUR 100 per person for subsequent violations.

Floor Sports

Residents are prohibited from participating in any outside activity indoors. Residence halls are not to be used for indoor tennis, Frisbee, golf, basketball, in-line skating, skateboarding, or other activities that could be injurious to residents or cause damage.

- **Financial sanction**: EUR 35 per person per incident, with a subsequent increase to EUR 75, and EUR 150 of repeated offenses.

Furniture

University furniture and plants are not to be moved from rooms or common areas without the permission of the Residence Hall Manager. No University furnishings may be taken off-campus.

Student room inspections may be periodically made for missing lounge furniture.

- **Financial sanction**: EUR 25 per person per item.

Gambling

Gambling that violates any Bulgarian or US law is prohibited in residence halls. This includes internet gambling in violation of OCC rules.

- **Financial sanction**: EUR 35 per person incident, with a subsequent increase to EUR 75, and EUR 150 of repeated offenses.

- **Judicial sanction:** Conduct Council. Violations may also be referred to the Blagoevgrad Police for criminal proceedings.

Harassment, Intimidation, and Discrimination

No student may make a person or group feel harassed, intimidated, or discriminated against or in any way create a hostile or unwelcome living/learning environment through any action, written or spoken word, sound, or public display of visual material.

Harassment is defined as any behavior, or creation of an environment, that undermines an individual's ability to study, work, or otherwise participate in the University community by causing persistent or pervasive distress.

Intimidation is defined as any action or implication, by word or deed, that is intended to make another individual fearful for their physical, mental, or emotional safety.

Discrimination is defined as the unfair treatment of any individual or group based on or referring to an individual's sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender expression, race, ethnicity, nationality, socio-economic position, religion, age, body shape, or physical ability.

Harassment, intimidation, and discrimination constitute a violation of policy whether occurring on campus, off campus, or in an online environment.

Note that many forms of harassment, intimidation, and discrimination – including, but not limited to, incidents of hate speech, incitement to hatred or violence, stalking, and defacement of student property – violate additional University policies and will be prosecuted and sanctioned accordingly.

Any student who interferes with a University community member engaging to protect a victim of harassment, intimidation, or discrimination will be prosecuted for *Violence and Endangering Others*.

- **Judicial sanction:** minimum probation for one semester plus additional as assigned by the Student Conduct Council; violations that incite or threaten violence will also be prosecuted for *Violence and Endangering Others*. Violations may also be referred to the Blagoevgrad Police for criminal proceedings.

Housekeeping

Residents are expected to maintain a level of cleanliness in their rooms and the common areas that is compatible with health and safety standards. In addition, the University reserves the right to amend these expectations for specific rooms in order to ensure reasonable compatibility between roommates.

Residence Hall staff may enter rooms without notice if a written complaint has been filed concerning health and safety issues in a room.

- **Financial sanction:** cost of cleaning and repair plus EUR 25 per person per incident.

Intellectual Property

No class, official University function, Student Organization meeting, or other University-sponsored event or forum may be recorded without the explicit permission of the individual or organization in charge of said class, meeting, event, or function.

- **Judicial violation:** confiscation and destruction of recording plus additional as assigned by Conduct Council.

Interference

The University places the highest priority on the safety of its students and community members and has processes and procedures in place to ensure that safety. Any student who interferes with a University community member engaging to protect a victim of harassment, intimidation, discrimination, incitement to hatred or violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, violence, or threats of violence will be prosecuted for *Endangering Others*

- **Judicial sanction:** minimum one semester suspension plus additional as assigned by Conduct Council.

Marketing Materials Policy and Guidelines

Approval and Stamping Requirement for Posters and Flyers

All posters and flyers must be stamped in a visible place by the Office of the Dean of Students before they may be posted. The approval requirements vary by event organizer:

- **Faculty:** Posters created by faculty receive automatic approval but must still be stamped.
- **Staff:** Posters created by staff must be approved by their respective department chair or manager before being stamped.
- **Students:** Posters created by students must first be reviewed and approved by the Office of the Dean of Students before being stamped.
- **External Stakeholders/Non-University Events:** Posters and flyers created by external stakeholders, including those advertising local events, services, or other marketing materials not related to University activities, must be reviewed and approved by the Office of the Dean of Students before being stamped. If the text is in Bulgarian, a short summary of the essential information in English must also be included.

Distribution of Commercial Flyers

The distribution of flyers for local commercial services is strictly limited to the Residence Halls and requires prior approval from the Residence Life Director. Distribution in any other campus location is not permitted.

Placing of Stickers

Stickers may be placed on any University-owned surface only with prior written permission from the Dean of Students and in coordination with the Facilities Office, or with the Residence Life Office if located in the Residence Halls.

Social Media Visuals

Digital materials undergo the same approval procedure as printed ones. They must comply with AUBG's Social Media Guidelines and Policies.

Required Content:

- **Event Ownership:** The organizer or sponsoring entity of any advertised event must be clearly indicated on the poster, flyer, or other promotional material.

Prohibited Content

Posters and other Promotional may not contain:

- **Offensive or discriminatory material:** Any sort of discrimination, racism, sexism, homophobia, or hate speech.
- **Explicit content:** Vulgar language, obscene images, pornography, or sexually explicit material.
- **Violence or threats:** Promotion of violence, harassment, or threats.
- **Illegal activities:** Promotion of drugs and any illicit substances, alcohol consumption, or unlawful actions.
- **False information:** Misinformation or misleading content.
- **Political Campaigning:** Endorsement of political parties, candidates, or partisan activities.
- **Religious Proselytizing:** Materials intended to promote, endorse, or attempt to convert others to specific religious beliefs or practices.

Locations for Posting

- Materials may be posted only on the cork bulletin boards with pins, or on glass walls and windows with easy-to-remove tape or adhesive pads.
- For posting materials in the glass case in front of the Carl Djerassi Theater, please coordinate with the Dean of Students Office and the Office of Events, Communications, and Marketing.
- Materials may not be posted on painted walls, glass doors, elevators, or wooden paneling. Exceptions may apply for large-scale campaigns upon coordination with the Dean of Students Office and the Office of Communications and Marketing.
- Locations for posting materials in the 'Griffin Café' and the 'Griffin Canteen' must receive additional approval by the respective managers.

Removal

- Upon expiration of the approval, event organizers must remove the posters (and tape).
- Posters without stamps will be removed immediately.

Sanctions for policy violation

- **Financial:** cost of removal and/or repair plus EUR 10 per item or up to EUR 100 per organization.
- **Alternative:** based on the individual case.

Noise

The University has an obligation to sustain an atmosphere of study and rest for students in their individual rooms. Noise emanating from any student's room or common area must not be sufficient to disturb students in adjacent rooms. This provision is in effect 24/7, not just during assigned quiet hours.

Consideration of others is expected 24 hours a day. Students are expected to respect the needs of other residents, specifically, the need to live in an environment with minimum distraction

from academic pursuits. Residents should curtail at all times social or recreational activities that infringe on others' rights, without being asked. This would include use of musical instruments, loud music, or excessive talking at high volumes at times other than the stated quiet hours. Students should talk with neighbors about the appropriateness of such activities in order to create a community living environment. If asked by another student or Resident Assistant to abstain from an activity, students should be considerate and cooperative.

- **Financial sanction:** EUR 35 per person per incident, with a subsequent increase to EUR 75, and EUR 150 of repeated offenses assigned by the Resident Hall Director with the right to appeal to the Director of Residence Life.

Online Postings

Students are required to respect the dignity and privacy of all University community members online as well as on campus as part of University policies on online citizenship. Posting or otherwise sharing information that depicts other individuals in ways that are explicitly degrading is prohibited. Posting or otherwise sharing information that violates another individual's rights to privacy is prohibited.

Violations may also qualify for prosecution under University policies on harassment, discrimination, intimidation, sexual harassment and violence, incitement to hatred or violence, or violence. For information on the posting of explicitly sexual content, see the **Sexual Harassment and Violence** portion of this handbook.

- **Judicial sanction:** minimum probation for one semester plus additional as assigned by Conduct Council. Violations may also be referred to the Blagoevgrad Police for criminal proceedings.

Pets

Pets in residence halls constitute a health hazard and are not permitted in campus buildings under Bulgarian law. Any pets found must be removed immediately.

Dogs, cats, or other stray animals living outside the residence halls should be reported to the Director of Residence Life, who will see to their removal. Please do not encourage their stay by feeding them.

- **Financial sanction:** EUR 25 per person per incident.

Quiet Hours

No noise may emanate from any room or common area in the Residence Halls during the following hours:

- 11:00 p.m. until 8:00 a.m., Sunday through Thursday
- 1:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m., Friday through Saturday and during fall and spring breaks

This is applicable to all Residence Halls. Residents in an individual hall may choose to lengthen this time, but no reductions will be allowed.

Final Exam Quiet Hours

Quiet Hours will be in effect 24/7 beginning the night before final exam week begins and continuing through the entire check-out period.

- **Financial and Judicial sanctions:** EUR 35 per person per incident, with a subsequent increase to EUR 75, and EUR 150 of repeated offenses plus additional sanctions as assigned by the Conduct Council or the Director of Residence Life.

Secure Access

- University ID cards provide access to residence hall accommodation and the main academic buildings. Students must keep their ID cards with them at all times. Students may not give or loan access cards to any person for any reason.
- Judicial sanction: Conduct Council.

Self-harm

The University takes self-harm and attempts to self-harm very seriously. Students who self-harm or are considering self-harming can receive medical assistance and counseling at any time; in moments of crisis, students are encouraged to seek immediate help through one of the University Safe Spaces and/or by contacting medical and counseling services, senior Residence Life staff, or the Dean of Students.

Students who learn that a fellow student is self-harming or attempting to self-harm should also immediately contact these services or staff members.

Every attempt will be made to ensure the safety of students who are engaging in self-harming. This may include removal from on-campus housing, and all cases will be dealt with in accordance with Bulgarian law to ensure the student's immediate safety and long-term wellbeing.

Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence

No forms of sexual harassment or sexual violence will be tolerated by the University. Please see the **Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence** portion of this Handbook for detailed policies, including definitions and mandatory minimum sanctions.

- **Judicial sanctions:** minimum suspension for one year and mandatory reeducation for sexual harassment violations; mandatory expulsion and lifetime ban from all University properties and functions for acts of sexual violence, plus additional as assigned by the Sexual Harassment and Assault Panel.

Sexual Privacy

The sharing of sexual materials without the consent of all parties depicted is absolutely prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, visual, audio, or written materials that depict sexual activities. All persons depicted in sexual materials have the right to revoke consent to the sharing of those materials at any time; the refusal to remove such materials from circulation once consent is revoked is also prohibited. Violations of this policy will be sanctioned as a form of *Incitement to Sexual Violence*.

- **Judicial sanction:** mandatory expulsion and lifetime ban from all University properties and functions, plus additional as assigned by the Sexual Harassment Hearing Panel.

Skateboards, In-Line Skates, and Rollerblades

Rollerblades, in-line skates, and skateboards destroy floors and are not to be worn or used inside any campus building. Please put on skates outside the building.

- **Financial and judicial sanction:** cost of repair plus EUR 25 per person per incident and additional as assigned by the Director of Residence Life or the Student Conduct Council.

Smoking (incl. e-smoking and vaping)

Under Bulgarian law, smoking is prohibited on all University indoor premises, including all offices, classrooms, laboratories, rest rooms, the library, the theatre, auditoriums, conference rooms, dining facilities, lobbies, corridors, and residence halls. Smoking includes the use of e-cigarettes and vaping.

Balconies and decks are smoking areas only where an ashtray is present. Please be considerate and do not leave cigarette butts around or stub out cigarettes on the walls and benches.

- **Financial and Judicial sanctions:** EUR 35 for first violation, with a subsequent increase to EUR 75, and EUR 150 of repeated offenses, plus additional sanctions as assigned by Student Conduct Council or the Director of Residence Life. Hosts of gatherings where smoking occurs will be fined EUR 100 for the first violation and EUR 200 for the second violation. Any subsequent violation will lead to additional sanctions imposed by the Director of Residence Life or the Student Conduct Council.

Theft and Vandalism

The University has no legal liability for thefts. Students should use caution in bringing any valuables to campus. Please close and lock all doors and also all windows on the ground floor of campus buildings.

Theft or vandalism of University property is prohibited and will be punished severely. Students apprehended for damaging University property will be held financially and legally responsible.

Theft of individual or University property will be handled by the Security Office and the local police, in addition to being referred to Conduct Council. Students should report any concerns to the guards as soon as detected. University Security will handle investigations with the assistance of local police.

- **Financial and Judicial Sanction:** Conduct Council. Theft of cash, electronics, jewelry, or other object(s) valued over EUR 20 will result in a minimum sanction of suspension for one semester. Violations may also be referred to the Blagoevgrad Police for criminal proceedings.

Throwing Objects

Throwing objects out of windows or from balconies, roofs, or decks poses a serious danger to passersby, in addition to littering the campus. No incident of throwing objects in this manner will be tolerated.

- **Financial and Judicial sanctions:** EUR 100 per person per incident plus additional as assigned by Conduct Council. Violations may also be referred to the Blagoevgrad Police for criminal proceedings.

Unauthorized Entry

Entering rooms assigned to other students, faculty or staff offices, or any other restricted area (such as mechanical rooms, guard desks, cleaning storages, or performance spaces) without

appropriate authorization is prohibited. Unless there is a declared emergency, students are also prohibited from exiting or entering buildings through windows or through alarmed exit doors.

Students who have been banned from campus spaces by University personnel or disciplinary bodies and return to campus without the explicit permission shall be sanctioned under this policy and, depending upon the cause of campus expulsion, may also be prosecuted for *Endangering Others*.

- **Financial and Judicial sanctions:** EUR 100 per person per incident plus additional as assigned by Conduct Council. Any student who harms or attempts to harm others will be immediately removed from housing. Violations will be forwarded to the Security Office and the Dean of Students, and will be reviewed by the Conduct Council.

Violence or Threats of Violence:

- **Financial and Judicial sanctions:**
 - **Violence resulting in medical treatment:** minimum suspension for one year or dismissal.
 - **Threats of murder or incitement to murder:** immediate and permanent expulsion from the University and lifetime ban from all University properties and functions
 - **Actions that intentionally and directly endanger the lives of individuals:** immediate and permanent expulsion from the University and lifetime ban from all University properties and functions. Permanent **expulsion** from the University and **lifetime ban** from all University properties and functions. Violations may also be referred to the Blagoevgrad Police for criminal proceedings.

Weapons

Firearms, ammunition, hunting knives, martial arts equipment, Tasers, edged swords, and all other potentially dangerous weapons, munitions, and sporting equipment are not permitted on University property nor in vehicles parked on campus.

Financial and Judicial sanctions: confiscation of item(s), EUR 150 per object. Conduct Council. Violations may also be referred to the Blagoevgrad Police for criminal proceedings.

Violence and Endangering Others

No form of endangerment will be tolerated on the University campus. *Endangerment* includes, but is not limited to: violence or threats of violence, intentionally or unintentionally undermining the safety procedures and regulations of the University, and intentionally exposing University community members to serious communicable additional assigned by Conduct Council. Violations may also be referred to the Blagoevgrad Police for criminal proceedings.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The University's academic integrity policies and procedures are designed to ensure the fair and equitable resolution of all academic integrity issues across our community.

The transparency and rigor of these academic honesty standards is integral to academic engagement and intellectual freedom; promoting democratic values across the region of Southeast Europe and the world; and preserving the international reputation and recognition of

the degrees granted by this University, and thus the reputation and value of the achievements of its students, faculty, staff, and alumni.

Creating and maintaining an institution that values and adheres to the highest standards of academic integrity is the responsibility of the entire academic community. At AUBG, all students, instructors, and staff are expected to promote and engage in academic honesty by actively and rigorously upholding academic integrity policies and procedures.

All regulations pertaining to academic integrity can be found in the Undergraduate Catalog. All regulations in the catalog take precedence over any statement in the Student Handbook.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

The University will not tolerate any form of sexual harassment or sexual violence within its community. The policies set out below apply to all members of the University community, and the complaint procedures overseen by the Sexual Harassment and Assault Panel are equally available to all community members – students, faculty, and staff. There is no statute of limitations on reporting sexual harassment or violence.

All persons experiencing sexual harassment, sexual violence, or threats of sexual violence are strongly encouraged to seek help through appropriate offices, Safe Spaces, and support personnel so that the University can develop a campus culture of consent, respect, and safety.

VICTIM ASSISTANCE

The University will pursue disciplinary action in cases of sexual harassment or sexual violence or threats of sexual violence, regardless of the offender's status in the University community. Victims may elect to file a University complaint through the Dean of Students and/or pursue criminal charges through the Blagoevgrad police.

However, **the University will provide assistance to harassment and assault victims regardless of whether or not the victim chooses to file any form of formal complaint.** Victims can make confidential, verbal requests for assistance through any of the following offices and personnel: the Dean of Students, the Assistant Dean of Students, the Psychologists, the AUBG Physician, the Equal Opportunity and Accessibility Coordinator, trained Residence Life staff (i.e., the Head of Residence Life, Residence Hall Directors, and Senior Resident Assistants), and Security.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment of either employees or students is a violation of European Union and United States laws. It is the policy of the University that no member of the University community may sexually harass another.

In accordance with its policy of complying with non-discrimination laws, the University regards freedom from sexual harassment as an employee and student right. Violators of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action.

Sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, non-verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

- submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or education;
- submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis of academic or employment decisions affecting that individual; or
- such persistent and unwanted conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's academic or work performance or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive employment, educational, or living environment.

To assure a safe learning environment for all students, any sexual relationships between faculty members and students are prohibited. This prohibition applies to all faculty members and anyone in a teaching position at AUBG (including those at ELI and anyone teaching seminars, weekend, or summer courses), and to all students enrolled at the University whether part-time or full-time. "Sexual relationships" are relationships that are, or could be construed to be, of a sexual, romantic, amorous, and/or dating nature. These are not limited to personal physical or verbal contact, but can also include texting, messaging, phoning, email, social media posts, and so forth.

It is the policy of the University to ensure fair and impartial investigations that will protect the rights of the person(s) filing sexual harassment complaints, the person(s) complained against, and the University as a whole. In cases of sexual harassment, please contact one of the Sexual Harassment Complaint Facilitators.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND INCITEMENT TO SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Any person committing an act of sexual violence, or participating in the incitement to sexual violence, will be prosecuted.

Sexual violence is defined as having any form of sexual contact with another person without that person's consent, or as forcing a sexual contact upon another person through threat or coercion.

Consent is defined as positive cooperation due to an exercise of free will. Persons consenting must act freely and voluntarily and have active knowledge of the act or transaction at the time in which the act occurs.

- **Consent** cannot be inferred from silence, passivity, intoxication, or unconsciousness.
- **Consent** cannot be inferred from prior sexual activity or prior discussions of sexual activity.
- **Lack of consent** is presumed when a person is incapable of giving consent due to mental, developmental, or physical disability, or because they are below the legal age of consent.
- **Lack of consent** is presumed when there is a threat of violence.
- **Lack of consent** is presumed when there is an imbalance of power by the perpetrator over the victim, including physical, mental, or emotional intimidation.

Sexual contact is defined as contact with any part of another individual's body for the purposes of sexual arousal, sexual gratification, sexual abuse, or sexual intimidation. Contact is not determined by whether or not the point of contact is covered by clothing and includes, but is not limited to:

- coming into contact with another person's genitalia, genital area, breasts, or buttocks;

- forcing an individual to come into unwanted contact with another individual's genitalia, genital area, breasts, or buttocks; or
- forcing unwanted contact between another person's genitalia, genital area, breasts, or buttocks and an object.

Incitement to sexual violence includes, but is not limited to:

- direct encouragement that another person commits an act of sexual violence;
- implying in any way or under any circumstances that consent to sexual activity is unnecessary or that sexual violence can be “deserved”;
- depictions of an individual, or category of individual, as a victim of sexual violence in any way that encourages or otherwise positively depicts that sexual violence; and
- the sharing of an individual's personal information (e.g., picture, physical location, telephone number, online account information) within a sexualized or violent context that puts the individual at risk of being specifically targeted for intimidation, violence, or threats of violence.

For the purposes of sanctions, a distinction will be made between University definitions of *sexual battery* and *sexual assault*.

Sexual battery is here defined as sexual contact made briefly through clothing and that also does not involve any form of penetration (i.e., “groping”).

Sexual assault is here defined as any sexual contact that goes beyond the definition of sexual battery.

INTERFERENCE

Any student who interferes with a University community member engaging to assist or protect a victim of sexual harassment or violence will be prosecuted for *Violence and Endangering Others*.

SANCTIONING OF PERPETRATORS

Sexual Battery

Students convicted of sexual battery will face, at minimum, suspension from the University for one semester with mandatory reeducation in sexual harassment and assault policies required before being readmitted to the University campus, classes, events, or sponsored events, in addition to any other sanctions assigned by the Sexual Harassment and Assault Panel. Violations may also be referred to the Blagoevgrad Police for criminal proceedings.

Incitement to Sexual Violence

Students who incite any form of sexual violence will face, at minimum, suspension from the University for one semester with mandatory reeducation in sexual harassment and assault policies required before being readmitted to the University campus, classes, events, or sponsored events, in addition to any other sanctions assigned by the Sexual Harassment Hearing Panel. Violations may also be referred to the Blagoevgrad Police for criminal proceedings.

Sexual Assault

Students who commit any form of sexual assault will be immediately and permanently expelled from the University (with the cause for expulsion recorded on permanent University transcripts) and be subject to a lifetime ban from all University properties, events, and sponsored events, in addition to any other sanctions assigned by the Sexual Harassment Hearing Panel. Violations may also be referred to the Blagoevgrad Police for criminal proceedings.

For information on dealing with sexual assault or helping victims of sexual assault, contact the Office of the Dean of Students, Health and Well-being Center, the Equal Opportunity and Accessibility Office, the and/or the Sexual Harassment Complaint Facilitators.

The Office of the Dean of Students has prepared this handbook using the most accurate information available at the time of publication. All information is subject to change.

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