

# RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

# & BENTLEY



BENTLEY UNIVERSITY

Office of Student Conduct

## **RESTORATIVE JUSTICE IS DRIVEN BY FOUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES:**

- **Inclusive decision-making** - Putting the decision making back into the hand of the individuals that care most about the harm that has occurred.
- **Active accountability** - An offender cannot sit back and be judged. They must be engaged in the process and take responsibility.
- **Repairing harm** - Focuses on hearing a reparation to bring up the harmed party.
- **Rebuilding trust** - Rebuilding the relationships so that the offender can once again be trusted and the harmed party can feel safe.



Karp, D. R. (2013). Little book of restorative justice for colleges and universities: repairing harm and rebuilding trust in response to Student Misconduct. Intercourse, PA: Good Books.



The Conduct philosophy and subsequent processes are modeled after the spirit of Restorative Justice. Restorative justice seeks to examine the harmful impacts of a decision and then determines the opportunities to repair the harm while holding the person who caused it accountable. At Bentley, we believe that students are responsible for their actions and the harm they cause to themselves, others, and the community, regardless of intent. Our Conduct processes are created to provide an educational opportunity to students who violate campus policies. Students will be able to reflect on their behavior, learn from their experiences, understand the impact of any harm they caused, and be provided opportunities to restore the harm while being held accountable for their actions.

Our two conduct processes reflect traditional Restorative Justice practices. First, students who are found responsible are provided opportunities to share their perspective and accept responsibility for their actions; this is achieved through sanction(s) that are issued. Additionally, harmed parties are able to participate in the Conduct process by submitting written reports, meeting with professional staff, or participating in the Conduct hearing itself, in some instances. The Hearing Officers and Student Conduct Board members create spaces that allow for productive conversations, free of judgment, with the goal of repairing harm caused. Second, the Conduct process provides support to all students and empowers alleged violators time to reflect upon their actions. Conduct processes that result in the student being found responsible for the policy violation will result in sanction(s), which provide students educational opportunities to restore harm caused to others and the Bentley community. Harmed parties will have designated rights within the Conduct process and receive support from the Office of Student Conduct and other campus offices. Lastly, after a conduct process has concluded students will receive follow up and progress may be tracked using a variety of metrics to ensure the most possible harm was restored.

**“RESTORATIVE JUSTICE IS A PROCESS TO INVOLVE, TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE, THOSE WHO HAVE A STAKE IN A SPECIFIC OFFENSE AND TO COLLECTIVELY IDENTIFY AND ADDRESS HARMS, NEEDS, AND OBLIGATIONS, IN ORDER TO HEAL AND PUT THINGS AS RIGHT AS POSSIBLE.”**

**HOWARD ZEHR, THE ZEHR INSTITUTE FOR RESTORATIVE JUSTICE, THE LITTLE BOOK OF RESTORATIVE JUSTICE**