

# Step-by-Step Guide: Academic Freedom in Instruction and Classroom Recordings at Bentley University

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## Step 1: Know Your Protections

- Academic freedom is a core value at Bentley University, supported by the institution's commitment to free expression and ethical teaching practices.
- These protections apply to all instructors of record, including full-time and adjunct faculty.
- Faculty have the right to select instructional content and teaching methods aligned with their expertise, course descriptions and university policies.
- [Bentley's Code of Ethics for Faculty and Staff](#) affirms the importance of integrity, respect, and compliance with academic standards.
- Your department chair and the dean's office are your first points of support if instructional choices are challenged.

## Step 2: If You Feel Intimidated or Threatened

- Document briefly: Note the date, time, and description of the incident (e.g., suspected recording, hostile comment, online post).
- Contact immediately: Notify your department chair. They will advise and, if needed, escalate to the dean's office, the Office of Student Conduct, and/or the [Office of Institutional Equity](#), if you feel targeted because of your identity.
- External complaints (e.g., social media or outside groups) should also be routed through your chair and dean's office.
- Reminder: Intimidation aims to disrupt teaching—stay focused and follow Bentley's support channels.

## Step 3: Establish a Shared Understanding

Consider including a syllabus clause such as:

"To support open inquiry and learning for everyone, recording (audio or video) in this course is not permitted without my prior permission or an approved accommodation through Student Accessibility Services. Any approved recordings are for personal study only and may not be posted, shared, or redistributed. All course materials are copyrighted and provided solely for the use of enrolled students."

- Review expectations with students early in the term.

- Reinforce that respectful discourse and academic freedom are foundational to Bentley's learning environment.

#### **Step 4: Handle Accommodations the Right Way**

- Students approved through [Student Accessibility Services \(SAS\)](#) may record for personal study purposes only.
- You may set clear limits: recordings must not be posted or redistributed.
- If uncertain, consult with SAS and your Chair for guidance.

#### **Step 5: If You See or Suspect Recording in Class or in a Student/Faculty Meeting**

- Stay calm. Ask the student to stop recording.
- If the student refuses, you may pause instruction or terminate the meeting to prevent escalation.
- Document the incident and report it to your chair.
- The chair will determine if referral to the [Office of Student Conduct](#) is needed.
- Avoid direct confrontation—allow Bentley's conduct process to address the matter.

#### **Step 6: If Your Lecture or Materials Appear Online Beyond Brightspace**

- Capture evidence: screenshots, URLs and identifying details.
- Notify your chair and dean's Office with a short summary.
- Bentley's [library](#) and [IT Services](#) can assist with copyright protection and takedown requests.
- Faculty generally retain copyright in their original instructional materials.

#### **Step 7: Protect Student Privacy in Your Own Recordings**

- Avoid including identifiable student information unless necessary.
- If student participation is recorded, obtain written consent by each student or restrict access to enrolled students only.
- Never post identifiable student content to public platforms without obtaining written consent by each student.

#### **Step 8: Keep a Simple Paper Trail**

- Ensure your syllabus and materials align with official course descriptions and learning objectives.
- Save copies of your syllabus and any announcements about recording or conduct.
- Retain notes or emails documenting incidents.

- A clear record supports you if issues arise later.

## **Resources at Bentley University**

[Office of Student Conduct](#)

[Student Accessibility Services \(SAS\)](#)

[Library Copyright Guide](#)

[IT Policies](#)

[Office of Institutional Equity](#)