the Conway School

Graduate Program in Sustainable Landscape Planning + Design

STUDENT HANDBOOK 2025-2026

Updated 9/18/2025

Contents

1. Use of the Facilities and Campus Life **4**
Safety 4
Chores 4
Buildings and Grounds 5
Winter & Spring Project Record Keeping and Reimbursements 6
Students' Office Supplies 6
Waste 6
Drugs & Alcohol 7
Smoking 7
Visitors 7
Mental Well-Being, Stress, and Self Care 7
Counseling 8
Self-Care 8
Studio Culture and Team Dynamics 10

2. Core Courses & Organization of Academic Calendar **11**

3. Credits, Requirements, & Academic Policies **13**
Credit Allocation 13
Federal Credit Hour Definition 14
Individual Participation in Team Projects 14
Technical Documents 15
Presentations 15
Written Work 15
Academic Evaluation 16
Incomplete Work 16
Academic Status: In Good Standing, Not In Good Standing, and Probation 17
Attendance Expectations 17
Reinstatement 18
Financial Aid 18
Graduation Requirements 18
Master of Science Candidates 18
Non-Degree Option 19
Extensions 20
Conferring of Degrees 20
Graduation Celebration 20
Conferring of Degrees and Certificates of Study 20
Policy on Suspension & Dismissal 20

Behavioral Standards 21
Definitions 22
Fines and Restitution 22
Student Placement 22
Transcripts 23
Degree and Accreditation Status 23
Health Insurance/Immunizations 23
4. Library 25
Organization and Scope 25
Borrowing Procedures 25
5. Ethical Practices and Legal Compliance 26
Notice of Nondiscriminatory Policy 26
Hazing 26
Campus Security Policy 27
Disclosure of Personal Information 29
Disclosure of Student Records Policies and Procedures 29
Procedure to Inspect Education Records 29
Right of School to Refuse Access or Deny Copies 29
Fees 29
Types, Locations, & Custodians of Education Records 30
Disclosure of Education Records 30
Record of Requests for Disclosure 30
Correction of Education Records 31
Accurate Representation of Degree 31
Tuition Obligations and Refunds 32
Late Fees and Collection Costs 32
Tuition Obligations and Insurance 32
Title IV Credit Balance Policy 33
Return to Title IV Policy 34
Disability Accommodations 34
Universal Access 34
Absence Due to Religious Beliefs 34
Sexual Harassment Policy & Procedures 35
Policy 35
Procedures for Sexual Harassment Grievance 37
Veterans 43
7. Grievance Procedure 45

1. Use of the Facilities and Campus Life

Safety

Safety is a primary concern. During the first weeks of school, Conway staff will conduct a tour to familiarize students with exits, fire extinguisher(s), basic equipment, and other necessary information and appropriate practices. During the year, safe operation of complex equipment will be demonstrated before student use.

Chores

A long-standing tradition at Conway is that everyone participates in stewardship of our facility, for both economic and philosophical reasons. Although we hire someone to clean the studio and kitchen on a regular schedule, we need everyone to clean up after themselves and to share some housekeeping and administrative chores, rotating weekly. To operate efficiently in our limited space, we do need a certain degree of order and tidiness.

Most tasks rotate weekly and are identified on a weekly chore calendar posted in the building. Be aware of your upcoming duties; it's acceptable to trade chores with another person when needed. More than one person may be assigned to a task if it requires a larger commitment of time and energy. Sample chores include:

Kitchen
• Scrub sinks, wipe surfaces, return wandering dishes to the kitchen; make sure refrigerator and microwave ovens are clean; prod those who are not cleaning up after themselves.

Classroom
• Ring bell to begin classes, time presentations, greet guests.
• Organize the class meeting space, recruit help to stack chairs, clear tables, counters, shelves, etc.
• Set up classroom, as needed, for next use.

Studio
• Keep supplies and tools (pens, stapler, scissors, etc.) in order. Notify Dave of supplies that are running low.

Supplies/Printer Room
• Keep supplies and tools (pen, tape, stapler, scissors, etc.) in order. This is not a janitorial role; everyone is expected to leave the copy room clean and orderly after use. Discarded paper should be placed in proper receptacles, not left on tables or floor.

Buildings and Grounds

The school facilities need to be treated as your own. The last person leaving school for the day must turn off interior lights and ensure that the kitchen door and main entrance door are locked. When the last staff or faculty member leaves, the crash bars on the doors will be set to lock upon closure. If you are the last person to leave, please check both doors to be sure this has been done. Each person is expected to clean up after themself in a timely manner. Notify Campus Manager, Dave Weber (weber@csld.edu), of any malfunctions or problems.

Kitchen

The kitchen is used daily and for occasional school functions and is on public display to visitors; it needs to be kept clean and presentable. Please:

- put away all food (label and keep track of personal food in the refrigerator, cabinets, etc.);
- wash and put away all dishes and utensils;
- wipe clean the table, stove, microwaves, and any other surfaces used; dispose of leftovers;
- turn off and unplug counter appliances (toasters, coffeemakers, etc.) to avoid fire risk.

Leftover perishable food needs to be disposed of promptly. Do not leave any food out or unwrapped. The refrigerator must be cleared of personal groceries at the end of each week, and whenever space is needed for special events. Please limit the quantity of your food kept in the cabinets and refrigerator to no more than each day's lunch (and possibly dinner); these small storage spaces must be shared by up to 25 people daily.

Our kitchenware is for use here at school; do not take dishes or utensils home, or use them for holding pencils, plants, paint, or for any other non-food purposes.

Telephone

Use your own phone for most calls. Be considerate of those around you when making calls and consider moving to a location where your voice will be less disruptive. School telephones are for school-related use and emergencies only.

Cell Phone Use While Driving

It is the policy of the Conway School that employees, students, faculty contractors, and Trustees will not use a cell phone (for making or receiving calls or texts) while driving for Conway School work or activities. This includes the use of hands-free devices. Please refer to the full policy here.

Official Mail

To send project-related mail, please ask the Campus Manager or a member of the faculty or staff for envelopes or boxes and postage and then leave your stamped, addressed item(s) in the Outgoing Mail basket in the administrative conference room or with a faculty member. If your mail is particularly time sensitive, please notify the Campus Manager or a faculty member

directly to find out whether you should plan to take the item to the post office instead of waiting for it to be picked up here at the school.

Printers, Scanners, & Copiers
Everyone needs to help keep the print room orderly. The school's copier is for use by students and staff and should be used for school copying only. Everyone will be trained in its use at the beginning of the school year. Consult the Campus Manager or one of the student IT specialists (chore to be assigned each term) if you encounter issues.

Computer Workstations
The school computer workstations are available for shared student use. Students should keep all documents on their own back-up disk if they are on the school's hard drive during the school term and should remove them from the workstation hard drive when projects are completed. All student work on hard drives will be erased at the end of each term and after June 30. Students are not to use staff computers.

Winter & Spring Project Record Keeping and Reimbursements

It is crucial that project expense records be kept accurately. Project budgeting and record keeping are required student project responsibilities, and a valuable part of your learning process. During winter and spring projects, you may incur expenses for which the school will provide reimbursement. These procedures will be reviewed at the beginning of the winter term.

Students' Office Supplies

Students sometimes need paper clips, staples, rubber bands, correcting fluid, glue, etc. Items students might need will be kept in either the print room or on the studio/classroom supplies shelf at the entrance to the classroom. Supplies are restocked as they get used up; notify Campus Manager when supplies are running low (not out). Do not borrow supplies from staff desks or from the administrative conference room.

Waste

Frequently during the year, students need to move on from rough drafts, initial sketches, and poor prints or photocopies to clean starts on new paper. We expect you to experiment, and to recycle some experiments, but unnecessary waste is costly, inefficient, and ultimately bad for the planet. Please learn to operate equipment properly and to use materials fully and well rather than devouring vast quantities of print paper, copy paper, trace, or anything else. Save and use scrap paper when you can. **Note:** Trace paper cannot be recycled and must be separated from other paper and put in the trash. When recycling paper, please fold it down to size instead of crumpling it as this saves a considerable amount of volume and cost.

Drugs & Alcohol

Neither drugs (except those prescribed by a physician) nor persons under the influence of drugs are allowed on school property or school-sponsored trips or events. The school prohibits the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs by students and employees on its property or as part of its activities. Adherence to this code is mandatory. The complete Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention Policy is distributed to all students on the first day of school; students are required to sign a copy indicating their intent to comply.

When alcoholic beverages are included at occasional social events and festivities, the school also provides non-alcoholic alternatives (and we suggest that students, when entertaining, do the same).

Smoking

Smoking or other tobacco use (vaping, dipping, etc.) is prohibited on the 88 Village Hill property (both indoors and outdoors), and in any school-owned or rented vehicle operated as part of the school's programming. Smokers are requested to smoke off the property and to dispose of their trash responsibly off of Conway School property.

Visitors

Visitors, with prior arrangement, are welcome so long as their presence does not disrupt classes, other students, academic progress, or functioning of the school. Visitors are welcome at school social events. *Please check with staff for current Covid-related policies first.

Mental Well-Being, Stress, and Self Care

There is a growing body of evidence showing an increased prevalence of anxiety and other stress-related conditions among both undergraduate and graduate college students. The Conway School, given the academic intensity and the intimate nature of its program, can be a stressful experience. Students may experience high levels of stress related to, for example, adjusting to the new environment, managing the academic workload, or meeting project deadlines. Although the Conway School is dedicated to providing all students with a rigorous graduate education, the school is also dedicated to doing so in a way that helps students manage new demands and supports their well-being.
Students are encouraged to approach faculty to talk through their experience with stress and other aspects of their mental and emotional well-being at any time. These conversations can help process challenges and are often beneficial to the student's overall learning trajectory during the

year. Because faculty are not trained mental health professionals, they may also recommend that students consider self-care strategies as well as external mental health services, such as those below. It is o.k. to use studio time for an appointment; faculty ask that students let them know in advance.

Counseling

Mental health counseling is appropriate and can be beneficial for everyone. Students can call their health insurance provider or use their provider's website to identify local therapists that will accept their insurance. Examples of local practices include the following:

- Valley Medical Group offers behavioral health services at multiple locations, including one located less than three miles from school in Florence (reachable by public transit). This practice accepts most health insurance plans.
- The Center for Women and Community (CWC) is located on the UMass Amherst campus and provides general counseling and specific counseling ("specific" meaning anxiety, depression, etc.) free of charge to anyone in Hampshire County (including international students). General counseling appointments are available 9:00 am – 5:00 pm Monday through Friday. CWC provides short term counseling (probably 3-4 sessions), but can then refer you to other providers in the valley. CWC specializes in serving women but all of their services are free and available to people of all gender identities and expressions. To schedule an appointment, students can call 413-545-0883. CWC also has a hotline if one needs/wants to talk to someone immediately (413-545-0800). They schedule appointments but also take walk-ins. The center is reachable via Bus B43 from Northampton to a stop near the Center at UMass.
- ServiceNet and CSO are two outpatient mental health clinics with locations in Northampton. Students can call these clinics (ServiceNet: 413-584-6855; CSO: 413-773-1314) or their health insurance company to see if they are covered. If there is a waitlist, if students are willing to schedule an appointment on Saturdays or are willing to travel outside of Northampton, the wait may be shorter.
- There are many therapists in private practice in the Northampton area. The cost for these services may be higher, but some of them may be more readily available to take on new clients. Psychology Today has a therapist finder option where one can browse a list of local therapists as well as filter by accepted insurance types and treatment specialty options.

Self-Care

The Conway School recommends that students practice self-care throughout their time at Conway. This will have a different meaning for each individual, but students might begin with the following:

- **Food:** Take the time to acquire and eat healthy food. Limit sugar, grease, alcohol, tobacco, and caffeine when possible, and drink lots of water. Take breaks during studio time to do so. See Local Resources document for lists of grocery stores, farmers markets, and other places to find fresh food. During the growing season, check out the Northampton Tuesday Farmers Market which takes place behind Thornes in downtown Northampton, or the Saturday market which takes place on Gothic Street downtown. Northampton's Winter Market takes place on Saturdays on Conz Street.
- **Sleep:** Sleep between 6-8 hours a night. All-nighters are often counterproductive. If you find that this is happening, please talk to a faculty member about prioritizing tasks and being efficient with your time. Try to maintain a consistent bedtime and wake-up time. It can help to have a bedtime "ritual" (e.g., mindfulness meditation [click here for free meditations], tea, gentle yoga practice [click here for a free video], etc.). Avoid using electronics for about an hour before bedtime. You might also establish a morning routine (e.g., mindfulness meditation, a short run, a hearty breakfast, etc.). Avoid checking your email or browsing your phone upon waking up.
- **Fresh Air:** Get outside. Take a walk during studio time, during breaks between classes, and/or at the beginning/end of the day. Take a walk down to the Mill River, through the neighborhood, to Smith, or in the dog park.
- **Disconnect:** Take time off of the internet. Take an evening a week to disconnect from the internet or from your computer entirely. During longer sessions of working on your computer, try to take breaks and focus on something far away in the distance.
- **Exercise**: Stroll down to the Mill River or conservation area directly west of the campus. Try out the nearby off-street **bike paths** (Norwottuck Rail Trail to Amherst, Manhan Rail Trail to Easthampton, and Mass Central Rail Trail to Williamsburg). For **local hikes**, check out DCR properties (such as Mt. Holyoke and Mt. Tom), city conservation areas (such as Fitzgerald Lake and Mineral Hills), Mass Audubon properties (such as Arcadia and Graves Farm), and Trustees properties (such as Chapel Brook, Chesterfield Gorge, and Bear Swamp, among many others). Take a **yoga class** at Yoga Sanctuary. Students have also joined gyms for the winter months. Pick-up volleyball and basketball games are coordinated by the Northampton Parks & Recreation Department.
- **Take a Creative Break:** Take a sketching break alone or with your classmates. In the past, students have held informal reading periods with coffee or tea before class one day a week. Doodle. Put your colored pencils to use. Pull some inspiring books from the library shelves and scan images that strike you.
- **Build in Social Time:** Allow yourself to take breaks with your classmates or other friends. See a show downtown, watch a movie, or share some coffee or tea downtown.
- **Trust the Process**: Acknowledge that you cannot become an expert in everything. Take notes, try your best, stay organized, and remember that this education is the beginning of a lifelong journey. Practice letting go instead of being attached to concepts or physical drawings. If you need to talk to someone, track down a faculty member for a chat. Our doors are always open.

Studio Culture and Team Dynamics

The Conway School program is intentionally small, and while that yields a strong sense of community and individualized support from faculty, it can also result in stress. We encourage collaboration between students, but ask that students be conscientious of other students' needs. To create a positive learning environment for everyone, we recommend the following:

- Be conscientious of other students' needs for a quiet workspace. Be aware of the volume of conversations in studio, and do not play music out loud.
- Maintain a clean workspace, and do not leave items scattered in shared areas (e.g., on classroom tables, bookshelves, etc.)
- If you have a question for a peer, ask them if they have time to help you in that moment, rather than demanding their time. Some students need longer stretches of uninterrupted work time, whereas others are less affected by frequent interruptions.
- Although we do encourage students to share their experiences with stress with one another, it's important to remember that stress can be contagious. Sharing frustrations and stress in the studio can negatively impact others' experience. You might use the conference room or outdoor areas to have these conversations.

During the winter and spring terms, students work in teams on projects. Because teammates spend a great deal of time together, during studio blocks, in class, and after school, tensions can run high. We encourage the following practices:

- Have a conversation with teammates about work habits, how they receive feedback, how they manage stress, learning goals, and communication. Check in frequently throughout the term, revisiting these topics.
- Keep in mind that everyone works at a different pace, and brings different strengths and weaknesses to the table. Try to support teammates as much as possible. If you feel frustrated, reflect on why you think you might be feeling that way; then, share your feelings with the group.
- Keep communication professional. Use respectful language and consider how others might interpret your language. When a teammate is struggling, sometimes just listening, allowing others their space to figure it out and offering to help can go a long way. Giving advice is often counterproductive especially if relationships are strained. You might ask, "how can I be helpful?" or "when you're ready let me know if there's something I can do to be helpful."
- Faculty encourage students to talk about team dynamics during weekly check-ins with faculty. Instead of compartmentalizing these seemingly personal issues, acknowledge that these dynamics are part of the design process. Talking about them early, as soon as they arise, can prevent higher levels of stress down the road.

2. Core Courses & Organization of Academic Calendar

Instruction, assignments, student presentations, studio work, and feedback are organized to dovetail with the development of each term's project. This scheduling results in a year with three terms, although they are not of even length.

TERMS I & II & III
Include:
• Ecological Design/Planning Workshop
• Ecology Class & Fieldwork
• Digital Design & Planning
• Humanities
• Site Analysis, Design, & Engineering

Student performance is demonstrated in written assignments; proposals and other professional writing; class participation and exercises; project development and completion; graphics; and regular presentations.

TERM I
Also includes: • Design Practice I: Site Design
Each student is responsible for researching, developing, presenting, and completing his/her individual design project.

TERM II
Also includes: • Design Practice II: First Community Project: Regional Plan
Students work in teams to complete one project that requires an extensive written report. The project usually focuses on broad-scale resource and land use assessment.

TERM III
Also includes: • Design Practice III: Second Community Project: Master/Site Plan
Students work in teams to develop a set of design documents which typically include construction details, grading plans, and planting plans.

Beginning the year: Fall orientation. School begins with four days of orientation field trips. Classes begin during orientation, including design exercises, site visits, presentation practice, and visits with professionals.

Program: Course work continues, carried out now in the classroom and at outdoor sites, and work begins almost immediately on individual projects. Terms 2 and 3 commence after

two-week breaks. Formal presentations for each term-long project are held several weeks before the end of the term to allow for incorporation of reviewers' suggestions.

Assessments take place throughout the year. The academic calendar has many sequenced milestones in project development. Faculty provide weekly responses to oral presentations, including review of graphics and content, and regular desk "crits" (feedback at students' desks during studio). Drafts of project plan sets and reports receive extensive faculty review with written comments. External critics review student project presentations. This is described elsewhere in the handbook under "Academic Evaluation."

Weekly presentations of student projects in progress are given throughout the year. These presentations are a vehicle to demonstrate skills and information learned. Theoretical, environmental, technical, language, and graphics issues are discussed every week, as is the role of the designer. Faculty regularly use the sessions to give additional instruction.

3. Credits, Requirements, & Academic Policies

Credit Allocation

Students learn through required regular attendance and full participation in classes, field trips, lectures, and workshops, and through completion of exercises, assignments, and projects. The graduate degree requires consistent attendance. Learning is applied in one site-scale and two community projects. Students demonstrate learning and skills in the following products and performance areas, for which credits toward the master's degree are granted.

	Credits Awarded		
	Fall term	Winter term	Spring term
Ecological Design Workshop	2		2
Ecological Planning Workshop		2	
Digital Design & Planning Methods	2	2	2
Site Analysis & Design	2		
Site Engineering & Design		2	2
Humanities	2	2	2
Ecology Class & Fieldwork	2	2	2
		Total Credits = 30	

Students are required to complete work based on classroom or other direct instruction; some academic work is based on projects and some on other topics. Project proposals and reports apply instruction in writing and, most importantly, show application of learning to specific projects for which the student is responsible. A student's graphic and technical documents represent not only instruction in drawing, graphic composition, and use of materials, but the application of general design theory to a specific project. Design presentations should synthesize, condense, articulate, and illustrate viable solutions to particular site problems and client requirements.

Grades are not given. Partial credits are not awarded. A student either satisfactorily completes

work in each category or is given an incomplete. Students should regularly check her/his list of completed work. Unfinished work at the end of a term will be noted.

A student with one or more assignments unfinished or missing may, upon successful completion of the assignment, receive credit from the instructor.

Completing each term's assigned and project work by the end of term is a program requirement; faculty will make all possible efforts to assist toward that end.

Federal Credit Hour Definition

Federal regulation defines a credit hour as "an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institution-established equivalence that reasonably approximates *not less than*: (1) One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or (2) At least an equivalent amount of work as required in section (1) of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours."

Conway School students attend scheduled classes and also work on classwork and projects in studio (with faculty supervision) and outside of scheduled school hours (generally Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm, with some exceptions). Classwork, assignments, speakers, field sessions, and other school activities and academic work are integrated with and support project work, and work on projects informs learning in other academic activities. Students typically work many hours every week on their projects, either individually or with team-mates, though the degree credits are not allocated separately for project work (as some institutions award for theses, for example). Students report that they work typically 50 to 58 hours per week during each term, on average. Over the 40 weeks of the Conway academic year (not including winter and spring breaks), students can expect to work a minimum of 2,000 hours. This exceeds the minimum hours (900) required by federal regulations for a 30-credit degree over three terms.

Individual Participation in Team Projects

Each student needs to contribute to many, if not all, aspects of a project's production. Work is divided among team members; however, each individual should gain enough experience to know how to plan, produce, and coordinate all aspects of the group project.

Technical Documents

Certain graphic products involve technical proficiency, and thus are evaluated not solely on the graphic representation but also on whether the information presented is accurate and complete.

Presentations

During the school year, students are required to

- give planned and impromptu presentations in classes;
- give timed project presentations at regular, weekly sessions;
- regularly observe presentations made by other students and participate in questions and discussion, and provide written constructive comments to peers;
- observe presentations given by professionals from many fields;
- give three formal presentations — one for each major project — to an audience that includes design/planning/ecology professionals;
- give to clients or public groups outside the school as many presentations as project work necessitates; and
- appropriately plan and rehearse (alone or with assistance) all scheduled presentations.

As months pass, students are expected to gain increasing ability in content development, clarity, and accuracy. Specifically, presentations need to show sound, selective information about a particular client and site; planning or design ideas which clearly fit both; and careful, reasoned development of those ideas. By the year's end, each student needs to demonstrate presentation abilities at or approaching a professional level of performance.

Written Work

Written work typically includes professional writing, personal essays, responses to readings, and project plan sets and reports. Many assignments undergo revision before final acceptance.

All submitted writing is evaluated in form and substance by the faculty. The submissions must show writing skill and understanding, and be acceptable advanced degree work. Students rewrite and revise until this standard is met.

Completing written work within deadlines is necessary to receive credit and is the responsibility of each individual student.

Plagiarism — falsely submitting work by another person as one's own — will be considered a serious infraction and may, at the discretion of school faculty, result in recommendation to the Board of Trustees for expulsion/dismissal without refund.

Academic Evaluation

Evaluation of student work takes place throughout the year in the following ways:

- Faculty members regularly confer with students individually and in design teams to provide desk-side critiques of students' design ideas, use of information, and graphics in progress.
- For each of the year's three major projects, students make formal presentations juried by design and environmental professionals.
- Students submit written work which is evaluated soon after submission by the humanities professor and/or at least one faculty member who is a landscape designer or planner. Written work is corrected and revised until it meets a graduate standard.
- Students give weekly presentations of developing designs to the class, faculty, and occasional visitors. After project presentations at school, faculty make brief written evaluations of each student's understanding, graphics, and verbal communication.

Standards and evaluation criteria are comparable to those applied in other graduate design programs where a pass/fail system is used. The core faculty's judgments on student work are buttressed, or challenged, by outside experts (both professional practitioners and academicians) in the evaluation of student performance.

Inferior work is required to be redone quickly, in part because of the school's contracted obligations to actual clients. However, the student's overall progress is considered more important than any single product or performance. Close daily and weekly contact with staff assures monitoring of each student's progress, successes, and weaknesses. A student who experiences difficulty with timely completion of a project or graduation requirement meets with the faculty to develop corrective plans. Should progress not be adequate during a probationary period, the student is requested to either withdraw from the degree program or, on rare occasions, to withdraw from the school. Admission to and attendance at Conway will not guarantee to any participant successful completion of the program nor award of the Master of Science in Ecological Design.

Incomplete Work

A student who is not meeting program standards or deadlines may at any time be called to a faculty conference. Work that does not demonstrate clear mastery of design concepts and lacks the intellectual depth expected of a master's degree candidate is considered unsatisfactory. The unsatisfactory or incomplete work is discussed, and the student is offered assistance and advised about strategies for improvement.

Unsatisfactory work in any credit category automatically results in an Incomplete for that credit

category when work is reviewed. Partial credits are not awarded.

Academic Status: In Good Standing, Not In Good Standing, and Probation

Once per term, students will receive formal notice of their academic standing. "In Good Standing" status indicates that the student is satisfactorily completing class and project work and participating appropriately in the academic life of the school. (This can be summed up as "*effort*" (working hard even if the results are not what you hope for), "*attendance*" (showing up, being present, supporting classmates in their work), and "*attitude*" (showing a willingness to work through challenges both on your own and in collaboration with faculty and classmates).) "Not In Good Standing" status indicates to the student that some improvement is needed; this status may result, for example:

- If observation shows the student is regularly failing to complete adequately assignments or project work;
- If the student fails to attend classes, presentations, field trips, or guest lectures;
- If the student is chronically late to classes, presentations, field trips, or guest lectures; or
- If the student's work is seriously incomplete (for example, several major or many smaller assignments are missing at the end of a term).

Attendance Expectations

The Conway program is short and condensed, and its various components designed to complement and support each other. Missing all or part of any planned activity (including studio time) affects students' ability to learn effectively and to contribute to the collaborative learning environment. Acceptable reasons for missing activities include observation of religious holidays, illness, and medical appointments that can not be scheduled outside of school hours. Of course, many unexpected events can occur over the school year that may result in missing school activities. As a student, it is your responsibility to communicate with the instructor of the activity, in advance when you know you will not be present or after the fact when the absence is unexpected, and your responsibility to make up missed work. (Students may ask faculty to record and/or livestream classes and other activities they will miss, but faculty are not required by school policy to do so.)

Minimum attendance requirements for maintaining Good Academic Standing

• Students may miss one school day (Monday through Friday) per term for an unexcused absence. Excused absences include missing class for observation of religious holidays, illness, and medical appointments. However, more than four days of excused absences per term other than observation of religious holidays will require a meeting with the Academic Director.
• Students are expected to be on time for classes, presentations, and field sessions (i.e., present and ready to go at the scheduled start time of the activity). More than three late arrivals per term (i.e., arriving later than five minutes after the schedule start) will result in loss of Good

Academic Standing; ongoing late arrival will result in Probation.
• Students are expected to attend program activities until their conclusion.

If the performance of a student receiving such status does not improve, the student will be placed on Academic Probation. Students placed on Academic Probation will receive written notice of probationary status and a record will be placed in their permanent file. A student who is placed on academic probation may appeal this decision by submitting a written request to the Academic Director explaining in detail why they should not be placed on probation. The Academic Director will review the case, confer with faculty, and meet with the student before determining if the probation should stand or be revoked. If revoked, no record of academic probation will appear in the student's files.

Academic Probation puts the degree candidate on official notice that the master's degree will not be attained without significant improvement. Academic Probation puts the non-degree candidate on official notice that the awarding of a certificate from Conway will not be achieved without significant improvement. While faculty will make efforts to give any student on Academic Probation extra assistance, the ultimate responsibility for fulfilling requirements lies with the individual student.

Reinstatement

A student on Academic Probation is reinstated when all work is competently completed, the student is up to date with ongoing assignments, and is participating appropriately in all academic activities.

Procedure for reinstatement: the student first completes all required work due, submits it to the appropriate faculty for review, and gains approval. The student then requests a meeting with faculty and shows at the meeting that missing work is complete and ongoing schoolwork is up to date and meets the required standard. If faculty unanimously agree that acceptable improvement and performance have been demonstrated, the Academic Director takes the student off Academic Probation by placing a written reinstatement in the student's permanent file, and provides a copy of the reinstatement to the student.

Financial Aid

Eligibility for financial aid will be jeopardized if satisfactory academic progress is not maintained.

Graduation Requirements

Master of Science Candidates

To receive the Master of Science degree, a student must demonstrate understanding of design

theory, of natural and built environments, of design communication, and of professional development and practice. The student must apply and demonstrate understanding by carrying out three major design projects from initial contact with an outside client to final delivery of all necessary drawings, reports, public presentations, technical data, research, and recommendations.

Throughout the ten-month program, regular attendance and active participation in classes, presentations, workshops, educational field trips, and special events offered at the school, and satisfactory completion of academic exercises, assignments, and readings are all required.

Conway students who successfully complete the program of requirements outlined above will earn 30 credits and will graduate. Candidates who have fulfilled all degree requirements will be granted the Master of Science in Ecological Design.

A checklist is provided to students at the end of the year to ensure all academic requirements have been met and that all other obligations to school, clients, and other students have been fulfilled. This checklist must be turned in before the degree can be granted.

Written evaluation of the program, core faculty, adjuncts, and guest teachers by the students is required by the school's accrediting agency, the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education (of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges). Evaluation forms will be provided to students several times a year and must be completed promptly. This obligation must be fulfilled before graduation.

Non-Degree Option

Gaining a Master of Science degree is not always the strongest motivation or primary goal for every student at the Conway School.

A non-degree option exists to provide an alternative to the master's degree program. In most cases, the non-degree option is identical to the degree track. Non-degree students still must meet admissions requirements. They pay the same tuition and costs as degree candidates. In general, they are responsible for full participation in all classes and project work, including presentations and production of reports. They receive equal attention from teachers and critics, contribute to the class and the school, and are not set apart from their classmates.

Students who decide not to pursue a master's degree or who have excessive difficulty fulfilling requirements may complete the program as non-degree candidates. A special program of requirements will be developed by faculty and the student.

At the end of the program, the non-degree student who successfully completes program and project work receives a "Certificate of Graduate Study" rather than a Master of Science in Ecological Design diploma.

Extensions

Completing the year's work before graduation is a program requirement. If reports, assignments, drawings or project work are unfinished before graduation due to extenuating circumstances, you may apply for one ten-day extension. A formal application is necessary for any such extension and must have unanimous approval of the school's core faculty. An additional instructional fee will be required of the student. Inability to manage time reasonably throughout the year is not cause for an extension.

Conferring of Degrees

Graduation Celebration

The Conway School holds its graduation celebration in June, at the full completion of projects, writing assignments, and other program work. The celebration honors the class's achievements and is an official conclusion to the program.

The graduation celebration is a student event meant to reflect the wishes and personality of each individual class. It is a time of appreciation for the accomplishments of the class. The class helps to plan the event.

Conferring of Degrees and Certificates of Study

All students receive a Certificate of Graduate Study at the graduation ceremony.

To receive the Master of Science degree, a student must satisfactorily complete all school-related projects and assignments to earn 30 credits. Non-degree candidates must satisfactorily complete the work requirements previously agreed upon with faculty. Additionally, all students must complete a check-out procedure satisfying any financial, library, or other standard obligations to the school.

The faculty determine candidates who have fulfilled requirements. After the end of the school year, official transcripts are completed and available upon request. Diplomas are usually mailed late in summer or early fall to the new Masters of Science recipients. (Should anyone need to demonstrate accomplishment in the program prior to receiving the diploma and permanent transcript, a temporary transcript and written recommendation may be provided.) **please also refer to the bottom of page 33.*

Policy on Suspension & Dismissal

A student enrolled in the program may be issued a warning or suspended upon unanimous recommendation of the coordinators, and may be dismissed upon unanimous recommendation by

the coordinators to, and approval by, the Chair of the Board of Trustees.

Causes for warning, suspension, or dismissal are illegal acts, violation of behavioral standards as set forth below, plagiarism, failure or inability to meet basic program requirements of attending classes and completing assignments and project work to an acceptable standard, or not paying tuition and participation fees. In the last two instances named, students must be officially notified at a conference with faculty that (a) incomplete or unacceptable academic performance or (b) nonpayment is causing dismissal to be considered, and faculty will discuss solutions other than dismissal with the student. In these instances, the student will be given at least four weeks to demonstrate academic improvement or to provide funds or an acceptable plan for meeting financial obligations. The criteria for academic performance are those listed in this student handbook. The schedule for payment of tuition and fees is listed in the agreement form each student signs before entering the program.

Faculty and trustees honor the school's commitment to try to understand and assist students experiencing difficulty; however, the school is an educational institution which can operate only if students meet academic and financial requirements.

In the rare event of dismissal, the student will be given written notification. Dismissal will be effective immediately. The student will no longer attend the school and will remove personal belongings. The student will remain responsible for all payments owed to the school according to guidelines in the refund policy.

Appeal may be made in writing to the Board of Trustees.

Behavioral Standards

Students are expected to be respectful of each other and of staff, each student’s right to privacy, one another's opinions, and each person’s physical and mental well-being. The following are unacceptable behaviors. Students have an ethical obligation to confront and challenge these behaviors (unless to do so would endanger their safety) and to report these behaviors to one of the three co-directors.

Physically Endangering Behavior
Actions that endanger any person’s physical well-being including but not limited to physical assault, use or possession of fireworks or weapons, the setting of fires, or the use or sale of illegal drugs.

Threatening or Intimidating Behavior
Verbal threats to do violence, psychological intimidation, bullying, or harassment of any person.

Discriminatory Harassment

Verbal, physical, or written abuse or other offensive actions directed towards an individual or group based on race or racial affiliation, age, sex or sexual preference, religion, national origin, disability, or previous military service.

Sexual Harassment (see Ethical Practices & Legal Compliance section below for full policy and procedures)
The Conway School is committed to the prevention of Sexual Misconduct, Relationship Violence, and Stalking. New students and new employees are required to read through the Student and Employee Handbooks, both of which contain the school's Sexual Harassment Policy & Procedures, and sign a statement confirming that they have read this policy.
Vandalism, Damage to Property, Theft
Theft of school or personal property as well as damage done to such property (due to either malice or extreme carelessness).

Definitions

Dismissal / Expulsion
The student's relationship with the school is severed. Transcripts of students who are dismissed for disciplinary reasons will bear the notation "Permanently dismissed on [date]."

Suspension
Suspension is for a specified length of time. While a suspension is in effect, the student is prohibited from visiting the school or using any of its resources, attending classes, having contact with faculty or staff, or using school facilities.

Warning
A warning by Conway staff is intended to make the student aware of the possible consequences of irresponsible or inappropriate actions.

Fines and Restitution

Conway staff may issue a fine that covers the cost of an article unlawfully removed from the school, or they may demand restitution to cover the repair or replacement of any property (belonging either to the school or to an individual) that has been damaged or stolen. The cost of labor in moving, repairing, or replacing an item may be included.

Student Placement

Neither the Conway School nor its individual staff members conduct an organized placement service, nor do they take responsibility for finding employment for graduates. The school posts job listings in its alumni LinkedIn group. In addition, the staff can recommend potential

employers to graduates (or graduates to employers). The faculty also discuss with each student who requests it a strategy for seeking employment, and assist all students with résumé preparation.

Transcripts

Transcripts are official records of each student's school year and cannot be modified to suit individuals after graduation. One transcript copy is furnished with the diploma. Additional copies are $5 per transcript. *Please also refer to the bottom of page 31.*

Degree and Accreditation Status

The Conway School of Landscape Design is accredited by the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education (CIHE) of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc. (NEASC). Following the requirements of CIHE, graduate credentials should be stated as follows: Graduates who complete the program and degree requirements "received the degree of Master of Science in Ecological Design" (MSED). Students who complete the program but do not complete degree requirements "completed a graduate program in Ecological Design at the Conway School of Landscape Design." Students who do not complete the program "attended a graduate program in Ecological Design at the Conway School of Landscape Design."

Health Insurance/Immunizations

Elaine Williamson (Registrar/Alumni Liaison, Registrar@csld.edu) collects the documents related to your health insurance and immunizations.

The State of Massachusetts requires that all full-time students enrolled in a degree granting program of higher education participate in an Affordable Care Act (ACA) comparable, comprehensive health insurance plan with coverage in the Northampton, MA area. Students must provide proof of this coverage by submission of a waiver form. Submission of this form confirms that the student's health insurance plan provides ACA comparable coverage which will be in force for the entirety of the 2025-2026 academic year.

Students in need of coverage may apply through the following options:

- The Massachusetts Health Connector: visit https://www.mahealthconnector.org/
- Abacus Benefits Plus: Conway's broker Rich Cahillane (rich@cahillane.com) is available to assist those looking for coverage, and will be notified if you shop on this site.

In addition, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Department of Public Health requires that students enrolled at an institution of higher education obtain particular immunizations (Please see Massachusetts School Immunization Requirements 2025-2026 for the Mass DPH information here).

By July 15th, you must submit:

- Signed health insurance waiver
- A photocopy/scan of your health insurance plan's summary of coverage
- A photocopy/scan of your health insurance card
- A photocopy/scan of immunization proof/records (your primary care physician should be able to supply this to you)
- Signed Immunization Survey

If you have not completed or are not able to complete all of the required shots before school begins, you must schedule the remaining shots with your physician and inform the school of the schedule.

Covid is not currently listed as a required immunization by the state; however, the Conway School **strongly recommends** that students receive the vaccine and all boosters. The school no longer requires employees or students to wear a mask when in the Coach House or traveling in the school van, but you should wear one if that is your preference. The school does continue to strongly encourage students and full-time employees to conduct rapid self-tests (provided at no cost by the school) when they suspect they may have contracted Covid-19.

Please email Elaine Williamson (Registrar@csld.edu) with any questions regarding health insurance and immunizations. You can submit the photocopied/scanned documents to Elaine via email.

Important: please block out any personal information including date of birth and social security number when emailing your documents.

4. Library

Organization and Scope

Open shelves and simple procedures allow students to take library materials to their desks twenty-four hours a day every day of the week. The library is organized to be a working library similar to what one might find in a design office.

The school's specialized collection is not well suited to the Library of Congress system. A book cataloging system devised specifically for the school by a professional librarian correlates to the teaching program. Its four major sections are:

A. The Natural World: the WHERE?

B. Human Activities and Facilities: the WHO and WHAT?

C. Techniques, Standards, and Data: the HOW?

D. Theory: the WHY?

Books can be searched on Conway's Librarything.com page:
www.librarything.com/catalog/conwayschool&deepsearch=

Borrowing Procedures

When borrowing a book, clearly print your name, the title of the book, the call number, and the current date on a library check-out card and place the card in the book's shelf location. Please use *one* yellow card per book. Return the book to its place on the shelf, remove the card, and cross out the borrower information. Return the check-out card to the box to be re-used. All books must be returned by June 30.

Please help in maintaining the order and cleanliness of the books; make no marks in the books. Remove all page markers from the books before returning.

You will be responsible for all books borrowed and unreturned. Transcripts and diplomas will be withheld until books are returned or replaced.

5. Ethical Practices and Legal Compliance

Notice of Nondiscriminatory Policy

The Conway School of Landscape Design, Inc., a Massachusetts not-for-profit corporation organized under Chapter 180 of the General Laws, is a professional school of ecological design and land-use planning. It does not discriminate based on race, color, national or ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, marital status, or veteran's status, in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and other school administered programs.

This notice is being given in compliance with the provisions of Internal Revenue Service revenue procedure 75-50, which requires tax-exempt schools to make known to all segments of the general community served by the school its racially nondiscriminatory policy about the admission of students.

Hazing

(In compliance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 269, Sections 17 and 18.)

Section 17. Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing, as defined herein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or both such fine and imprisonment.

The term "hazing" as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section to the contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action.

Section 18. Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without

danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.

Campus Security Policy

(In compliance with the Crime Awareness and Campus Security Act of 1990 [PL 101-542, Title II], the Conway School of Landscape Design provides the following information to all current and incoming students and staff.)

(A) CURRENT CAMPUS POLICIES REGARDING PROCEDURES AND FACILITIES
Campus phones are available to report emergencies or criminal actions. Emergency phone numbers (fire, police, ambulance) are posted near or on each phone. Such calls are to be reported as soon as possible to one of the co-directors, or, if they are not available, to the nearest available coordinator, each of whose contact information is provided below. The staff will respond as appropriate to any such report.

Coordinators Contact Information
Kenneth Byrne
North Hadley, MA 01035
917.715.1381 (c)

Kate Cholakis ’11
Florence, MA 01062-1908
508.265.1114 (c)

Kim Erslev
Shelburne Falls, MA 01370
413.475.8560 (c)

Priscilla Novitt ’07
Northampton, MA 01060
413.270.1965 (c)

Kara Schnell
Williamsburg, MA 01096
413-320-8503 (c)

Dave Weber ’15
Williamsburg, MA 01096
413.222.1183 (c)

Elaine Williamson ’11
Belchertown, MA 01007
413.537.7173

(B) CURRENT CAMPUS POLICIES REGARDING ACCESS TO CAMPUS FACILITIES AND SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS
The school building is to be locked and lights turned off by the last person to depart. Only students, staff, and official guests may have access to keys to enter the building once it's been locked.

Students are simply cautioned to use common sense and discretion when working late at night or walking home or to cars, and to report any suspicious behavior immediately.

(C) LAW ENFORCEMENT; ACCURATE AND PROMPT REPORTING
Conway School has no hired security personnel. Emergency dispatch service is provided by emergency dispatchers **911** (posted near or on all phones). In the event of an emergency, students or employees must contact 1) local authorities and 2) an employee. Students are asked to be aware of fire extinguishers and how to use them, but in the event of fire, they should consider their own safety and that of fellow students first.

(D) & (E) TYPE AND FREQUENCY OF PROGRAMS OFFERED TO INFORM STUDENTS AND EMPLOYEES ABOUT CAMPUS SECURITY PROCEDURES
No special programs on crime prevention other than an initial orientation will be provided unless unusual circumstances warrant.

(F) CRIME STATISTICS
Statistics concerning the occurrence on campus (in Easthampton for 2017-18 and then in Northampton thereafter) of the following criminal offenses will be provided annually, for the year just past and all previous years of Conway's existence.

Crime	*Incidence (since 1972)*
(i) murder	0
(ii) rape	0
(iii) robbery	0
(iv) aggravated assault	0
(v) burglary	0
(vi) motor vehicle theft	0

(G) off-campus student organizations or housing facilities (Not Applicable: no off-campus student organizations or housing facilities exist at Conway)

(H) STATISTICS ON ARRESTS

Violation	*Number of arrests (since 1972)*
(i) liquor law violations	0
(ii) drug abuse violations	0
(iii) weapons possessions	0

(I) ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE PREVENTION POLICIES
Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention Policies are contained in the Physical Facilities section of this student handbook and in handouts distributed to students during application and enrollment. Explanation of policies is given at the beginning of the school year.

Disclosure of Personal Information

Disclosure of Student Records Policies and Procedures

In accordance with the U. S. Dept. of Education Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), Conway keeps permanent records for all students and graduates, and complies with disclosure provisions and individuals' rights to access their own records.

Procedure to Inspect Education Records

Students may inspect and review their education records upon request to the appropriate record custodian. Students should submit to the Executive Director a written request which identifies as precisely as possible the record or records he or she wishes to inspect. The staff person will make the needed arrangements for access as promptly as possible and notify the student of the time and place where records may be inspected. Access will be given in 45 days or less from the receipt of the request. When a record contains information about more than one student, the student may inspect and review only the records that relate to him/her.

Right of School to Refuse Access or Deny Copies

The school reserves the right to refuse access to permit a student to the letters and statements of recommendation (regarding the student's application to the school) for which the students has waived his or her right of access; or which were placed in the file before January 1, 1975; and those records which are excluded from the FERPA definition of education records.

Conway reserves the right to deny transcripts or copies of records not required to be made available by the FERPA in any of the following situations: the student has unpaid financial obligation to the school; there is an unresolved disciplinary action against the student.

Fees

A fee may be charged for copying and postage.

Types, Locations, & Custodians of Education Records

Admissions records, cumulative academic records, financial records, and disciplinary records are all kept in the administrative office files of Conway School; custodians of records are the administrative staff of the school.

Disclosure of Education Records

The school will disclose information from a student's education records only with the written consent of the student, except:

1. To school officials who have a legitimate educational interest in the school. A school official is: a person employed by the school in an administrative, supervisory, academic or support staff position; a person elected to the Board of Trustees; a person employed by or under contract to the school to perform a special task, such as an attorney or auditor.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official is: performing a task that is specified in his or her position or by a contract agreement; performing a task related to a student's education; performing a task related to the discipline of a student; providing a service or benefit relating to the student or student's family, such as health care, counseling, job placement, or financial aid.

2. Conway's policy is to forward records to other schools only when a request is made or approved by the student or graduate.

3. To certain officials of the U. S. Department of Education, the Comptroller General, and state and local educational authorities, regarding certain state or federally supported education programs.

4. In connection with a student's request for or receipt of financial aid, as necessary to determine eligibility, amount or conditions of the financial aid, or to enforce the terms and conditions of the aid.

5. If required by a state law requiring disclosure that was adopted before Nov.19, 1974.

6. To organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school.

7. To accrediting organizations to carry out their functions.

8. To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena.

9. To appropriate parties in a health or safety emergency.

Record of Requests for Disclosure

The School will maintain a record of all requests for and/or disclosure of information from a student's education records. The record will indicate the name of the party to whom it may be

redisclosed and the legitimate interest the party had in requesting or obtaining the information. The record may be reviewed by the eligible student.

Correction of Education Records

Students have a right to ask to have records corrected that they believe are inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of their privacy rights. Following are the procedures for the correction of records:

1. A student must ask the appropriate official of the school to amend a record. In doing so, the student should identify the part of the record he/she wants changed and specify why she/he believes it is inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of his or her privacy rights.

2. The school may comply with the request or it may decide not to comply. If it decides not to comply, the school will notify the student of the decision and advise her/him of her/his right to a hearing to challenge the information believed to be inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student's rights.

3. Upon request, the school will arrange for a hearing, and notify the student, reasonably in advance, of the date, place, and time of the hearing.

4. The hearing will be conducted by a hearing official who is a disinterested party; however, the hearing officer may be an official of the institution. The student shall be afforded a full and fair opportunity to present evidence relevant to the issues raised in the original request to amend the student's education records. The student may be assisted by one or more individuals, including an attorney.

5. The school will prepare a written decision based solely on the evidence presented at the hearing. The decision will include a summary of the evidence presented and the reasons for the decision.

6. If the school decides that the challenged information is not inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student's right of privacy, it will notify the student that he/she has a right to place in the record a statement commenting on the challenged information and/or a statement setting forth the reasons for disagreeing with the decision.

7. The statement will be maintained as part of the student's education records as long as the contested portion is maintained. If the school discusses the contested portion of the record, it must also disclose the statement.

8. If the school decides that the information is inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student's right of privacy, it will amend the record and notify the student, in writing, that the record has been amended.

Accurate Representation of Degree

The school has consistently been praised for strong ethics displayed by staff and past students

and expects continuing high ethical standards from students and graduates.

A false representation of an academic degree is both unethical and illegal. Students entering the school who falsify transcripts are subject to expulsion without refund of tuition and fees. Graduates may not misrepresent degree status, or knowingly allow such misrepresentation to occur on any document.

The Conway School offers only one degree: the Master of Science in Ecological Design. Non-degree students who meet requirements earn a transcript certifying successful completion of the program as non-degree graduates, and a Certificate of Graduate Study. A student who withdraws during the school year or does not meet requirements may state that she or he attended the school but did not finish or did not meet degree requirements. Successfully completing requirements is a fine achievement; school authorities expressly forbid misrepresentation of degree status. Accurate language concerning degree and accreditation status are located elsewhere in this handbook.

Tuition Obligations and Refunds

Tuition policies are described in the student Enrollment Agreement signed at enrollment and are repeated below in part.

The student understands that, in consideration of the school's reserving a position for the student and the fact that the school has fixed costs that cannot be altered if the student does not attend the school or complete the academic year, it is the student's obligation to pay the tuition and fees for the full academic year, that this obligation is unconditional, and that no portion of tuition and fees, whether paid or outstanding, shall be refunded or canceled, notwithstanding the subsequent withdrawal, dismissal, or absence (for any reason) of the student from the school, unless otherwise specifically set forth in this agreement.

Late Fees and Collection Costs

A late fee in the amount of 1.0% per month will be charged to the outstanding balance of all accounts more than 30 days past due. The student agrees to pay all costs incurred by the Conway School of Landscape Design, Inc. to collect any amounts due and outstanding, including but not limited to, legal fees, court costs and related travel.

Tuition Obligations and Insurance

Conway has no insurance plan to compensate for loss of tuition due to unanticipated separation. You may be able to acquire an independent tuition refund insurance plan to help reduce financial loss should you not complete the academic year. Contact your insurance representative for details.

If the student terminates the agreement with Conway in writing, or if the student must withdraw from school for any reason, the following refund policy will apply:

First Payment Period	
Time of Withdrawal	*Refund Amount of First Tuition Payment*
Prior to the first day of school, September 2, 2025	100%
From the first day of school through October 1, 2025	50%
After October 1, 2025	No refund
Second Payment Period	
Time of Withdrawal	*Refund Amount of Second Tuition Payment*
Prior to February 1, 2026	100%
February 2 through February 28, 2026	50%
After February 28, 2026	No refund

The school complies with all laws and regulations that govern governmental student loan programs. Any student who participates in a governmental loan program, which program allows termination of enrollment and tuition refund, may terminate this Agreement at any time. The termination by the student must be in writing and will be effective when received by the school. The tuition and fees refund policy is stated in the enrollment contract.

To receive a Conway School degree or a copy of their transcript, a student must have:
- paid all tuition and other fees owed to the school, and
- (for those who have taken out a federal student loan) completed their loan exit counseling.

Title IV Credit Balance Policy
Any Title IV credit balance due a student will be refunded within 24 hours of being posted to the student's Conway School account.

Return to Title IV Policy
RETURN OF TITLE IV FUNDS. [For the full policy, please use this link.] The US Dept. of Ed. specifies how the Conway School must determine the amount of federal student financial aid (Title IV) program assistance that has been earned if a student withdraws from school. In some cases, the student will be required to return unearned Title IV funds. The Return of Title IV process may also result in the student owing the school for unpaid tuition and fees. The requirements for Title IV program funds when a student withdraws are separate from the Conway School's institutional refund policy. Therefore, the student may still owe a balance to the school to cover unpaid institutional charges.

To calculate the percentage of Title IV aid earned:
Divide the number of days to be completed in the term as of the last date of attendance in the payment period by the total days in the term. If this percentage is greater than 60%, the student earns 100%. If less than or equal to 60%, the calculation is: % earned times total aid disbursed or could have been disbursed = AMOUNT STUDENT EARNED. Subtract the Title IV aid earned from the total disbursed = AMOUNT TO BE RETURNED.

Disability Accommodations

The Conway School of Landscape Design (the Conway School) is committed to providing equal access to qualified students with disabilities. Consistent with this commitment, the Conway School will provide reasonable accommodations to disabled students to allow them to have equal access to educational opportunities, unless doing so would create an undue hardship. Students requesting an accommodation should contact the Conway School's Academic Director.

Universal Access

The school provides barrier-free entrance to each of the rooms in its facility, which includes reception area, classroom, studio, kitchen, and toilets.

Absence due to religious beliefs

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts statute ensures that any student who is unable, because of religious beliefs, to attend classes or to participate in any activity on a particular day shall be excused and shall be provided with an opportunity to make up such activities that may have been

missed because of such absence on any particular day, provided, however, that such makeup shall not create an unreasonable burden upon the school. No adverse or prejudicial effects shall result to the student.

Sexual Harassment Policy & Procedures

Adapted from the University of Massachusetts' Sexual Harassment Policies & Procedures dated March 6, 2014.

The U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) enforces Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Title IX protects people from discrimination based on sex in education programs or activities that receive Federal financial assistance. Title IX states that, "no person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." Title IX applies to the Conway School because it receives federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Education. The ED Title IX regulations (Volume 34, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 106) provide additional information about the forms of discrimination prohibited by Title IX.

Policy

The Conway School of Landscape Design (also referred to as the "Conway School," "Conway", or the "school") is committed to providing faculty, staff, and students with an environment where they may pursue their careers or studies without being sexually harassed. Sexual harassment of or by any member of the school is unlawful and will not be tolerated. It is illegal and constitutes a violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and Massachusetts G.L.c.151B and 151C.

For the purposes of this policy, sexual harassment is defined as follows: Unwelcomed sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

1) submission to or rejection of such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or academic work; or

2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or academic decisions affecting such individual; or

3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or sexually offensive working or academic environment.

Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to the following:

- repeated unwanted sexual flirtations, advances or propositions;

- continued or repeated verbal abuse or innuendo of a sexual nature;
- uninvited physical contact such as touching, hugging, patting, brushing or pinching;
- verbal comments of a sexual nature about an individual's body or sexual terms used to describe an individual;
- display of pictures, posters or cartoons that a reasonable person would find offensive or sexually suggestive;
- continued or repeated jokes, language, epithets or remarks of a sexual nature;
- prolonged staring or leering;
- making obscene gestures or suggestive or insulting sounds;
- demand for sexual favors accompanied by an implied or overt threat concerning an individual's employment or academic status or promises of preferential treatment;
- indecent exposure.

In determining whether an alleged incident constitutes sexual harassment, those entrusted with administering this policy will look at the totality of the circumstances, such as the nature of the sexual advances and the context in which the alleged incidents occurred. The final decision regarding a suitable penalty will be made from the finding of fact on a case-by-case basis and from any record of previous sexual harassment by the Respondent.

The Title IX Coordinator (Kate Cholakis) and co-directors will be responsible for administering this policy and its procedures. If the complaint is against a co-director, the complainant may take the complaint to the Title IX Coordinator or chair of the board of trustees. The school has designated the Title IX Coordinator with oversight as required by Title IX, the Clery Act, and the Violence Against Women Act. The Title IX Coordinator:

- Is familiar with the kinds of discrimination covered under Title IX.
- Knows the details of the school's policies and procedures on sex discrimination and sexual misconduct.
- Helps create campus policies regarding sex discrimination and sexual misconduct.
- Considers how the school defines consent.
- Oversees sex discrimination and sexual violence prevention policies.
- Investigates complaints of sex discrimination or allegations of sexual misconduct and enforces disciplinary actions in accordance with the school's policy (as outlined in the student handbook). This might involve conducting interviews with the involved parties, informing all parties of the school's grievance process, establishing witness credibility, evaluating evidence with an impartial view, determining appropriate sanctions against the perpetrator, and helping survivors find resources.
- Communicates their availability and remains accessible to students who need guidance or want to make a complaint.

Conway's current Title IX Coordinator is Kate Cholakis. She is available during academic hours, 40 hours per week. Students may approach her in person, email her

(titleixcoordinator@csld.edu) or reach her by phone (413-203-6774). Individuals with questions or concerns about Title IX or who wish to file a complaint or have information about an alleged violation may contact the Title IX Coordinator. Students and school employees should report to the Title IX Coordinator when sexual harassment has occurred on campus and during off-campus educational activities and programs. If a current student has experienced or witnessed sex-based or gender-based discrimination or misconduct, please contact the Title IX Coordinator. Reports can be made anonymously on the school's website.

Procedures for Sexual Harassment Grievance

A. **Purpose and Scope**

Conway School intends for this grievance procedure to provide a fair, prompt, and reliable determination about whether the school's sexual harassment policy has been violated. Anyone who, at the time of the alleged harassment, was either employed by or enrolled at the Conway School may file a complaint alleging violation of this policy. Specific procedures for complaint processing will be determined consistent with the exceptions noted in the last paragraph of this section. No school employee or student is exempt from the jurisdiction of this policy.

In most instances, the person who receives the alleged harassment will initiate a complaint (thus the "Complainant"). However, the school reserves the right to initiate a formal grievance (or to continue processing a complaint even after a request to withdraw has been submitted by the Complainant in accordance with Section D) when, in the opinion of the co-directors it is appropriate to do so.

As in any grievance procedure, justice requires that the legal rights, as well as the right to academic freedom, of the Complainant and the Respondent be fully assured. The school will make every effort to protect these rights and will knowingly undertake no action that threatens or compromises them. Notwithstanding, nothing in these procedures is intended to prevent the school's administration from taking appropriate interim measures to protect one or more of the parties until such time final adjudication regarding the complaint has been reached.

The school does not intend for this procedure to impair or limit the right of anyone to seek a remedy available under state or federal law. A Complainant may file a complaint with an external agency to meet state and federal agency deadlines without jeopardizing his or her right to a school hearing. (See Section L.) Upon official notification that an individual has filed with an external agency, the school will inquire if the Complainant wishes to continue with the internal grievance process. Should the Complainant seek to discontinue the internal process, the school will nonetheless continue to fact find and take appropriate measures.

B. **Confidentiality**

All parties involved in any aspect of this process will act at all times to preserve the confidentiality of these proceedings. Co-directors will share information with those individuals

who have a legitimate and operational need to be informed, and to the extent that it is necessary to maintain the effectiveness of this process. Individuals found to have violated the confidentiality of this process may be subject to disciplinary proceedings consistent with applicable administrative rules and regulations.

C. **Deadlines**

A Complainant should report an incident immediately, but will have twelve months following an incident to initiate a complaint under this policy and procedures unless he or she can show good reason for having that deadline waived. Anyone who has been subjected to the conduct prohibited under this policy, or who has knowledge of such conduct, should report this information following the normal Complaint Procedure as soon as possible. A Complainant must make a request for an exception to the filing deadline in writing to one of the co-directors who will render a decision in writing following his or her review of the request. The school may consult legal counsel in making this determination.

In some instances, particularly when a pattern of behavior is the subject of the complaint, supporting evidence may include reports of behavior that occurred outside of the twelve-month filing deadline. In these instances, a written request for an exception is not required; however, the Respondent may ask the co-directors to rule on the admissibility of such evidence. The decision of the co-directors in these instances is final.

Failure to meet any of the deadlines stipulated in this procedure will not result in a decision by default or prevent the process from continuing.

Requirements for Participation & Withdrawals

If a Respondent fails to respond to a claim or to appear at a hearing, the school will consider this failure to respond a breach of responsibility and could result in disciplinary action. Furthermore, a Respondent will not prevent this process from proceeding by his or her silence or absence; failure to respond to a complaint or to appear at a hearing may result in the process proceeding solely based on the Complainant's testimony and evidence.

A Complainant may request to withdraw a formal grievance after it has been filed by submitting written reasons for the withdrawal to the co-directors. The co-directors will be responsible for notifying the Respondent of the request to withdraw. The Respondent must provide written agreement to the withdrawal before the school will drop the charges. A Respondent who does not agree to the withdrawal request must provide written reasons to the co-directors who, after consultation with appropriate administrators including, where necessary, legal counsel, will issue a written determination to the parties regarding the status of the claim. A Complainant may not interrupt the process simply by failing to appear at the hearing or other required meetings. Failure to appear may result in the hearing proceeding solely based on the Respondent’s testimony and evidence.

None of the above actions should be construed to impinge upon the right of the school to initiate or continue a claim despite a request to withdraw when, if in the opinion of the

co-directors, the allegations are sufficiently egregious to merit further action on the part of the school. The school will rely on the alleged victim to serve as a witness under these circumstances.

D. **Retaliation**

It is unlawful to retaliate against an employee for filing a complaint of sexual harassment or for cooperating in an investigation of a complaint of sexual harassment procedures. Any act of retaliation directed against person(s) participating in these procedures is illegal. Complaints of retaliation should be addressed to the co-directors who will determine the appropriate action (unless the complaint is against one of the co-directors, in which case the complaint should be brought to the chair of the board of trustees). It is against Conway policy and unlawful to retaliate in any way against anyone who has lodged a harassment complaint, has expressed a concern about harassment, including sexual harassment, or has cooperated in a harassment investigation. Therefore, the initiation of a complaint, in good faith, will not under any circumstances be grounds for disciplinary action.

E. **Disciplinary Action**

The penalties for those found to have violated this policy may include, but will not be limited to, any one or combination of the following: verbal admonition, written warning placed in the personnel file, probation, suspension without pay, demotion, removal from administrative duties, and dismissal.

F. **Filing Sexual Harassment Complaints**

The school recognizes that it has a responsibility to provide a procedure for rapid and equitable resolution of all sexual harassment complaints. In many instances, resolution can be reached without the need for formal measures. The goal in all instances is to ensure that inappropriate and offensive behavior is stopped.

G. **Initiating a Complaint**

Complainants may initially consult with a co-director who can provide information about the complaint handling system and options available for resolution.

The co-director will assess the matter; determine what immediate action must be taken; and advise the Complainant about how to proceed – informally, using one of the methods described in Section I, J, and K or formally, using the methods described in Sections L and M.

The co-director may also consult with the other co-directors and/or chair of the board of trustees to determine the appropriateness of proceeding under these procedures. The co-directors have the authority to discontinue processing a complaint. This decision is final and not subject to appeal.

The co-directors will identify the appropriate fact-finding mechanism. Fact-finding will be done either internally (by a school staff member) or externally (by a person whose services will be retained specifically for this purpose). When fact-finding results in a written report, this report may later be introduced into the record during a formal hearing process.

H. **Informal Resolution**

In some circumstances, informal resolution of a complaint prior to or instead of initiating the formal process may be more satisfactory than directly proceeding to a formal grievance. Informal resolution options include, but are not limited to, self-help or consultation.

I. **Consultation and Action**

When the Complainant cannot address the Respondent comfortably and directly, or the behavior has continued in spite of direct confrontation, then the Complainant should report the behavior to someone in a position of authority who can intervene.

J. **Formal Resolution (Filing a formal grievance)**

Complainants who are dissatisfied with or do not wish to utilize informal resolution should consult directly with a co-director to determine the appropriateness of filing a formal grievance.

Any individual who chooses to file a formal sexual harassment grievance may do so immediately following the incident giving rise to the complaint, or following efforts to reach an informal settlement. In no event will the grievance be filed greater than twelve months following the incident that gave rise to the complaint unless the provisions of Section III have been met. After initially meeting with the Complainant to assess the complaint, including the appropriateness of the complaint being filed under this Policy and Procedures (see Section H), the co-directors will advise the Complainant of appropriate next steps.

K. **Formal Grievance Procedure**

The grievance must be submitted in writing to the co-directors. The grievance must clearly and concisely state a description of the matter being complained about; it may also indicate any remedy sought. The Complainant must sign and date the complaint form.

The Respondent will have ten working days to submit a written response to the co-directors. Their response will contain full and specific responses to each claim in the grievance, admitting, denying, or providing a full explanation of the allegations. The Respondent must sign and date the response. If an investigation has not already taken place and a fact-finder's report completed, then one will immediately commence. The co-directors will appoint the fact-finder and provide the fact-finder with a copy of the response and the complaint.

The fact-finder will conduct a thorough investigation and forward a written report to the

Director as quickly as possible**.** The Director will review the report to determine next steps.

When a hearing is to be held, it will be conducted in accordance with the procedures outlined below.

If, consistent with Section H, the co-directors determine that the complaint should be dismissed, and a hearing should not be held, the co-directors will provide written notification of this decision to the Complainant and the Respondent. This decision is final and not subject to appeal under these procedures.

The co-directors will provide a summary of the fact-finder's report to the Complainant and the Respondent.

L. **Duties and Powers of the Co-Directors and hearing Panel**

The co-directors will:

1. assign members to the hearing panel (in addition to the co-directors, these members may include administrative staff and trustees);
2. ensure an orderly presentation of all evidence;
3. ensure that the proceedings are accurately recorded; and
4. see that a fair and impartial decision based on the issues and evidence presented at the hearing is issued by the hearing Panel.

The hearing Panel will:

1. define issues of contention;
2. conduct a fair and impartial hearing which ensures the rights of all parties involved;
3. receive and consider all relevant evidence which reasonable people customarily rely upon in the conduct of serious business;
4. ensure that the Complainant and Respondent have full opportunity to present their positions and to present witnesses and evidence which support their positions (further, the co-directors may also name individuals to appear as witnesses);
5. ask relevant questions of the Complainant, Respondent, and witnesses to elicit information which may assist the co-directors in making a decision (members of the school community have a responsibility to fully cooperate with this process);
6. continue the hearing to a subsequent date if necessary to permit either party to produce additional evidence, witnesses, or other relevant materials;
7. change the date, time or place of the hearing on its own motion or for good reason shown by either party, and with due notice to all parties;
8. permit both parties to submit written arguments following the conclusion of the hearing; and
9. rule by majority vote on all questions of fact, interpretations of rules, regulations and

policies, recommendations for penalties and relief, and any requests that are made during the hearing.

The co-directors may consult with or have the assistance of school Legal Counsel throughout this process.

M. **The Hearing**

The hearing is intended to provide a forum within which a panel determines whether school policy has been violated. Both parties will be given a full and fair hearing. The proceeding, although formal, is not a court proceeding and the school will not be bound by the procedures and rules of evidence of a court of law. In most instances, Complainants and Respondents will be expected to speak for themselves. The school will hear and admit evidence which it believes is pertinent to the case.

N. **Review**

Within thirty days after receiving a written copy of the co-directors' decision, the Respondent, and the Complainant may request a review by submitting a written petition to the Director (who may appoint a designee to handle the review). The petition for review will set forth in detail the specific grounds upon which review is sought. The co-directors will review the record of the case and based upon this review**,** may modify or vacate the earlier decision.

The co-directors or designee will render a written decision in as timely a manner as possible following receipt of the petition for review and all materials relating to the grievance. The co-directors' decision will constitute final school disposition of the matter.

O. **Records**

Records of all proceedings under this Policy will be kept by the executive director and may be accessible to authorized staff as necessary. For example, records may be accessed when determining an appropriate penalty for a subsequent sexual harassment complaint; when a complaint of retaliation is made; when a decision is reviewed; or when a Respondent is a candidate for a supervisory position.

The records will also be available to the school's Legal Counsel for any proceeding related to these policies or procedures, whether internal to the school or in any judicial or administrative proceeding in which the school, its trustees, officers, employees, or agents are a party.

P. **Standard of Proof**

A violation of this Sexual Harassment Policy will be found only where there is a preponderance of evidence that a violation has occurred. The school will be bound to make its determinations based on this standard of proof.

Q. **State and Federal Remedies**

In addition, complaints of sexual harassment may be filed with one or more of the government agencies set forth below.

EEOC - Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
John F. Kennedy Federal Building 475 Government Center
Boston, MA 02203
(800) 669-4000

MCAD - Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination

Boston Office:
One Ashburton Place, Room 601
Boston, MA 02108
(617) 994-6000; TTY (617) 994-6196

Springfield Office:
436 Dwight Street, Room 220
Springfield, MA 01103
(413) 739-2145

OCR - Office for Civil Rights
United States Department of Education
5 Post Office Square, 8th Floor/Suite 900
Boston, MA 02109-3921
Telephone: (617) 289-0111
TTY: (800) 877-8339

Veterans

The Conway School welcomes applications from military veterans and military-connected students. We are committed to making our program accessible for veterans and their dependents. Conway works with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to provide one-on-one assistance to covered individuals (any individual who is entitled to educational assistance under chapter 31, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment, or chapter 33, Post-9/11 GI Bill® benefits) concerning GI Bill® benefits, as well as other financial aid benefits and needs. Please contact us for more information. We look forward to helping you understand and maximize your veterans benefits.

The Conway School additionally participates in the Yellow Ribbon GI Bill Education Enhancement Program, also known as the Yellow Ribbon Program. This participation permits the school and the VA to provide matching funds to cover all or a portion of the outstanding amount of established charges not covered under the Post-9/11 GI Bill. The Conway School will provide a contribution of $1,000 to each Yellow Ribbon participant during each academic year. The Conway School's billing adheres to the requirements of and complies with S2248 PL 115-407 Section 103. The Conway School will not impose any penalty, including the assessment of late fees, the denial of access to classes, libraries, or other institutional facilities, or the requirement that a covered individual borrow additional funds, on any covered individual because of the individual's inability to meet his or her financial obligations to the institution due to the delayed disbursement funding from VA under chapter 31 or 33. The Conway School will allow any covered individual to attend a course of education during the period beginning on the date on which the individual provides to the educational institution a certificate of eligibility for entitlement to educational assistance under chapter 31 or 33 (a "certificate of eligibility" can also include a "Statement of Benefits" obtained from the Department of Veterans Affairs' [VA] website eBenefits, or a VAF 28-1905 form for chapter 31 authorization purposes) and ending on the earlier of the following dates:

- The date on which payment from VA is made to the institution.
- 90 days after the date the institution certified tuition and fees following the receipt of the certificate of eligibility.

This allows a student to attend the course until VA provides payment to the institution. Section 103 requires a State Approving Agency (SAA), or the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) when acting in the role of the SAA, to disapprove certain courses of education. VA can grant a waiver to these requirements. The VA must make payments to schools no later than 60 days after receiving the tuition and fee certification from the school, and they would have to report semiannually to Congress any cases in which VA fails to make such payments within 60 days of certification. Compliant with Section 702 of the Veterans Access, Choice and Accountability Act of 2014 ("Choice Act"), the School does not charge qualifying Veterans and dependents tuition and fees in excess of the rate for resident students for
terms. All students are charged the same tuition rate.

GI Bill® is a registered trademark of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). More information about education benefits offered by VA is available at the official U.S. government Web site at https://benefits.va.gov/gibill/

7. Grievance Procedure

At the Conway School, grievances or major complaints may be about behaviors or actions of individuals or about policies or activities of the school as whole. Whenever a student, faculty, employee, contractor, or other member of the Conway School community believes that their legal or other rights have been violated, they (the "Complainant") should contact one of the co-directors to discuss their options within the process as outlined below. The co-directors oversee the grievance process; however, if the person about whom a complaint is being filed is one of the co-directors, the Complainant should file their complaint with the chair of the Board of Trustees, who will then serve the roles assigned to the co-directors below.

In cases involving complaints under this policy that include alleged violations of the Conway School Sexual Harassment Policy & Procedure (see section, above), the co-directors will confer and determine the appropriate process based on the Sexual Harassment Policy & Procedure.

Informal Procedures
If possible, the Complainant should bring the problem directly to the person whose actions they find to be objectionable (or the primary staff member overseeing a school policy or activity). Every effort should be made to reach a mutually agreeable solution to address the grievance. Complainants are also encouraged to speak with one of the co-directors.

If direct communication does not result in a satisfactory resolution, the Complainant may bring the grievance to one of the co-directors, who will notify the person being complained about (the "Respondent") normally within five working days of receiving the complaint.

The responsible co-director will meet with the Complainant and Respondent, either together or separately. This meeting has the main goal of facilitating a resolution between the parties with one of the co-directors serving as a facilitator or mediator of the process (this co-director must be acceptable to both the Complainant and Respondent). The period for conducting the meeting(s) should be no longer than three weeks from the time of receiving the complaint (one week if a student). The co-director will announce to the parties the final decision within five working days after the final meeting.

Formal Procedures
Filing a Formal Complaint
If the Complainant chooses not to use the informal process described above, or the informal process is not successful, the Complainant can file a formal complaint with one of the co-directors. The complaint should be a written description of the circumstances that are the basis of the complaint with sufficient details (i.e. dates, specific actions or behaviors, steps already taken to resolve the situation, etc.) to enable the Co-Director to make an initial

determination as to how to proceed. Within five working days, the Co-Director will determine whether the complaint is actionable under the Conway School's policies and requires investigation. If so, the Co-Director will inform the Respondent of the existence of the complaint and provide them with a copy of the complaint. If the Respondent chooses, she/he may provide a written response to the complaint with five working days of receipt of the complaint. The Co-Director will forward the complaint and any response to the complaint to the other Co-Directors, with copies to the chair and vice chair of the Board of Trustees.

The Conway School will follow its established investigative, disciplinary, sanctioning and appeals procedures as outlined in the employee and student handbooks. Such procedures may result in the imposition of discipline, up to and including suspension and termination (or expulsion, in the case of students).

Retaliation
Conway School strictly prohibits retaliating against any person who is participating in any complaint under this policy and may result in the imposition of discipline, up to and including suspension and termination (or expulsion, if a student).

Filing a Complaint with the State
The Massachusetts Department of Higher Education attempts to provide an avenue for the informal resolution of complaints and concerns regarding institutions of higher education. A description of the process is available below, and on the Board of Higher Education's (BHE) website at: https://www.mass.edu/forstufam/complaints/complaints.asp. The BHE's complaint policy is available as a downloadable pdf at: https://www.mass.edu/forstufam/documents/Final%20DHE%20Complaint%20Policy.pdf

Process. To initiate a complaint about a college or university operating in Massachusetts, a complaint form must be completed. The online form is available at: https://www.mass.edu/forstufam/complaints/complaintform.asp

After a complaint is submitted to the Board of Higher Education, the complaint is referred to the institution it concerns for explanation, response, and resolution, if possible. The institution generally has 30 days from its receipt of the complaint from the Board to provide a response to the complainant and the Board. If the forthcoming clarification and response concerning a Massachusetts institution do not satisfy the Board, the matter shall be referred to the Consumer Protection Division and/or the Public Charities Division of the Attorney General's Office. An institution's own Board of Trustees has the authority and responsibility to establish and enforce policies necessary for the management of the institution. The Board of Higher Education cannot require any institution to take any specific action in a matter and cannot provide complainants with legal advice.

Additionally, individuals who believe they have been subjected to discrimination and harassment

may file a formal complaint with the government agencies listed below. Using the school's complaint process does not prohibit an individual from filing a complaint with these agencies. Claims filed with the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD) or the US Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights (OCR) must be filed within 300 days from the date of the alleged violation and complaints filed with OCR must be filed within 180 days of the alleged discriminatory act.

Students may bring complaints to:

Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination
One Ashburton Place, Room 601, Boston, MA 02108; Telephone 617-994-6000

Office of Civil Rights (OCR), United States Department of Education, 8th Floor, 5 Post Office Square, Boston, MA 02109-3921; Telephone: 617-289-0111; Fax: 617-289-0150; TDD: 800-877-8339; OCR.Boston@ed.gov