

# UWSA Positive Space Policy

Selected from the UWSA Policy Manual



## Article IX. Positive Space

### Section 9.01 Positive Space Policy

#### **Preamble**

The purpose of the UWSA Positive Space Policy is to foster and maintain a welcoming, safe, and inclusive environment committed in being free from barriers, harassment, abuse and all forms of oppression. This policy is intended for those who study, work, and otherwise participate in any aspect of UWSA operations and initiatives. The procedures attached to this policy supports victims first, and also support those who violate the policy through education, awareness, mediation, and shared community accountability. This policy strives to provide support and restoration for all involved through providing opportunities for growth and healing.

The scope of application of this policy is in effect for all UWSA employees, UWSA members, UWSA volunteers, community participants, and representatives of the UWSA upon commencement of their duties, and to all members of the public in UWSA service centers, spaces, programs, and events, including daily work environments and annual elections.

The Chief Operating Officer is responsible for the administration of this policy and its procedures. The Board of Directors is responsible for the continued review, enhancement, and development of its content through the Bylaws and Policy Committee on an ongoing basis. The UWSA will also review and adapt the policy through ongoing student and community consultations. This policy is intended to adapt and evolve, such as new and evolved conflicts occur.

The UWSA recognizes that the Positive Space Policy is a broad and evolving policy, and allocates the Positive Space levy to efforts that furthers organizational education, training, and outreach regarding the policy and its implications in the wider community.

The Positive Space Policy is supported by, and works in tandem with, the following:

- Human Rights Code of Canada
- Accessibility for Manitobans Act
- University of Winnipeg Respectful Work and Learning Environment Policy
- UWSA Code of Conduct
- UWSA Abuse Prevention Policy
- UWSA Acknowledgment of Responsibility contracts

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## *Definitions:*

For the purposes of this policy, a “Positive Space” is a space in which:

- The dignity of all participants is respected;
- Allows for respect and support for an individual’s well being in regards to their mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual aspects;
- Expectations regarding conduct are clearly communicated;
- There is acknowledgment of intersecting oppressions and the inherently oppressive nature of the institutions within which the UWSA functions (such as corporate law, the academy, and the state);
- Intentional steps are taken to create an equity of voice, participation, and outcomes among and for participants;
- Boundaries for acceptable behaviour are followed, including accepting responsibility for the consequences of breaching those boundaries;
- The dynamic nature of expectations, which are not static, and which may shift at the UWSA to accommodate the nuanced ways in which we learn together about systemic oppression and how and when policies must be flexible in order to serve their core function.

For the purposes of this policy, “Problematic Conduct” is defined as:

- Failure to meet expectations regarding Positive Space, including objectionable or unwelcome contact, commentary, or solicitation;
- Any instance of harassment, discrimination, or other violations of the Respectful Work and Learning Environment Policy; 22
- Any violation of the Human Rights Code of Canada

## **Policy Statement**

The UWSA prioritizes Positive Space, and will exercise due diligence in the safeguarding of its workplaces, study spaces, and community spaces through empathetic engagement, education, and accountability.

In order to maintain Positive Space Policy for its members, employees, and the public, the UWSA will address all instances of problematic behavior, and work with University of Winnipeg campus and community members in order to make reasonable accommodations, build relationships, and operate with integrity on behalf of its membership.

Implementation of this policy is governed by procedures outlined below.

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## Procedure

The protocol for addressing infringement of Positive Space Policy is:

1. The allegation or observation regarding problematic conduct will be brought to the immediate supervisor of the employee/representative/volunteer. The immediate supervisor will fill out an Incident Report and contact the Chief Operating Officer.
2. The Chief Operating Officer will conduct an internal investigation and meet with all relevant parties, including the individual responsible for the problematic conduct.
3. If the allegation or observation is criminal, or any individual's safety is threatened, emergency services will be contacted immediately.
4. If the allegation or observation relates to non-criminal conduct, the Chief Operating Officer will meet with the individual and provide a written outline regarding expectations for continued participation in UWSA initiatives, in consultation and collaboration with appropriate UWSA staff members and directors.
5. Such outline must include support for the victim(s), and also provide support for the offender(s) in order for growth and a restorative objective for all parties to heal and grow from identified conflict or policy violation.
6. If the conduct of the individual does not change to meet expectations outlined in the meeting with the Chief Operating Officer, suspension from UWSA spaces and events may result.
7. If suspension from UWSA spaces is not respected, or violated upon re-entry following a suspension, the individual may be suspended again, or suspended from all UWSA spaces and activities entirely, in perpetuity.
8. Suspended persons may schedule meetings with the Chief Operating Officer to discuss expectations or to review past conversations and written instructions, and the Chief Operating Officer may change or enforce barring decisions through Executive Director consultation, and with the approval of the Executive Committee.
9. The Chief Operating Officer will notify University of Winnipeg Security regarding all suspended persons. It is understood that persons suspended from the UWSA are not suspended from the greater University of Winnipeg Campus.
10. The Chief Operating Officer will be the internal lead on all complaints and liaise with administrators from other offices and organizations regarding outcomes, advocacy, and cases, and maintain an internal file.