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A.1.1 Type universes

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We postulate a hierarchy of **universes** denoted by primitive constants

$$\mathcal{U}_0, \quad \mathcal{U}_1, \quad \mathcal{U}_2, \quad \dots$$

The first two rules for universes say that they form a cumulative hierarchy of types:

- $\mathcal{U}_m : \mathcal{U}_n$ for $m < n$,
- if $A : \mathcal{U}_m$ and $m \leq n$, then $A : \mathcal{U}_n$,

and the third expresses the idea that an object of a universe can serve as a type and stand to the right of a colon in judgments:

- if $\Gamma \vdash A : \mathcal{U}_n$, and x is a new variable,¹ then $\vdash (\Gamma, x : A) \text{ ctx}$.

In the body of the book, an equality judgment $A \equiv B : \mathcal{U}_n$ between types A and B is usually abbreviated to $A \equiv B$. This is an instance of typical ambiguity, as we can always switch to a larger universe, which however does not affect the validity of the judgment.

The following conversion rule allows us to replace a type by one equal to it in a typing judgment:

- if $a : A$ and $A \equiv B$ then $a : B$.

¹By “new” we mean that it does not appear in Γ or A .