Undergraduate Association Confidentiality Policy For Undergraduates on Standing Committees of the Faculty

In the process of serving as representatives on Standing Committees of the Faculty, undergraduates may be exposed to or have access to information which is not available to the student body as a whole. When presented with this information, it may be unclear exactly how confidential this information is, and who the student has permission to disseminate the information to. The purpose of this document is to create a set of “levels of confidentiality” which can be assigned to sets of information in order to make clear who the information can be shared with. This will in turn allow representatives to share information with their constituents and better represent their needs.

This policy applies to any document or information presented directly to the committee. Any set of information or documents should be considered by default completely confidential (Level 3). Undergraduate representatives should only share the contents of any potentially confidential information acquired in a committee with the consent of the committee chair.

When an undergraduate wishes to share a document which has confidential information with individuals who are not members of the given committee, they must submit a written request for approval to the chair of the committee. If the information that the undergraduate wishes to share is not contained in a document, they must produce a document themselves which lists the information they wish to share. In addition to the aforementioned document, every request must also contain the individuals or groups who the undergraduate rep wishes to share the information with.

After a request is submitted the chair can respond to the request with the level of confidentiality which they think is most appropriate. If a document is given a confidentiality level above 1, the chair should also include a brief statement attached explaining why this document is confidential.

In the case of this policy, it is important to understand confidentiality as being the degree of limitation around sharing a set of information. The confidentiality of each set of information, understandably, depends heavily on who is receiving the information. Relevance is a nebulous term which will be used in the coming descriptions. Information is considered relevant to an individual if it is necessary for them to carry out their duties and obligations to their constituents. Note that information which may be interesting, but not beneficial, is not covered under relevance.

What follows is a list of the confidentiality levels, and a brief description, intended to explain what can and cannot be done at each level.
Levels and Descriptions

Level 1

Level 1 information is to be freely distributed to any undergraduate or administrator. The Undergraduate Association prides itself on both its transparency and service to students, and with that in mind, all information that can reasonably be accessible to all should be accessible to all.

Level 2

Level 2 information can be distributed to anyone who is relevant with possible preference to those in a position of leadership. When information is shared with someone under Level 2 confidentiality, they must be informed that they do not have the right to further share said information.

Level 3

Level 3 information should not be shared with anyone, regardless of the circumstances. This designation is primarily intended to protect personal information of students, staff, or faculty, in addition to sensitive or incomplete data, and deliberations within committee meetings.

Additional Confidentiality Procedures

Breaches

Sometimes individuals and groups without authorization gain access to confidential information, even with a thorough confidentiality system in place. If this is believed to be the case, one should first alert the owner of that information, and second request that the unintended recipient delete the information. If an undergraduate representative is found responsible for knowingly distributing information in a manner that violates the above policy, they may be removed from the committee by the committee chair.