



NEWS

‘Grasping at straws’: Inside Princeton’s disciplinary process for pro-Palestine students

Laurence Drayton '26, who was investigated for his participation in the protest at Richardson Auditorium, told the 'Prince' that the investigation process "felt very coercive," and that it "essentially forces [the investigated person] to identify people, unless they're willing to take a personal penalty for not doing so."



Drayton was given a Dean's Warning, the weakest disciplinary action at the University, for alleged dishonesty and refusing to answer certain questions about the protest.

“They wanted to find me guilty of something, and since they weren't able to find me guilty of any actual misdemeanor at the event, which the investigation was supposed to be about, 1.1.5 is kind of the only option.”

Laurence Drayton '26

Referring to the section of Rights, Rules, and Responsibilities (RRR) that requires University community members to be honest and cooperative with the disciplinary process.



“We do note, however, that the University **only imposes penalties when and as conduct merits it** and [when] consistent with our policies.”

Jennifer Morrill

University spokesperson, declining to discuss particular disciplinary cases



“I thought that was an **invasive question** that seemed more directed toward **furthering surveillance and repression of other students** in the future than investigating the alleged policy violations at hand.”

Anonymous arrested undergraduate student referred to as “Riley”

On the questions they were asked about text communications related to Clio.



While their disciplinary cases at the University have been resolved, the 13 arrestees still face **defiant trespassing charges** in Princeton Municipal Court.

They have **appeared in court four times** — including one hearing that dragged on for over three hours — and still no trial date has been set. A recent hearing scheduled for Dec. 10 was pushed back to Jan. 14, 2025.



Riley recalled the May 13 campus-wide email proposing the restorative justice process, which they said included “something vague about the university minimizing the impact of the arrest.”

“I still don’t know what that means. I still have no idea what that means. But, you know, that’s the line that they decided to go up with.”

Riley

Expressing frustration with the University’s repeated claims that it supports an outcome that would “minimize” the impact of the arrest



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Caption: In interviews with the Prince, six students subject to University disciplinary proceedings for involvement in pro-Palestine protest described a tangled process that appeared fixated on searching for protest leaders to blame and employed tactics they described as invasive. The students were all investigated for supposed participation in pro-Palestine disruptions last spring. Their accounts, corroborated by dozens of documents reviewed by the Prince, including emails and investigation records, provide a rare glance behind the scenes of the University's investigative apparatus. Tap the link in our bio for the full story. Reporting by Olivia Sanchez and Annie Rupertus. Post design by @paige.walworth.

Photo credit: Malia Gaviola / The Daily Princetonian.

Alt Text: Collage image of pictures from Pro-Palestine protests. Top text, in orange: NEWS Bottom text, in white:

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