

GOVERNORS STATE UNIVERSITY

# STUDENT HANDBOOK

2019 – 20



*Governors State*  
UNIVERSITY





## **Welcome to the 2019–20 Academic Year!**

As members of the Governors State University community, it is important that we all know what to expect of one another and how we make our shared values come to life every day. Our mission is not a static statement – it is what we live by. Any well-functioning community must have a set of values; this Handbook is meant to serve as a guide not only for our students, but also for faculty, staff, and administrators to ensure that all members of our community, are informed about policies, procedures, rights, and privileges.

Our Student Code of Conduct, along with other university policies, will give you clear guidance on both what you can expect from GSU faculty and staff and what we will expect from you. The Student Handbook also contains helpful information, guides, and directories that will make navigation of campus life easier.

If, after reading through this Handbook, you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Office of the Dean of Students in C1310 or at 708.235.7595 or [deanofstudents@govst.edu](mailto:deanofstudents@govst.edu).

We wish you the best this academic year. And remember, we are here to help you succeed.

*Dr. Elaine P. Maimon, University President*

*Dr. Aurélio Manuel Valente, Vice President for Student Affairs & Enrollment Management*

*Mr. Corey M. Williams, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs & Dean of Students*



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## Office of the Dean of Students

### Welcome from the Dean of Students!

As your Dean of Students, it is my pleasure to welcome you to Governors State University for the 2019-20 academic year. During your time at GSU, I encourage you take an active role in your education and in our community as a whole. As a member of this community, it is your responsibility to know our policies as they establish a model for civility, care, honesty, and respect on our campus. I ask that you review this Student Handbook and abide by the conduct policies.

The Office of the Dean of Students (ODOS) works with students to advocate and provide access across a wide spectrum of areas. ODOS works closely with university services and community agencies and clears a pathway to success in areas ranging from university policies and procedures to academic performance and personal crises. If you need assistance, I encourage you to contact my office. Here are some of the ways we can help:

- Provide an opportunity for students to share their feedback, questions, or concerns.
- Help students understand and navigate through the university policies and procedures.
- Support students in making decisions related to educational, personal, and other barriers that may impede on the completion of their academic goals.
- Connect students with campus and community resources regarding food and housing needs.
- Provide initial notification to university faculty/staff in the event of a major illness/injury.
- Assist with emergencies that impact a student's educational experience.
- Consult with the campus community about addressing student behavior, including misconduct, disruptive behavior, students of concern, or students in distress.

I encourage you to explore new ideas and continue to challenge yourself this academic year. I hope to have an opportunity to talk with you and if you see me on campus, please say hello. I'm truly delighted that you have chosen to attend Governors State University.

Warm Regards,

**Corey M. Williams**

**Associate Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students**

Campus Location: C1310

Phone: 708.235.7595

Email: deanofstudents@govst.edu

Website: [www.govst.edu/DOS](http://www.govst.edu/DOS)



## Student Handbook Knowledge & Interpretation Statement

The policies and procedures listed within the Student Handbook do not constitute a comprehensive outline of all the university's rules and regulations. Students are subject not only to all applicable laws, but also to all university policies, rules and regulations, and are responsible for informing themselves about their responsibilities and obligations.

This Student Handbook is published to facilitate student access and understanding of official university policy. Language in the Student Handbook may differ slightly from official university policies for purposes of clarity and formatting. While there are no procedural implications due to language differences, the original policies are available for review at [www.govst.edu/policies](http://www.govst.edu/policies), the University Catalog ([www.govst.edu/catalog](http://www.govst.edu/catalog)) and the Governors State University Board of Trustees website ([www.govst.edu/About/Board\\_of\\_Trustees](http://www.govst.edu/About/Board_of_Trustees)).

Questions of interpretation or application of the Student Handbook or the Student Code of Conduct (Policy 4) should be directed to the Office of the Dean of Students.

## Changes to the Student Handbook

The Student Handbook is reviewed annually by the Office of the Dean of Students prior to the start of each academic year. Should the university determine that emergency circumstances exist, or are imminent; the university reserves the right to revise the Student Handbook effective upon publication and notice to students. Proposed changes to the handbook are welcome from all GSU community members.

## Distribution of the Student Handbook

To inform members of the campus community about the Student Handbook, the Office of the Dean of Students will publish the handbook online and electronically distribute the handbook annually. Printed copies are available upon request in the Office of the Dean of Students.

***The 2019-20 Student Handbook is effective August 12, 2019.***

*The most current version is located on the Student Handbook website ([www.govst.edu/handbook](http://www.govst.edu/handbook)).*

## Community Standards Program

GSU's Community Standards program, coordinated by the Office of the Dean of Students, strives to promote a safe and secure community while upholding the rights of all community members. The program promotes student learning, student development, and a campus culture of respect and responsibility. We aim to encourage a community of acceptance and accountability by creating processes and policies designed to resolve conflict in an appropriate manner.

Community Standards is responsible for administering the Student Code of Conduct (Policy 4), which is the primary policy used to outline the university's expectations for students and the role that they play in our community. This handbook details the administrative procedures used in addressing the conduct of students and/or registered student organizations that fail to abide by the university's community standards.

### Community Standards' mission is fulfilled by:

- Promoting a campus environment that supports the overall educational mission of the university by educating students about their rights and responsibilities as community members.
- Educating the campus community regarding the Community Standards core values of civility, integrity, responsibility, and social justice.
- Providing an avenue for individuals who are impacted by a student's behavior to voice their concerns and request action through the Community Standards process.
- Balancing the individual rights of students with their responsibilities as members of the numerous communities to which they belong, including the university and local community.
- Assisting students in understanding and navigating the Community Standards process by providing them with resources and information regarding their rights and options.
- Holding students accountable for their behavior in a fair, impartial, and consistent manner.
- Designing intentional sanctions that foster reflection, growth, and positive behavior change while taking into account student's individual experiences and circumstances.
- Helping students to reflect on the impact their choices can have, both on their current student experience and on their future opportunities.
- Offering educational and leadership opportunities for students who participate in the operation of the student conduct system.

### Contact Information

Phone: 708.235.2845

Email: [communitystandards@govst.edu](mailto:communitystandards@govst.edu)

Campus Location: C1310

[www.govst.edu/communitystandards](http://www.govst.edu/communitystandards)

## SECTION ONE: UNIVERSITY OVERVIEW

### Mission

Governors State University is committed to offering an exceptional and accessible education that prepares students with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to succeed in a global society.

### Vision

Governors State University will create an intellectually stimulating public square, serve as an economic catalyst for the region, and lead as a model of academic excellence, innovation, diversity, and responsible citizenship.

### Core Values

- **Invest in Student Success** through a commitment to mentoring and a deliberate university focus on student achievement of academic, professional, and personal goals.
- **Provide Opportunity and Access** to a first-class public education to residents of our surrounding communities and all those traditionally underserved by higher education.
- **Serve as an Economic Catalyst** for the citizens of the state of Illinois and our larger Midwest region, so that our communities grow and flourish.
- **Prepare Stewards of our Future** to thrive in the global economy, to contribute to ongoing innovative research, and to serve as stewards of the environment.
- **Demonstrate Inclusiveness and Diversity** to encourage acceptance of wide-ranging perspectives among students, staff, faculty, and members of the broader community.
- **Promote Quality of Life**, which encompasses civic, personal, professional, and cultural growth.

## Campus Information & Acronyms

<b>Acronym/Resource</b>	<b>Information</b>	<b>Location</b>
ARC	Academic Resource Center	B1215
ASSD	Access Services for Students with Disabilities	B1215
BoT	Board of Trustees, GSU Governing Body	govst.edu/bot
CAS	College of Arts & Sciences	E2578
CHHS	College of Health and Human Services	G156
CJY	Center for the Junior Year	C1321
COB	College of Business	G263
COE	College of Education	G256
CPA	Center for Performing Arts	D Building, first floor
CSO	Community Service Officer	Prairie Place Front Desk
C-Store	Convenience Store	Prairie Place first floor
Cube	Computer Connection Central/Technology Help Desk	D Building, second floor
CWC	Counseling and Wellness Center	A1120
DDP	Dual Degree Program	A2122
DPS	Department of Public Safety	C1375
FAFSA	Financial Aid Application	govst.edu/finaid
FDC	Family Development Center, childcare center	Adjacent to West Lot 1 and 2
FERPA	Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, Student Privacy Law	govst.edu/registrar
Gender Inclusive Restroom	Single Stall Gender Inclusive Restroom	C building, first floor near C1310
GMT	Goodman Malamuth Technology Building	Adjacent to West Lot 2
HOG	Hall of Governors	D Building
HOH	Hall of Honors	D1490
ITS	Information Technology Services/Help Desk	Cube, second Floor D Building
Lactation Room	Pickup room access key from Human Resources (C1360) or Department of Public Safety (C1360)	E2530B
Lakeside Lounge	Dining and social space	D Building, adjacent to café
NSP	New Student Programs	B1215
ODOS	Office of the Dean of Students	C1310
OIS	Office of International Services	GMT Building
PP	Prairie Place, on-campus residence hall	1 Prairie Place
ROAR	GSU Orientation Program	B1215
SEI	Student Evaluation of Instruction	govst.edu/sei/
CSEIP	Center for Student Engagement and Intercultural Programs (Formerly Known as Student Life)	A2110
SSC	Student Success Commons	B1215
The Den	Jaguar Den (Student Lounge)	A2140
TWAG	This Week at GSU, student run campus news	govst.edu/twag
UAAC	Undergraduate Academic Advising Center	C3385

## Academic Colleges & Programs

Information about GSU Colleges and Academic Programs is published in the University Academic Undergraduate and Graduate Catalog. The Academic Catalog is a comprehensive listing of current information regarding:

- Degree Requirements
- Course Offerings
- Undergraduate and Graduate Rules and Regulations
- Tuition and Fee Payment Policies
- Admissions Information
- Financial Assistance
- Academic Calendar

Students should keep the catalog of the year they first enrolled for referral throughout their academic career. Information in the catalog is subject to change and does not constitute a contract or warranty that the university will continue indefinitely to offer the program in which a student is enrolled. The university expressly reserves the right to change, phase out, or discontinue any policy or program. Such changes take precedence over catalog statements.

The most current catalog is available on the Academic Catalog website ([catalog.govst.edu](http://catalog.govst.edu)).

## Student Support Services

The Jaguar Success Guide ([www3.govst.edu/jaguar-success-guide](http://www3.govst.edu/jaguar-success-guide)) is an online clearinghouse of resources GSU provides to every student. There are resources that fit your needs—whether you are a first-year student living in Prairie Place, a working adult commuting to class, or a graduate student with a family. Key resources are listed below.

Tutoring, Disability Services, Writing Center, Study Skills, New Student Programs, GSU STAR	Academic Resource Center / Student Success Commons B1215, 708.534.4090 <a href="http://www.govst.edu/arc">www.govst.edu/arc</a>
Career Services, Student Employment, Internships, Resume Review, Mock Interviews	Career Services B1215, 708.235.3974 <a href="http://www.govst.edu/careerservices">www.govst.edu/careerservices</a>
Academic Advising, Degree Audit, Study Plans	Undergraduate Academic Advising Center C3385, 708.534.8043 <a href="mailto:advising@govst.edu">advising@govst.edu</a>
Educational Interest, Major, and Career Exploration	Center for the Junior Year C1322, 708.235.2855 <a href="http://www.govst.edu/CJY">www.govst.edu/CJY</a>
Student Financial Accounts, Payment Plans, Billing	Cashier's Office C1336, 708.534.4055 <a href="http://www.govst.edu/student-accounts/">www.govst.edu/student-accounts/</a>
Student Conduct, Student Advocacy, Student Concerns, and Campus Threat Assessment	Community Standards / Office of the Dean of Students C1310, 708.235.2845 <a href="http://www.govst.edu/communitystandards">www.govst.edu/communitystandards</a>
Lost and Found, Safety Escort, and Car Unlocking Services, Police Services	Department of Public Safety C1375, 708.534.4900 <a href="http://www.govst.edu/campus-safety/">www.govst.edu/campus-safety/</a>
Financial Aid, FAFSA, Grants, Scholarships	Office of Financial Aid D1400, 708.534.4480 <a href="http://www.govst.edu/finaid/">www.govst.edu/finaid/</a>
Childcare Services	Family Development Center FDC Building, 708.235.7300 <a href="http://www.govst.edu/FamilyDevelopmentCenter">www.govst.edu/FamilyDevelopmentCenter</a>
Advocate Health Services, Individual & Group Counseling, Sexual Assault Confidential Support	Counseling and Wellness Center A1120, 708.235.7334 <a href="http://www.govst.edu/counseling-and-wellness/">http://www.govst.edu/counseling-and-wellness/</a>
International Student Services, Study Abroad, Cultural Programming	International Student Services GMT 168, 708.235.7611 <a href="http://www.govst.edu/ois">www.govst.edu/ois</a>

myONECARD, Student Identification Services	Student Central/Welcome Desk or University Housing D1400 or C1331, 708.534.4363 <a href="http://www.govst.edu/Campus_Life/myONECARD">www.govst.edu/Campus_Life/myONECARD</a>
Recreation and Fitness, Intercollegiate Athletics	Recreation and Fitness A1106, 708.534.4556 <a href="http://www.govst.edu/Campus_Life/Recreation_and_Fitness">www.govst.edu/Campus_Life/Recreation_and_Fitness</a>
Class Registration, Graduation, Commencement, Student Information Change, FERPA, Transcripts	Registrar C1300, 708.534.4500 <a href="http://www.govst.edu/registrar">www.govst.edu/registrar</a>
Student Clubs & Organizations, Student Senate, Civic Engagement, Community Services, Diversity & Intercultural Programs	Center for Student Engagement and Intercultural Programs (Formerly Student Life) A2100, 708.235.7362 <a href="http://www.govst.edu/studentlife">www.govst.edu/studentlife</a>
Student Military, Veteran's Support	Veterans Resource Center GMT 160, 708.235.7597 <a href="http://www.govst.edu/veterans">www.govst.edu/veterans</a>
Student News Media, Phoenix Newspaper, This Week at GSU (TWAG)	Phoenix: <a href="http://www.opus.govst.edu/phoenix">www.opus.govst.edu/phoenix</a> TWAG: <a href="http://www.govst.edu/twag">www.govst.edu/twag</a>
Food Pantry, Emergency Necessities, Housing/Food Insecurity, Social Services Referrals	GSU4U C1310, 708.235.2228 <a href="http://www.govst.edu/gsu4u">www.govst.edu/gsu4u</a> Food Pantry A1115, 708.235.2845 <a href="http://www.govst.edu/jaguarden">www.govst.edu/jaguarden</a>
Sexual Misconduct, Title IX, Sexual Assault, Sexual Harassment, Dating/Domestic Violence, Stalking	Title IX Coordinator C1360, 708.534.4100 <a href="http://www.govst.edu/titleix">www.govst.edu/titleix</a>

## Financial Aid

The Office of Financial Aid administers federal, state, institutional, and private sources of aid. This office is located in D1400. Please refer to the Office of Financial Aid website at [www.govst.edu/finaid](http://www.govst.edu/finaid) for the most current and up-to-date information.

Students who have been accepted to Governors State University are strongly encouraged to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) in order to be considered for federal, state and institutional resources. Funding may be based on financial need or may be based on academic, athletic or fine arts merit.

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is available October 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Financial Aid Definitions:**

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) – application for student aid, such as federal grants, work-study, and loans used to pay for college.

Cost of Attendance (COA) – An average estimate of what will cost to attend GSU. It is comprised of tuition and fees, room and board, transportation, books and supplies, and personal expenses.

Expected Family Contribution (EFC) – This number is determined by the federal government using the information submitted on the FAFSA.

Financial Need – The difference between the student’s COA and the EFC.

Grants and Scholarship – is free money to help pay for college. Grants are often need-based, while scholarships are merit, talent and/or athletics based – financial aid that doesn’t have to be repaid.

Loans – sums of money students borrow to pay for their educational costs. Loans are part of financial aid and have to be repaid over time. The loans go into repayment if the student drops below half time, or six months after the student graduates. Repayment can be deferred if needed.

Federal Work-Study – provides an opportunity for part-time employment to students with financial need, allowing them to earn money to help pay education expenses. The program encourages community service work on-campus or off-campus depending on the opportunities available.

**Financial Aid Process**

1. Apply for a Federal Student Aid (FSA) ID with the Department of Education. Student and parents of dependent students should both apply for their own FSA ID. If you or your parents have an FSA ID from a previous year (used for you or another sibling), they should reuse that ID. The FSA ID needs to be used every year you apply for financial aid.
2. Complete the FAFSA application at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov) – GSU school code is 009145.
3. The Department of Education recommends families to utilize the IRS Data Retrieval tool when completing the FAFSA.
4. The Department of Education will process your FAFSA and email you the Student Aid Report (SAR) containing your information.
5. If your FAFSA is selected for verification, you will receive an email to your student email from financial aid listing the items needed to complete the verification process.

**Financial Aid Awards**

Once your financial aid has been reviewed, you will be awarded and sent an email to your student email stating your award letter is available. The financial aid award package may consist of a combination of grants, scholarships, loans, and/or work-study. Please note: financial aid is awarded with the assumption of full-time status. Students must notify the Office of Financial Aid of all types of scholarships awarded. Scholarships must be considered as a resource in determining the student’s total awarded package. If you have been selected to receive a scholarship for the academic year, please submit a copy of the scholarship letter from the provider indicating the total amount awarded and the academic terms for which the scholarship will be disbursed.



The Office of Financial Aid has an electronic process for you to accept your financial aid award(s). Follow these steps:

1. Log into myGSU.
2. Select Financial Aid, then select My Financial Aid.
3. Review your Financial Aid Award Letter
4. Accept and/or Decline your Financial Aid Awards
  - a. Accept Federal Direct Stafford Loans: The following actions must be completed in order to ACCEPT your awarded Stafford Loans and use these funds as payment towards your student account:
    - i. Sign the Master Promissory Note and complete the Entrance Loan Counseling online at <https://studentloans.gov> You will need your FSA ID to log into this site.
  - a. Decline (or Reduce) Federal Direct Stafford Loan
    - i. To decline your Direct Stafford Loan(s), select “Reject”
    - ii. If you would like to reduce your Direct Stafford Loans, complete the Reduction Form – Federal Direct Loans and Federal Work-Study. LINK?
  - a. All grants and scholarships are automatically ACCEPTED.
  - b. Accept / Decline Federal Work-Study, select “Accept” or “Reject” tab.

### Federal Pell Grant

Federal Pell Grant is for undergraduates, seeking their first bachelor's degree, who demonstrate significant need. More information on the Pell Grant can be found on the Federal Student Aid website.

Full Time	Three-Quarter Time	Half Time	Less Than Half Time
12 or more credit hours	9-11 credit hours	6-8 credit hours	Less than 6 credit hours
100% of Pell Grant	75% of Pell Grant	50% of Pell Grant	25% of Pell Grant

\*Students with higher EFC's may not be eligible for Pell at less than full time

Students are limited to 12 semesters (or 600%) of Pell Grant eligibility during their lifetime. You may view your percentage of Pell Grant used by logging into NSLDS. Your 'Lifetime Eligibility Used' percentage will be displayed in the 'Grants' section.

Students may be eligible to receive additional Pell Grant funding for the summer semester. This allows a student to receive Federal Pell Grant funds for up to 150 percent of the student's annual Pell Grant for an award year.

### State of Illinois Monetary Award Program (MAP)

This is a grant for undergraduate Illinois residents who demonstrate financial need as determined by the information supplied on the FAFSA. Because MAP funding is historically insufficient to meet the demand, a suspension date is typically implemented a few months after the FAFSA application has been made available on October 1st. Students are encourage to complete the FAFSA application as close to the October 1st date as possible in order to be considered for eligibility.

The State of Illinois MAP Grant is based on enrollment in 15 semester credit hours. This means that you will get 100% of your MAP Grant if you are enrolled in 15 hours. If you enroll in less than 15 hours, your MAP Grant will be prorated based on the number of hours for which you are enrolled. For example:

- Total semester MAP Grant: \$2000
- Number of semester hours: 10
- Eligible MAP Grant award:  $10/15 \times \$2000 = \$1333.33$

More information on the MAP grant program and updates can be found on the Illinois Student Assistance Commission's website.

### **Federal Direct Loans**

Governors State University participates in the Federal Direct Loan Program through the U.S. Department of Education. If this is your first Federal Direct Subsidized or Unsubsidized Loan at Governors State University, or you have an expired promissory note, you are required to sign an electronic Master Promissory Note and complete Entrance Counseling online at [www.studentloans.gov](http://www.studentloans.gov). This MPN and Entrance Counseling will be in effect throughout your time at GSU.

Student loans are not prorated based on enrollment. However, you must be enrolled at least half-time to be eligible for loans. Failure to stay enrolled at least half time will cause ineligibility for student loans.

**Federal Direct Subsidized Loan:** This loan is only available to undergraduate students. Loan repayment begins six months after you graduate or drop below half time. More information about Federal Direct Subsidized Loans can be found on the Federal Student Aid website.

**Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan:** The interest on this non-need based loan accrues from the time the loan is disbursed until paid in full. You may pay the interest while you are in school or it will be added to the principal balance of the loan when you begin repayment. Loan repayment begins six months after you graduate or drop below six credit hours. More information about Federal Direct unsubsidized Loans can be found on the Federal Student Aid website.

### **Federal Direct PLUS Loans**

Graduate/Doctoral students or parent/s of a dependent student can apply for this federal loan. This particular federal Stafford Loan is not automatically awarded to students. A credit check is required and the loan amount can't exceed the student's COA and must take into account all other financial aid and resources received by the student. Repayment begins 60days after the loan is disbursed, however, repayment can be deferred. Parent of dependent or Graduate/Doctoral student must complete a Loan

Master Promissory Note online at <https://studentloans.gov> and turn in a Federal Direct PLUS Loan Request to the Financial Aid Office.

### **Alternative Loans**

Alternative loans may be used as a source of financial aid in addition to scholarships, state, and federal assistance. Before you pursue any private lender loan you should be sure that you have utilized every Federal financial resource available to you. Alternative loans are subject to credit analysis and may require a so-signer. The Office of Financial Aid is unable to provide guidance as to which alternative loan may best meet your needs, however, some of the following factors should be examined:

- Interest rate – the interest rates are typically variable.
- Loan fees – an origination fee is the amount of money that the lender keeps off the top of the loan proceeds.
- Loan repayment and deferment options – some lenders will allow students to defer payments until after graduation, while others require interest payments while in school. Repayment plans may differ as well.

The Office of Financial Aid at GSU uses ELM resources to assist students by making it easier to navigate and filter the list of lenders across a range of data points and compare them side-by-side.

### **Federal Work-Study**

Subsidized by the federal government, FWS is a need-based financial aid award that allows you to work and earn money. To be considered, you must complete a FAFSA each academic year. Therefore, you must be awarded FWS before you can begin working a FWS job.

The FWS award amount is the maximum amount you may earn through this type of employment during the corresponding award period. You must also maintain satisfactory academic progress (SAP).

Many FWS positions are available in departments throughout campus. The type of work will vary by department. Please follow the steps below to review jobs on campus:

- Accept your FWS award, please go to myGSU financial aid awards and select accept.
- Go to [Jobs for Jaguars](#) to complete a profile and search for on and off campus jobs.
- Schedule an interview.
- If hired, Department Supervisor will give you a Student Employment Job Referral, which must be given to the FWS Coordinator in the Financial Aid Office.
- The FWS Coordinator will complete a Student Contract and submit to HR.
- Student must meet with HR to complete required paperwork.

For more information on the application process, please contact [Career Services](#) at 708.235.3974 or send an email to [career@govst.edu](mailto:career@govst.edu).

### **FA Link**

Purchase or rent books at the GSU bookstore using financial aid. In order to be eligible you must:

- Have submitted your FAFSA and completed the financial aid process.
- Have received a Financial Aid Award email. This can be viewed in your myGSU portal.
- Have received enough financial aid above and beyond the amount that covers your tuition, fees, and housing (if applicable).
- Have registered for classes for the term for which you wish to purchase books.
- Meet all other financial aid requirements including Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP), have no prior balances on your student account, and have no other registration holds that would prohibit you from receiving financial aid.

You must remain eligible for financial aid in order to use your financial aid at the bookstore. Before you make any registration changes, be sure to check with The Office of Financial Aid first.

FA Link will be available prior to the first financial aid disbursement of each semester.

### **Financial Aid and Academic Requirements**

A student's eligibility to receive funds from federal, state, and institutional programs depend on the number of credit hours for which the student initially registers and completes. Financial aid packages are awarded on the basis of full-time enrollment costs, the student should be aware that the award package will be re-evaluated and adjusted if full-time enrollment is not established and maintained. For financial aid purposes, undergraduate and graduate full-time enrollment status requires a minimum of 12 credit hours each semester.

### **Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)**

Regulations governing the federal student aid programs require that institutions develop standards of satisfactory academic progress (SAP) for student aid recipients. These guidelines require that we evaluate your progress by all three of the following: the length of time it takes to complete your program of study, the rate of completion, and your cumulative grade point average (GPA). Your academic record is reviewed at the end of each semester, including summer, to ensure you are meeting the SAP requirements.

### **Maintaining SAP status**

Monitoring SAP: Students will be monitored for satisfactory academic progress after grades are posted at the end of each semester. Students working on additional degrees after their first bachelor's and/or master's degree will also be monitored for all SAP criteria. Students will be assigned one of the following SAP statuses: Satisfactory, Warning, Suspension, Probation, or Continued Probation. Once this process is complete, students who are calculated to be on Warning or Suspension will be notified via email indicating the status of their satisfactory academic progress. Additionally, all students can monitor their SAP status online via the myGSU student portal.

Financial Aid Warning: Students who fail to meet the minimum cumulative GPA and /or fail to complete a minimum percentage of classes are placed on financial aid warning for the following term. Students placed on warning remain eligible for financial aid for one semester. At the end of the warning period, students will be reviewed for SAP compliance. Successfully complying with SAP standards will result in the continuation of financial aid for the following term. Failure to achieve the required cumulative GPA

and/or percentage of completion will result in suspension of financial aid eligibility for the following term.

**Financial Aid Suspension:** Students who were previously given a Financial Aid Warning and failed to meet the conditions of the warning which are to maintain a minimum cumulative GPA and complete a minimum percentage of classes are placed on suspension. Students who are placed on suspension are no longer eligible to receive state or federal financial aid. Suspension status for financial aid will remain in effect until an appeal is submitted and approved or all SAP standards are met. Students who are ineligible for financial aid funding due to SAP Suspension may still attend GSU.

### **SAP Appeals Process**

**SAP Appeal:** Students who are suspended for not meeting the satisfactory academic progress standards may appeal for reinstatement of financial aid eligibility for one semester, if they have extenuating circumstances which are generally beyond their control such as a death in the family, serious illness or injury of the student. Completing a SAP appeal does not guarantee approval. For more detailed information, refer to the SAP Appeal Instructions at [www.govst.edu/finaid](http://www.govst.edu/finaid).

**Financial Aid Probation:** Students who are suspended and filed a successful appeal for financial aid reinstatement will be awarded aid for one semester on Financial Aid Probation.

**Continued Probation:** As long as the student continues to make progress as identified by the academic plan the student will remain eligible for financial aid on continued probation. Students will be notified of their status at the end of each semester or when they first apply for financial aid.

**Appeal Denied:** Students whose appeal are denied will have all aid cancelled and will be responsible for paying for their classes or dropping them within the required refund period. Your classes are not automatically dropped when your financial aid is cancelled. If you register, pay your tuition and fees out-of-pocket and successfully complete all your courses you can re-appeal at the completion of the term for re-consideration. If approved your financial aid will not be retroactive, it will be reinstated for future terms at GSU.

**Reinstatement of Eligibility:** Students who are on financial aid suspension, can regain eligibility by raising their cumulative GPA to 2.0 (undergraduate students) or 3.0 (graduate and doctoral students), and/or raising their overall completion rate to 67 percent or above

### **Tuition and Fee Charges**

Governors State University tuition and fees are among the lowest in Illinois. The University's Board of Trustees approves rates for the next academic year usually during February of each year. After the rates are approved, they are available on our website. Please visit the following link for the current academic year's tuition and fees: <http://www.govst.edu/tuition-19-20/>

## Payment Methods

Governors State University offers various types of payment methods, as follows:

- Online - via credit card and electronic check (checking or savings account).
- By phone - via credit card by phoning the Cashier's Office at 708.534.4055.
- In person - at the Cashier's office (C1336) using cash, money order, check or credit card.
- By mail - using money order or check by mailing payment to:

Governors State University  
Cashier's Office  
1 University Parkway  
University Park, IL 60484-0975

The University accept Visa, MasterCard and Discover. Please visit the following link for more information:

[http://www.govst.edu/About/Offices and Departments/Student Accounts and Billing/Cashier-s Office/](http://www.govst.edu/About/Offices_and_Departments/Student_Accounts_and_Billing/Cashier-s_Office/)

## Tuition Payment Plans

Governors State University offers several payment plan options for each term through the TouchNet system (online). A \$40 non-refundable payment plan set-up charge will need to be paid at the time of enrollment in the plan.

TouchNet payment plans include feature that will automatically deduct the monthly payments from the student's or parent's debit or credit card. As part of enrolling in the plan, payments are scheduled and processed on the due dates without additional action needed on the part of the student or parent. It is the student's or parent's responsibility to make payments according to the payment plan schedule. If payment declines or does not go through due to insufficient funds, the student's account will be assessed a \$25 late fee for each installment that is late. Failure to have met prior payment plan obligations may prohibit you from entering into a payment plan with the university for future semesters.

Please visit the following link for more information about the current academic year's payment plan options: <http://www.govst.edu/payment-plan-19-20/>

## Student Refund Process

Students may be entitled to a refund due to excess of tuition payments, Financial Aid or if they drop a class within the 100% refund period. Federal regulations allow for this process to take up to 14 days to complete. Please visit the following link for more information about the student refunds process: <http://www.govst.edu/student-accounts/>

## University Housing

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Prairie Place is the first residential building on the Governors State University campus. Students of all levels – from freshmen to doctoral candidates – live here. Community rooms and lounges, study spaces, laundry facilities, kitchens and even a convenience store are all right here in your new home. Please view the University Housing Handbook for more information regarding Contract types, general information, and policies.

Choose from four unique room types:

- Semi Suite (double occupancy bedrooms)
- Two-Bedroom Apartment (double occupancy bedrooms)
- Two-Bedroom Apartment (single occupancy bedrooms)
- Four-Bedroom Apartment (single occupancy bedrooms)

## Campus Dining

The GSU Café is located in the middle of everything – a great place to grab a meal or snack. You'll find healthy choices that will keep you fueled all day long. There are hot specials every day for lunch and dinner, plus a salad bar, sandwich bar, soup and pizza. Arena Food Service, Inc. is the University's Food Service, Catering and Vending partner. Arena provides full retail food services in the GSU Café and C-Store at Prairie Place. Please view our Campus Dining website for more information regarding vending services, catering services, and daily hours and menus.

GSU offers a Meal Plan program to ALL enrolled students. The convenient and flexible meal plan allows you to have monies specifically available for food and beverage purchases on the GSU campus. Resident students are assigned a specified residential meal plan according to their room type. Commuting students can select the Meal Plan program that best meets their needs:

- GOLD PLAN: \$1500/semester
- SILVER PLAN: \$1000/semester
- BRONZE PLAN: \$500/semester

## Bookstore

The Governors State University Bookstore (D1493) managed by Follett, sells textbooks, GSU and Jaguar apparel, and other academic supplies. Please view our Bookstore website for more information regarding our price match program, how to use your Financial Aid to purchase or rent books, and bookstore hours.

## Center for Student Engagement and Intercultural Programs (formerly Student Life)

The Center for Student Engagement and Intercultural Programs (formerly Student Life) is where involvement and learning meets. The Center for Student Engagement and Intercultural Programs affords students the opportunity to be included in activities and the chance to participate using one's abilities in day to day activities as a member of the community. The center promotes a sense of belonging and connectedness through leadership development programs, intercultural education, campus programs & traditions, student clubs & organizations and service learning opportunities as

partners with all campus community members. For more information call 708-534-7362 or visit us at <http://www.govst.edu/Studentlife/>. To learn more about clubs and organizations visit Jaguar Connection at <https://govst.campuslabs.com/engage/>.

## Supplemental GSU Student Handbooks

**Members and Student Leaders in Student Organizations:** For more information about expectations and procedures related to student clubs and organizations, please refer to the Student Engagement and Intercultural Programs Manual ([www.govst.edu/studentlife/](http://www.govst.edu/studentlife/)).

**Resident Students:** For more information about expectations and procedures related to living on campus, please refer to the University Housing website ([www.govst.edu/housing](http://www.govst.edu/housing)) and the University Housing Handbook ([www.govst.edu/housinghandbook](http://www.govst.edu/housinghandbook)).

**Student Athletes:** For more information about expectations and procedures related to participation in intercollegiate athletics, please refer to the Student Athlete Handbook ([www.gsuaguars.com/](http://www.gsuaguars.com/)) and the GSU Athletics website ([www.govst.edu/athletics](http://www.govst.edu/athletics)).



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## SECTION TWO: UNIVERSITY POLICIES

As stated, the policies and procedures listed within the Student Handbook do not constitute a comprehensive outline of all the university's rules and regulations. Students are subject not only to all applicable laws, but also to all university policies, rules, and regulations, and are responsible for informing themselves about their responsibilities and obligations.

### A. Civility Policy

As set forth in its Mission Statement, "Governors State University is committed to offering an exceptional and accessible education that prepares students with the knowledge, skills and confidence to succeed in a global society." The faculty, staff, and students of Governors State University, as members of the university community, can expect to be treated with respect and consideration and are expected to treat others in a similar manner.

All members of the community must treat other members with civility and respect, while recognizing that disagreement and informed debate are valued in an academic community. Demeaning, intimidating, threatening, or violent behavior, either in verbal or written form, that affects the ability to learn, teach, or work in the university community are unacceptable and violate Governors State University's standards for civility and respect.

Individuals covered by this policy include all members of the Governors State University community (faculty, staff, and students). Contractors and vendors of Governors State University, as well as visitors to the campus are also expected to comply with the requirements of this policy.

#### Responsibility to Act

A member of the community who is involved in or witnesses behavior on campus that imposes imminent danger to people or property should immediately contact the Department of Public Safety (DPS). In non-emergency situations that do not involve imminent danger, contact a supervisor, division/departments chair, dean, the Department of Human Resources, the Office of the Provost, or the Office of the Dean of Students for advice on the proper course of action, or to make a complaint.

Red Campus Phones:	Direct line to DPS
Yellow Campus Phones:	Red button provides a direct line to DPS
Campus Phones (Emergency):	Dial 911
(Non-Emergency):	Dial 4900
Non-Emergency (Non-campus Phones):	Dial 708.534.4900
Office of the Dean of Students:	Dial 708.235.7595
Human Resources	Dial 708.534.4100

#### Violation of the Civility Policy

A university community member who has violated the policy is subject to disciplinary action, which may include separation of the offending party from the university, consistent with established disciplinary

procedures. Non-compliant behavior by contractors, vendors, or visitors may lead to removal from the campus, at the discretion of Governors State University.

## **B. Student Records (FERPA)**

As required by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), GSU maintains individual student records for the purpose of providing educational, vocational, and personal services to the student. The Access to Student Educational Records policy provides the confidentiality of student education records as established under FERPA, establishes the right of students to inspect and review their education records, and provides guidelines for the correction of inaccurate or misleading data.

The University has an obligation to limit access to student information to those legitimate uses defined in the FERPA and university policy, and to insure that data is stored securely to prevent unauthorized access. Questions regarding FERPA should be directed to the Registrar's Office. *Access to Student Educational Records Policy (Policy 12)* is available at [www.govst.edu/policies](http://www.govst.edu/policies).

## **C. Title IX and Sexual Misconduct**

Governors State University (GSU) is committed to maintaining a community in which students, faculty, and staff can work and learn together in an atmosphere free of all forms of unlawful discrimination and harassment, including sexual and gender based misconduct. Such misconduct violates the dignity of the individual and the integrity of the university as an institution of higher learning, and thus, will not be tolerated at GSU.

Title IX is the comprehensive federal law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in any federally funded education program or activity, including all forms of sexual misconduct. As required by Title IX, the university prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in all university activities and programs. Any form of sexual harassment, including sexual assault and sexual violence, is a violation of Title IX and Sexual Misconduct Policy (Policy 78, [www.govst.edu/titleix](http://www.govst.edu/titleix)) and the Student Code of Conduct. Sexual Misconduct includes, but is not limited to, sexual and gender-based harassment, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking. Sexual Misconduct includes the full range of unlawful sex-based misconduct under Illinois and federal law, regardless of whether it is specifically defined in the policy. Unwanted or unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that is committed without valid consent of all parties involved will not be tolerated.

Consistent with our legal responsibilities and institutional values, the university is committed to taking all appropriate steps to eliminate sexual misconduct, prevent its recurrence and address its effects. The university encourages all members of our community to participate in the process of creating a safe, welcoming and respectful environment on campus.

## GSU Title IX Coordinator

If you experience sexual misconduct or know someone who has, we encourage you to report it to the Title IX Coordinator so that we can help create a university community free of any such conduct.

### **Sandra Alvarado, Title IX Coordinator**

1 University Parkway (C1360)  
University Park, IL 60484  
Phone: 708.534.4100  
Email: [titleixofficer@govst.edu](mailto:titleixofficer@govst.edu)

### **Corey Williams, Deputy Title IX Coordinator & Dean of Students**

1 University Parkway (C1310)  
University Park, IL 60484  
Phone: 708.235.6810  
Email: [cwilliams43@govst.edu](mailto:cwilliams43@govst.edu)

**Submit a secure online incident report:** [www.govst.edu/TitleIX/](http://www.govst.edu/TitleIX/)

## Title IX and Sexual Misconduct Policy and Complaint Procedures

Definitions of prohibited conduct and related terms, complaint procedures, and support resources are detailed in the Title IX and Sexual Misconduct Policy ([www.govst.edu/titleix](http://www.govst.edu/titleix)).

## Confidential Resources & Reporting Obligations

Most university employees, unless specifically exempted, must immediately report allegations or disclosures of sexual misconduct to the Title IX Coordinator. *If you are seeking support and wish to speak confidentially without filing a formal report, students may contact the resources below:*

**Counseling and Wellness Center** provides free, confidential counseling services for GSU students.

Confidential Advisor: Erica Wade, Director of Counseling & Wellness  
Campus Location: A1120  
Phone: 708.235.7334  
[studentcounseling@govst.edu](mailto:studentcounseling@govst.edu)  
<http://www.govst.edu/counseling-and-wellness/>

**YWCA South Suburban Center** provides affordable and confidential services for survivors of sexual assault and abuse. The crisis hotline provides free, confidential, crisis intervention, and referral services.

Location: 320 West 202nd St., Chicago Heights, IL 60411  
Crisis Hotline (Available 24/7): 708.748.5672  
Phone: 708.754.0486  
[www.ywcachicago.org](http://www.ywcachicago.org)

## Sexual Misconduct Awareness and Education

In addition to Title IX, Governors State University also complies with Illinois Legislative Public Act 110 ILCS 155: Preventing Sexual Violence in Higher Education Act which requires that the institution adopt a comprehensive policy concerning sexual violence, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking consistent with governing federal and state law. Accordingly, as a student you may be asked to participate in education and outreach related to the prevention of sexual violence. Students are expected to participate in all required training and educational programs to ensure state and federal compliance and help create a welcoming and respectful campus community.

## D. Complaints & Grievances

Complaint and grievance procedures have been established to foster open communication and ensure that Governors State University continuously improves as a result of feedback from students.

- **Informal Complaints** are filed to address concerns (such as an action or practice within the control or responsibility of the University) that a student believes should be changed to improve their overall quality of education and student experience, and/or the experience of others.
- **Formal Grievances** are filed to request an explanation, reconsideration, and review of a decision made by a faculty member and/or administrator. The policy is applicable to academic concerns regarding final grades, academic advising, and other academic related matters. Non-academic grievances may be filed regarding registration, enrollment, discrimination, harassment, or any other university error related to non-academic issues.

For the purposes of this document, “working days” refers to weekdays but excludes weekends, university holidays, and days when the campus is closed for business.

More information about student complaints and grievances is detailed in the Student Grievance Policy (Policy 5, [www.govst.edu/policies](http://www.govst.edu/policies)) and online at [www.govst.edu/studentcomplaints](http://www.govst.edu/studentcomplaints).

### Academic Grievance Procedure

Students may file a grievance to review academic decisions made by the university, including, but not limited to issues regarding grades, academic advising, and other academic related matters. Academic grievances are resolved in the colleges through the faculty, division/department chair, and college dean.

#### 1. Informal Resolution

- a. Prior to filing a grievance, the student *must seek informal resolution of the issue* with the faculty member or administrator directly involved in the issue/incident of concern within 15 working days (when classes are in session) of the occurrence of the issue.
- b. If, after reasonable efforts, a satisfactory solution is not reached, the student may file a written grievance with the appropriate division/department chair.

#### 2. Filing a Grievance

- a. To file an official academic grievance, the student must submit a written statement within 30 calendar days of the event to the division/department chair of the collegial unit in which the course is offered.

- b. The grievance must state the reasons for the grievance and the remedy that is sought.

### 3. Request for Extension of Filing a Grievance

- a. The student may request a one (1) time extension of the 30-day time period in which a grievance must be filed.
- b. This request must be in writing to the division/department chairperson prior to the end of the 30-day period with reasons and requested time for extension.

### 4. Determination of Grievances (*please check with your academic college dean for the most up-to-date information*). The division/department chair has seven (7) working days to determine if the grievance has substance.

#### a. *Determination if the Grievance is an Issue of Substance*

- i. If the grievance is determined to be an issue of substance, the division/department chair shall refer the grievance to the chair of the College Grievance Committee.
- ii. The grievance chair shall attempt to find a mutually satisfying solution by working with both the student and the faculty/administrator involved within seven (7) working days (when classes are in session) of receiving the grievance.
- iii. If the grievance chair is unable to mediate a satisfactory solution, they shall request in writing that the faculty/administrator involved submit a written response to the student's grievance.
- iv. The response is to be received by the grievance chair within seven (7) working days of the request (when classes are in session).
- v. The grievance chair shall convene the Student Grievance Committee within ten (10) working days (when classes are in session) of receiving a written response from the faculty/administrator involved.

#### b. *Determination Grievance is Not an Issue of Substance*

- i. If the division/department chair decides that the grievance does not represent an issue of substance covered by these procedures, they shall so inform the student in writing with reasons.
- ii. The student may appeal (except in cases in which the provost or designee has rendered the decision) the division/department chair's decision of no substance to the dean/director in writing within ten (10) working days (when classes are in session) of receipt of the division/department chair's decision.
- iii. The decision of the dean/director shall be submitted in writing within ten (10) working days (when classes are in session) to the provost (or designee), the chairperson, and the student.
- iv. The student may appeal the dean/director's decision to the provost (or designee) in writing within ten (10) working days (when classes are in session) of receipt of the college dean/director's decision.
- v. The decision of the provost (or designee) shall be provided in writing within ten (10) working days (when classes are in session) and is final and binding.

**Additional information regarding Academic Grievance Procedures can be found here ([www.govst.edu/grievance-policy-procedure](http://www.govst.edu/grievance-policy-procedure)).**

### **Non-Academic Grievance Procedure**

Students may file a non-academic grievance with the Office of the Dean of Students for matters not addressed through the academic grievance process.

Non-academic grievances should be submitted online at [www.govst.edu/grievance](http://www.govst.edu/grievance).

- A. Filing a Complaint:** To file a complaint, the student must submit a written statement to the Office of the Dean of Students within 30 calendar days of the date of occurrence. The written complaint must state the reasons for the grievance and the remedy that is sought.
- B. Request for Extension of Filing a Grievance:** The student may request an extension of the thirty-day time period in which a complaint must be filed. This request, with rationale, must be in writing to the Office of the Dean of Students prior to the end of the 30-day period.
- C. Determination of Complaints:** Upon receipt of the complaint, the Dean of Students or their designee has seven (7) working days to determine if the grievance has substance.
- a. *Determination that the Complaint has No Substance:*
    - i. If the Dean of Students or their designee decides that the complaint does not have substance covered by these procedures, they shall so inform the student in writing with rationale. The decision of the Dean of Students or their designee shall be submitted in writing to the provost (or designee) and the student.
    - ii. The student may appeal the Dean of Students or their designee's decision to the provost (or designee) in writing within ten (10) working days of the receipt of the dean's decision. The decision of the provost (or designee) shall be provided in writing within ten (10) working days and is final and binding.
  - b. *Determination that the Complaint has Substance:*
    - i. If the Dean of Students or their designee determines the grievance has substance, they shall attempt to find a mutually satisfying solution by working with the student within ten (10) working days of receiving the grievance.
    - ii. If the Dean of Students or their designee is unable to mediate a satisfactory solution, they shall review the facts and make a decision regarding the student's complaint. The decision shall be submitted in writing within seven (7) days of the request to the provost (or designee) and the student.
    - iii. The student may appeal the Dean of Students or their designee's decision to the provost (or designee) in writing within ten (10) working days receipt of the dean's decision.
    - iv. The decision of the provost (or designee) shall be provided in writing within ten (10) working days and is final and binding

## E. Concealed Carry

The Concealed Carry policy was developed in response to the Illinois Firearms Concealed Carry Act, 43 ILCS 66, which prohibits anyone from knowingly bringing a firearm onto property owned or controlled by an institution of higher education. The Act also authorizes GSU to restrict persons from carrying concealed firearms onto campus property, including university vehicles, to regulate student, employee or visitor misconduct or violations of regulations, and to establish regulations for the storage and maintenance of firearms on university property.

The policy expands the restriction of firearms and includes weapons which shoot a projectile, are explosive, or are designed or traditionally used to inflict harm and includes threatening, intimidating, or bullying actions in the restricted activities. It also places restrictions on the movement and storage of firearms or weapons in privately owned vehicles on university property. For more information, please see the Concealed Carry policy ([www.govst.edu/Campus\\_Life/Campus\\_Safety/Police\\_Services/](http://www.govst.edu/Campus_Life/Campus_Safety/Police_Services/)) or contact the Department of Public Safety in C1375 or at 708.534.4900.

## F. Demonstration and Public Protest Policy

Consistent with principles of academic freedom and academic responsibility outlined in the Governors State University Board of Trustees Governing Policies, the purpose of the Demonstration and Public Protest Policy is to provide necessary resources to support the exercise of constitutional rights provided by First Amendment. Additionally, the policy is intended to provide for the safety of all persons and property associated with the planned or spontaneous act of demonstration or protest.

To secure assistance in planning and obtaining university facilities and in order to protect the rights of all members of the university community, groups are encouraged to register demonstrations with the University Events office at least two working days prior to the event. The University permits demonstrations, marches and non-university affiliated speakers without prior registration provided no sound amplification equipment is utilized and members of the university community not participating in the demonstration may proceed with their normal activities.

The *Demonstration and Public Protest Policy* is available at [www.govst.edu/policies](http://www.govst.edu/policies).

## G. Late Course Withdrawal

Students may withdraw from courses using their myGSU portal through the published withdrawal date. If a student wishes to withdraw after the published date, they must submit a late withdrawal request to the Registrar ([www.govst.edu/withdrawing](http://www.govst.edu/withdrawing)). Students who are denied a late withdrawal may submit a written appeal to the Office of the Dean of Students as outlined in the *Withdrawal Policy (Policy 6)*.

### Submitting a Late Withdrawal Appeal Request

1. **Filing an Appeal:** Student submits a one (1) page (maximum) letter explaining the rationale for an appeal and attaches additional supporting documentation that the student believes will be needed to effectively review the appeal request. This information must be submitted to the Office of the Dean of Students (deanofstudents@govst.edu) *within ten (10) working days of the denial letter receipt* from the Registrar.
2. **Review of Appeal:** The Office of the Dean of Students will investigate/review the appeal information in order to make a decision. The designated individual responsible for reviewing the appeal will determine if a meeting with the student to discuss the appeal is necessary or if there is sufficient information provided within the written appeal in order to make a decision.
3. **Notice of Decision:** Students will be notified of decision *within ten (10) working days* of submitting an appeal. If the appeal is approved, the associated departments will need *at least ten (10) working days* to make changes to the student's account.

## H. Missing Student Notification Procedures

Governors State University strives to offer the safest learning environment for all members of the campus community. The *Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008* requires all institutions of higher education to establish a missing student notification policy for students that reside in on-campus housing. The Act requires such institutions to ensure that on-campus residential students have a process for which they can register confidential contact person information as well as procedures for implementation of this policy. For more detailed information, please refer to the University Housing Handbook ([www.govst.edu/housinghandbook](http://www.govst.edu/housinghandbook)) or visit [www.govst.edu/housing](http://www.govst.edu/housing).

## I. Religious Observances

Governors State University will not discriminate against students for observing religious holidays and will reasonably accommodate the religious observances of individual students regarding admission, class attendance, as well as the scheduling of examinations and academic work requirements.

- It is the responsibility of the student to notify (in writing) the GSU administrator/faculty member involved at least three class periods in advance of the date of the religious observance.
- Accommodations considered unreasonable are those which would necessitate the modification of academic standards or create undue hardship on the University or its staff.
- If students feel they have been discriminated against, a student may file grievance following the procedures outline in the Student Grievance Policy (Policy 5).

*Reasonable Accommodation for Students' Religious Observances (Policy 38)* is available at [www.govst.edu/policies](http://www.govst.edu/policies).

## J. Smoke Free/Tobacco Free Campus

In accordance with (110 ILCS 64/) the Smoke-Free Campus Act, as of July 1, 2015, Governors State University prohibits smoking and the use of tobacco products indoors and outdoors on campus



property, including parking lots and in parked cars. Littering the remains of tobacco products or any other related waste product on campus property is further prohibited.

The purpose of the Smoke Free/Tobacco Free Campus Policy is to provide a healthy environment that promotes and encourages the health, well-being, and safety of students, faculty, staff, and visitors at Governors State University by minimizing the negative effects of secondhand smoke, to improve safety, and to encourage a more sustainable environment. For more information please review the *GSU Smoke Free/Tobacco Free Policy* at [www.govst.edu/smokefree](http://www.govst.edu/smokefree).

### **K. Student Evaluation of Instructions (SEI)**

Students have the right to evaluate the effectiveness of the instruction they received using a university-wide Student Evaluation of Instruction (SEI) process at the completion of each term. Information about the SEI process is online at <http://www.govst.edu/sei/>

### **L. Volunteer Emergency Worker**

Consistent with the Volunteer Emergency Worker Higher Education Protection Act (110 ILCS 122), GSU will provide reasonable accommodations for any student who is absent from class due to the performance of their duties as a volunteer emergency worker. The Volunteer Emergency Worker Job Protection Act defines a volunteer emergency worker as a volunteer firefighter, emergency medical technician, ambulance driver or attendant, or other first responder.

If an absence is the result of a student's documented performance of emergency volunteer work, an instructor must accommodate the absence within reason. A student who believes they were unreasonably denied this accommodation may seek redress through the Student Grievance Policy (Policy 5). The *Volunteer Emergency Worker Policy (Policy 67)* is available at [www.govst.edu/policies](http://www.govst.edu/policies).

## SECTION THREE: STUDENT RIGHTS

### A. Student Rights & Responsibilities

Governors State University recognizes the basic rights and responsibilities of the members of the university and strives to provide for its members the opportunities and protections that best serve the nature of the educational process. The Student Code of Conduct governs the behavior of students of the university and protects the basic rights of the individual as well as the practical necessities of the community. Students have the right to a safe environment to support the pursuit of their educational and personal goals. Students also have the right to provide feedback to university faculty, staff, and administrators through informal and formal processes as outlined in this handbook (i.e. grievances, complaints, appeal processes).

Students are expected to:

- Treat students, faculty, and staff of the university with fairness and respect,
- Represent themselves in an honest manner,
- Respect university property and the activities conducted at university facilities, or university-sponsored events,
- Respect the property of others, and
- Uphold university policies and all applicable laws.

University is expected to:

- Treat students of the university with fairness and respect,
- Afford students procedural due process before taking disciplinary actions,
- Communicate policies and procedures to students, and
- Uphold university policies and all applicable laws.

### B. Alcohol and Drug Abuse

The health and well-being of GSU students, faculty, and staff are critical components of the overall health of our university community. Consequently, Governors State University seeks to maintain a campus environment that is free from the illegal use of alcohol and other drugs. Consistent with its mission as a public institution of higher education, the university is committed to educating the students, faculty and staff on the dangers of alcohol and drug abuse, and to establishing standards of conduct that maintain a campus environment in which such abuse is prohibited. These standards are intended to be in full compliance with the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 and the Drug-Free Schools Act of 1989 by annually producing and distributing information on Drug and Alcohol Abuse.

In compliance with the Act, the Counseling and Wellness Center audits and authors a biennial report of institutional policies and practices that includes the effectiveness and the consistency of the enforcement of sanctions. The 2016-18 report is available upon request and the 2018-20 report is forthcoming.

GSU students are expected to comply with local, state, and federal laws related to the use of drugs, alcohol, and crimes of violence. The Student Code of Conduct details expectations for students' behavior regarding alcohol and drugs as well as possible sanctions for violations of these policies, which include disciplinary sanctions and educational programs.

### **Counseling & Support Services**

Counseling and Wellness Center <http://www.govst.edu/counseling-and-wellness/> offers professional counseling assistance to students with concerns related to the use and/or abuse of drugs and/or alcohol. Those students who seek university counseling assistance will also be referred to an appropriate community treatment program for more in-depth assessment and treatment if required. Some alcohol, drug, and/or crimes of violence must be deferred directly to public safety to enforce appropriate charges for their illegal actions.

### **Health Risks**

The abuse or illegal use of alcohol and the illegal use of controlled substances can seriously injure the health of employees and students, adversely impair the performance of their duties and their academic achievements, and endanger the safety and well-being of fellow employees, students, and others. Substance abuse may involve not only controlled substances and illegal drugs, but also alcohol and other substances that pose a health risk. When drugs are combined, their negative effects on the mind and body are often multiplied beyond the effects of the same drugs taken singly, which can be deadly.

## **C. Americans with Disabilities**

Governors State University is committed to the full inclusion and participation of persons with disabilities in all aspects of university life. Consistent with the Illinois Human Rights Act, the American with Disabilities Act, and other state and federal law, GSU will provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities or temporary health issues.

Access Services for Students with Disabilities (ASSD) is dedicated to creating an accessible environment and equality of educational opportunities for students with documented disabilities. Legally mandated access and accommodations are available to all qualified students who self-identify with ASSD. Students must provide documentation by a qualified professional that can verify the functional impact of the disability as well as recommendations for appropriate accommodations.

The information provided by students is voluntary and confidential. For more information and/or to arrange for accommodations, please contact Access Services for Students with Disabilities ([www.govst.edu/disability-services](http://www.govst.edu/disability-services)) in the Student Success Commons, located in B1215, at 708.534.4090.

## **D. Campus Bulletin Board Posting Procedures**

Prior approval by Center for Student Engagement and Intercultural Programs is required to post materials on Center for Student Engagement and Intercultural Programs and University Housing bulletin boards. Request for posting flyers should be made online through Jaguar Connection ([www.govst.edu/jaguarconnection](http://www.govst.edu/jaguarconnection)) and approved items should be submitted to the Center for Student Engagement and Intercultural Programs (A2100) for posting.

Types of material which may be posted include, but are not limited to: event notices of activities offered by the Center for Student Engagement and Intercultural Programs, events and activities sponsored by recognized student groups and organizations, events, and activities offered by GSU or their associates (e.g., Dining Services, Follett Bookstore), non-profit events and activities of interest to Governors State University students, and direct service items considered on a case-by-case basis.

## **E. Campus Safety Information (Clery Act)**

Establishing and maintaining a safe and secure environment for our staff, students, and visitors is of primary importance to Governors State University. The Clery Act (Student Right to Know and Campus Security Act of 1990) is a federal mandate which requires that all current students and employees be provided with information on policies and procedures involving campus security, the reporting of criminal action or other emergencies, and the enforcement authority of security personnel.

As part of our commitment to campus safety and in compliance with the Clery Act, the Campus Security Report is available for review on the Campus Right to Know Website ([www.govst.edu/Campus\\_Life/Campus\\_Safety/Campus\\_Right\\_to\\_Know/](http://www.govst.edu/Campus_Life/Campus_Safety/Campus_Right_to_Know/)) and in printed form in the Department of Public Safety (DPS), located in C1375.

## **F. Emergency Notification Procedures**

The Emergency Management plan outlines strategies to protect the life and safety of university students, faculty, and staff, and to preserve university property and assets in the event of an emergency. The Emergency Management website ([www.govst.edu/emergency](http://www.govst.edu/emergency)) is a resource for information on how to prepare for emergencies and the Safety Booklet ([www.govst.edu/take-action/](http://www.govst.edu/take-action/)) details how to “Take Action” in the event of campus emergency situations, including but not limited to, fire, weather-related emergencies, and acts of violence.

Governors State University notifies the campus community upon the confirmation of a significant emergency or dangerous situation involving an immediate threat to the health or safety of students or staff occurring on any campus. GSU Alerts sends notifications regarding emergency situations to students via cellular and land-line phones, email, social media, and more. Students should update their contact information in their myGSU portal to ensure receipt of emergency notifications.

Emergency information and planning resources are available here ([www.govst.edu/emergency](http://www.govst.edu/emergency)).

## G. Emergency and Medical Leave

A student may request and be considered for an emergency or medical leave when extraordinary circumstances, such as a serious illness, injury, or hospitalization prevents the student from continuing classes. The severity and duration of the problem must be such that it would not be reasonable to expect the student to be able to make up the missed work. The Emergency & Medical Leave process covers both physical and mental health issues as well as military deployment. Students requesting leave for military deployment are required to contact Veterans Services.

Emergency & Medical Leave Requests are “all or nothing”; it is not possible to receive an emergency leave from individual classes while remaining enrolled in other classes. A student may withdraw from courses prior to the published withdrawal date. After the published withdrawal date, students may submit a late withdrawal request to the Registrar for withdrawal from single or multiple classes.

Options for students with medical issues, including the Emergency & Medical leave process, are detailed online at [www.govst.edu/emergencyleave](http://www.govst.edu/emergencyleave).

## H. Good Samaritan (Amnesty Practice)

The health and safety of every student is important to GSU. The Office of the Dean of Students recognizes that the potential for a conduct action may deter students from seeking needed medical assistance for a fellow student or themselves. As a university, we support and encourage all students to reach out for assistance in cases of a medical emergency and/or when you see others in need.

Through the Good Samaritan/Amnesty practice, students are encouraged to be active bystanders and respond to potentially risky circumstances (such as alcohol or drug intoxication) without reasonable fear of consequence from the university.

- A Good Samaritan who makes an effort to obtain medical assistance will not face formal conduct action as long as there are no other violations of the Student Code of Conduct.
- Excused instances include that of the possession and/or use of alcohol/drugs by persons under the age of twenty-one (21) as well as intoxication in or on any property owned, controlled, or used by Governors State University, including that of University Housing.
- Students may still be required to meet with the Office of the Dean of Students to discuss the incident even if no formal conduct charges are filed.

Good Samaritan/Amnesty practice can also apply to situations that may arise during an approved University-sponsored event or activity wherein the serving of alcoholic beverages is permitted. In any case, should a situation arise, the Office of the Dean of Students will take all actions of a student and/or a student organization into consideration while addressing any violation of the Student Code of Conduct (Policy 4). Conduct that violates local, state, and/or federal laws are still subject to criminal charges.

**For medical assistance, contact the Department of Public Safety (DPS) at 708.534.4900 or dial 911. All students who reach out for assistance must self-identify so that the university is able to recognize your Good Samaritan/Amnesty practice.**

## **I. Mental Health Contact Information Disclosure**

In accordance with the Student Optional Disclosure of Private Mental Health Act (110 ILCS 74/), Governors State University provides students the opportunity to authorize in writing the disclosure of certain private mental health information to a designated person of their choosing.

This Act states that an institution of higher learning may disclose information about a mental health emergency to a designated person if the student grants permission. If a mental health emergency occurs and a student poses a threat to the safety of themselves or others, a university staff member will attempt to contact the designated mental health contact person and notify them that the student poses a clear, imminent danger to themselves or others.

If you wish to designate a person that would receive certain private mental health information in an emergency, please complete the Student Optional Disclosure of Mental Health Contact Information Form online (<http://www.govst.edu/counseling-and-wellness/>).

## **J. Student Travel/Conference Funding**

Center for Student Engagement and Intercultural Programs provides travel funds for students to attend and/or present at conferences to enhance their educational experience. Students may seek funding for conference travel by completing a Student Travel Request Packet ([www.govst.edu/Campus\\_Life/Student\\_Life/Student\\_Travel](http://www.govst.edu/Campus_Life/Student_Life/Student_Travel)). Awards are subject to availability of funds.

## **K. Center for Student Engagement and Intercultural Programs**

The Center for Student Engagement and Intercultural Programs is where involvement and learning meets. The Center for Student Engagement and Intercultural Programs affords students the opportunity to be included in activities and the chance to participate using one's abilities in day to day activities as a member of the community. The center promotes a sense of belonging and connectedness through leadership development programs, intercultural education, campus programs & traditions, student clubs & organizations and service learning opportunities as partners with all campus community members. For more information call 708-534-7362 or visit us at <http://www.govst.edu/Studentlife/>. To learn more about clubs and organizations visit Jaguar Connection at <https://govst.campuslabs.com/engage/>.

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## SECTION FOUR: STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

### A. Student Misconduct

Governors State University's official policies on student misconduct are detailed in *Student Conduct Code* (Policy 4) and *Academic Honesty* (Policy 24). All GSU students are responsible for reading, understanding, and complying with the official conduct policies, located at [www.govst.edu/policies](http://www.govst.edu/policies).

#### Conduct Records (Disciplinary Records)

The university conduct process is designed to be an educational process that holds students accountable for their conduct and decision making. For that reason, disciplinary records are part of a student's educational record. Disciplinary information is considered an educational record and is not subject to review by the public and must follow the guidelines in accordance with GSU's Access to Student Educational Records Policy (Policy 12).

#### Responsibility to Report Incidents

Although other policies and procedures may exist to address student misconduct, the following matters must be referred to the Office of the Dean of Students for consideration of formal Student Conduct proceedings (either instead of or in addition to other applicable policies or procedures):

1. Behavior that poses an imminent risk to the safety of the student or any members of the university community, including but not limited to, threats or acts of violence;
2. Serious infractions of the Student Code of Conduct including, but not limited to: the destruction of property; possession of weapons; bomb threats; use, sale, or possession of controlled substances; or violations of local, state, or federal laws;
3. All incidents of alleged sexual misconduct, which include, but are not limited to, sexual assault, sexual harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking.

#### Authority & Jurisdiction

The Student Code of Conduct (Policy 4) ([www.govst.edu/policies](http://www.govst.edu/policies)) outlines the conduct system at Governors State University. This policy establishes standards of behavior for the GSU student body, both for academic and nonacademic conduct. The identified standards of behavior may be applied to student behavior both on and off campus and is applicable to both individual students and registered student organizations.

- A. Authority:** The Office of the Dean of Students: Community Standards Program has primary responsibility for resolving matters of non-academic student misconduct. Faculty and academic colleges have primary authority for resolving academic misconduct. The Dean of Students or designee shall be responsible for all administrative details involved in non-academic student conduct and academic misconduct, when requested by faculty/academic colleges.

- B. Jurisdiction:** The Student Code of Conduct is applicable to misconduct both on and off campus, including university premises and university-sponsored activities. All students and registered student organizations are expected to follow all relevant policies and procedures listed within the university policy directory and their respective program of study.
1. **Institution/University/School** is Governors State University.
  2. **University community** includes all persons associated with the university as students, employees, agents, trustees, volunteers, contractors (including employees or agents of contractors), or members of the public lawfully in attendance at a university activity or present on university premises.
  3. **Student** is a person currently enrolled at a campus or in a course, program or activity of the university, including without limitation, all persons taking courses at the university, both full-time and part-time, pursuing undergraduate or graduate studies in any university school/college or program. For individuals who become subject to the conduct process while a student, their status shall continue for disciplinary processing purposes until all proceedings have concluded.
    - a. *Continuing Student Policy (Policy 32)* states, “A continuing student at Governors State University is defined as any degree-seeking student or non-degree seeking student whose continuous enrollment at GSU has not been interrupted for more than six (6) consecutive semesters/terms, including summer term.” The complete policy can be found at: [www.govst.edu/policies](http://www.govst.edu/policies). Students with continuing student status who have allegedly violated policies may be referred to Community Standards for adjudication. If a student is not registered for classes at the time of the incident, Community Standards may place a hold on the student’s account, preventing course registration until the case is resolved.
    - b. **Responding Student(s):** Student(s) who have allegedly violated the university’s Student Code of Conduct.
    - c. **Complainant(s)/Reporter:** Person(s) who have reported or brought forth the alleged violation(s) of responding student(s).
  4. **Student Organization** is a group of persons who have complied with university requirements for recognition as established by Center for Student Engagement and Intercultural Programs.
  5. **University premises** are buildings or grounds owned, leased, operated, controlled, or supervised by the university.
  6. **University-sponsored activities** are all university-sponsored educational programs and services; extracurricular programs, events, or functions (including religious, service, leadership, social, recreational, and athletic) administered or coordinated through the university or one of its schools, departments or approved organizations; as to each whether occurring on or off university premises.



- 7. The Student Code of Conduct** applies to actions and behaviors displayed in person and/or through the use of any electronic media. Students should be advised that online postings such as blogs, web postings, chats, and social networking sites are in the public sphere and are not private. These postings can subject a student to allegations of misconduct if evidence of policy violations is posted online.
- C. Student Code of Conduct and Violations of Law:** When students violate a university policy, they are subject to disciplinary action by the university whether or not the conduct violates civil laws. When a student is subject to allegations of violating federal, state, and/or local laws, the university may simultaneously and independently investigate and address potential conduct code violations. The university conduct process shall proceed notwithstanding any criminal complaint that may arise from the same incident.
- D. Student Code of Conduct and Other Disciplinary Procedures:** The Office of the Dean of Students will work with other offices, as appropriate, to address any conflicts associated with concurrent processes to address the same behavior. Students who are athletes, student leaders, employees, or hold other relationships with the University, and whose behaviors violate the Student Code of Conduct, may also fall within the jurisdiction of another university policy or process associated with that relationship. Likewise, employees who enter into a relationship with the university as students may be held accountable for misconduct through the Student Conduct process in addition to any action they face as an employee.
- E. Student Status and Holds:** A student charged with violating policies may not avoid the conduct process by withdrawing from courses and/or the university. Student conduct proceedings may continue as described in this handbook without the student's participation, and/or, at the discretion of the Office of the Dean of Students, a hold may be placed on the student's record prohibiting further registration, issuance of a degree or transcript, and/or release of transcripts.
- F. Prior Conduct or Criminal History:** The University requires students to disclose a criminal or disciplinary history on their application for admission to GSU and application for University Housing. The university does not use criminal or disciplinary history in admissions decisions, but may restrict students from living in on-campus housing due to a criminal history. Submitting false information on application for admission or on-campus housing may result in cancellation of an admissions decision, housing assignment, and university disciplinary action.
- G. Responsibility for Guest Behavior:** Students and their guests are expected to follow the rules and regulations defined in the Student Code of Conduct and University Housing Handbook. Students may be held responsible for the actions of their guests that violate the Student Code of Conduct. Guests include, but are not limited to university guests and guests of students residing in University Housing. Students may be held accountable for the behavior of their guests including restitution (payment) for property damage.

**H. Changes to the Student Code of Conduct Procedures:** The Student Conduct Committee, with the addition of a member from the Institutional Policies Committee (IPC), is responsible for ensuring that conduct procedures align with policy. All final changes to procedures implementing the Student Code of Conduct must be approved by at least two-thirds of the committee (Student Conduct Committee plus the IPC member). Approved revisions are finalized and held until the beginning of the following academic year.

## B. Student Conduct Policies

As members of the university community, students are responsible for conducting themselves in a manner compatible with the university's mission and values. Violations of the community standards that are essential to the core educational mission of Governors State University will result in sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct. The university may at any time enact interim measures or impose disciplinary sanctions for violations of the Student Code of Conduct. The Office of the Dean of Students assumes primary responsibility for addressing non-academic misconduct and the primary responsibility for addressing academic misconduct rests with the faculty/academic colleges.

### Non-Academic Misconduct

Students are expected to act in a manner that promotes the health and safety of the university community. In addition, students are expected to use and treat university facilities and resources (a) in a manner consistent with applicable policies, rules, procedures, etc., (b) for their intended use, and (c) without causing damage or harm thereto. Furthermore, students should not unduly interfere with any university operations. Violations of these standards include, but are not limited to:

1. **Abuse and Threatening Behavior.** Prohibited acts include, but are not limited to, intentional and unwanted physical contact with another person, including assault, battery, or physical behavior and/or abusive or threatening language (expressed or implied) directed to any person (including oneself), that may be carried out in person, via electronic media, or third parties, that:
  - a. Endangers the safety, physical or mental health, or life of any person, or creates a reasonable fear of such action;
  - b. Substantially interferes with an individual's academic, employment, and/or living conditions/environment, or access to university resources and opportunities; and/or
  - c. Restricts the freedom of movement of another person by use of physical force. (Reference to Violation 4; Policy 4).
  
2. **Alcohol.** Prohibited acts include, but are not limited to, the use, possession, manufacture, sale, or distribution of alcoholic beverages by any person under the legal age of consumption (21 years of age) or to any person under the legal age of consumption. Public intoxication, driving under the influence, and all other violations of university policy and/or federal, state, or local laws related to alcohol are further prohibited. (Reference to Violations 9 and 20; Policy 4).

*Additional regulations regarding alcohol in University Housing are within the University Housing Handbook. Violations of University Housing Policy regarding Alcohol, include but are not limited to:*

- a. Persons under 21 being in the presence of alcohol
  - b. Persons over 21 consuming alcohol in the presence of underage persons
  - c. Persons under 21 possessing alcohol containers for storage or decorative purposes
  - d. Common sources of alcohol (kegs, punch bowls) and drinking games
3. **Bullying.** Prohibited acts include, but are not limited to, intentional, repeated, persistent, and/or aggressive behavior (physical, verbal, or written) directed at another person, either in person or through electronic (e.g., email, instant messaging, text messages, blogs, mobile phones, pagers, online games, websites, and social media sites), telephonic or other means, that intentionally or unintentionally causes fear, distress, or harm to another person's body, emotions, self-esteem, personal belongings, or reputation. (Reference to Violation 4; Policy 4).
  4. **Computer and Technological Misuse.** Misuse of university computer systems, laboratories, equipment, or software in violation of university policies is prohibited (Reference to Violation 17; Policy 4).
  5. **Contempt of the Conduct Process.** Prohibited acts include, but are not limited to, failure to comply with the instructions or orders of a duly authorized conduct body or representative; failure to fully complete imposed disciplinary sanctions, interim measures, or outcomes; falsification of information; or any act which hinders or obstructs the conduct process. Unauthorized release of a student's disciplinary conduct is also prohibited. (Reference to Violations 11 and 24; Policy 4).
  6. **Controlled Substances (Drugs).** The unlawful manufacture, distribution, sale, transportation, possession, or use of a controlled substance (i.e., illegal drugs and drug paraphernalia), including prescription or over the counter medications when used in a manner other than its intended purpose, in accordance with state and federal law. Recreational and medical cannabis, while legal in Illinois, is not legal under federal law and is prohibited. Using or possessing cannabis in any form, including but not limited to: tinctures, kief, edibles, and topicals, is prohibited on campus, including in all open areas and buildings. ~~Prohibited acts include, but are not limited to, the use, possession, manufacture, sale, distribution, or transportation of illegal drugs and drug paraphernalia. This includes prescription medication and over the counter medication or any other substance being used in any manner other than its intended purpose.~~ (Reference to Violation 1; Policy 4).
  7. **Destruction of Property.** Prohibited acts include, but are not limited to, any activity which destroys or defaces property or grounds of the university, of a university community member, of another institution, or of another person, on or off campus (Reference to Violation 8; Policy 4).

- 8. Discrimination.** Prohibited acts include, but are not limited to, acts of misconduct or bias incidents when committed by reason of the age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, marital or civil union status, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, veteran status, or other protected class status of another individual or group of individuals. (Reference to Violation 18; Policy 4).
- 9. Dishonesty.** Prohibited acts include, but are not limited to, furnishing false information to any university official, faculty member, or office; or facilitation, intentionally or knowingly aiding another student in violating the Student Code of Conduct (Reference to Violations 2 and 23; Policy 4).
- 10. Disorderly Conduct.** Prohibited acts include, but are not limited to, public behavior that is disruptive; breaches the peace through rioting or other acts; or aiding/procuring another person to breach the peace at functions sponsored by the university as well as functions involving the participation of members of the university community (Reference to Violation 7; Policy 4).
- 11. Disruptive Behavior.** Prohibited acts include, but are not limited to, behaviors that impair, interfere with, or obstruct the orderly conduct, processes, and functions of the university or the rights of other members of the university community. This includes, but are not limited to, acts that occur both inside and outside of the classroom setting and that may involve the use of electronic equipment, such as in online classes. (Reference to Violation 6; Policy 4).
- 12. Emergencies and Fire Safety.** Violation of local, state, federal, or campus policies regarding emergencies and fire safety including, but not limited to:

  - a. Tampering with, unauthorized activation of, or misuse of emergency or fire safety equipment, including fire alarms, smoke detectors, fire alarm pull boxes, and fire extinguishers is prohibited.
  - b. Failure to exit or impeding the evacuation of any facility, property, or building when a fire alarm or other emergency notification has been sounded, including blocking or locking fire exists or propping doors open is also prohibited.
  - c. Starting or maintaining any open flame in any university facility or on the campus without proper authority, including smoking indoors and disposal of lit tobacco products indoors is also prohibited.
  - d. Intentionally initiating or causing to be initiated any false report, warning, or threat of fire, explosion, terrorism or other emergency is further prohibited. (Reference to Violations 10 and 22; Policy 4).
- 13. Firearms, Weapons, and Dangerous Substances.** Firearms, weapons, and explosives of any type are prohibited on or in any property owned or leased by the university; this includes any property used to house university-sponsored events or activities. Prohibited acts include, but are not limited to, illegal or unauthorized possession, use, or unauthorized storage of firearms, fireworks, ammunition, explosives, dangerous chemicals, switchblade knives, knives with blades

that are three inches or longer, other weapons, or realistic replicas of weapons on university premises or use of any such item, even if it is legally possessed, in a manner that harms, threatens, or causes fear to others (Reference to Violation 3; Policy 4 and Concealed Carry Policy).

- 14. Gambling.** Prohibited acts include, but are not limited to, any form of gambling; playing any games and/or extra-curricular activities for money or property; or otherwise placing bets on uncertain outcomes (Reference to Violation 19; Policy 4).
- 15. Hazing.** Knowingly requiring the performance of any act by a student or other person in the university community for the purpose of induction or admission into any group, organization, or society associated with the university if (a) the act is not sanctioned or authorized by the university; and (b) the act results in bodily harm to any person or recklessly, intentionally, or unintentionally endangers the mental, physical, or academic health or safety of a student or other person in the university community. Prohibited acts include, but are not limited to, the forced consumption of any substance; paddling or striking in any manner; personal servitude; sleep deprivation; conducting activities that do not allow for time to meet academic commitments; those that require the violation of university policies or federal, state, or local laws; or any activity likely to cause embarrassment or humiliation (Reference to Violations 4 and 6; Policy 4).
- 16. Indecent Exposure.** Prohibited acts include, but are not limited to, publicly exposing one's private body parts, public urination, public defecation, and public sex acts (Reference to Violation 21; Policy 4).
- 17. Legal.** Committing or attempting to commit any act that is or would be a violation of local, state, or federal law, on campus or at any university-sponsored event, is prohibited (Reference to Violation 22; Policy 4).
- 18. Misuse of University Documents and Materials.** Prohibited acts include, but are not limited to, forgery, alteration, unauthorized use or misuse of any documents, records, materials or ID cards belonging to the university, a student, or member of the university community; permitting the use of university documents by an unauthorized person; possession, manufacture, sale, or distribution of university materials and identification cards or devices that are false or fraudulent (Reference to Violations 2 and 13; Policy 4).
- 19. Noncompliance with University Officials.** Failure to comply with the directions of university officials, including campus police officers and emergency personnel acting in performance of their duties, is prohibited (Reference to Violation 12; Policy 4).
- 20. Sexual Misconduct.** Prohibited acts include, but are not limited to, engaging in any acts related to sexual activities between individuals that are unwanted or unwelcome, or accomplished

through force or the threat of force, or without the full and informed consent of all parties involved. Sexual misconduct may include, but is not limited to, sexual assault, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, stalking, dating violence, and domestic violence as those terms are defined in the GSU Title IX and Sexual Misconduct policy. (Reference to Violation 4; Policy 4 and Policy 78).

- a. **Sexual Harassment** is a form of sex discrimination when the conduct is based on an individual's actual or perceived sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. It includes any unwelcome advances, requests for sexual favors, or any verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.
  - b. **Sexual Assault** is any type of sexual contact or sexual intercourse with another that occurs without that person's knowing and voluntary consent.
  - c. **Dating Violence** refers to a type of intimate partner violence by a person who has been in a romantic or intimate relationship with the complainant. Whether a relationship exists will depend on the length, type, and frequency of interaction.
  - d. **Domestic Violence** refers to a type of intimate partner violence committed by a current or former spouse or relationship partner, current or former cohabitant, a person with whom a complainant shares a child in common, a person similarly situated to a spouse under domestic or family violence law, or anyone else protected under domestic or family violence law.
  - e. **Sexual Exploitation** is taking advantage of the sexuality of another person without consent or in a manner that extends the bounds of consensual sexual activity without the knowledge of the other individual for any purpose, including sexual gratification, financial gain, personal benefit, or any other non-legitimate purpose.
- 21. Stalking.** Engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person(s) that would cause a reasonable person to (a) fear for their safety or the safety of others, or (b) suffer substantial emotional distress is prohibited. Course of conduct means two or more acts, including but not limited to acts in which a person directly, indirectly, or through third parties, by any action, device, method or means, follows, monitors, observes, surveils, threatens, or communicates to or about another person, or interferes with another person's property (Reference to Violation 4; Policy 4).
- 22. Theft.** Prohibited acts include, but are not limited to, attempted or actual theft, unauthorized use, or possession of any property when an individual had knowledge or reasonably should have had knowledge that it was personal or university property, equipment and/or resources is prohibited (Reference to Violations 15 and 16; Policy 4).
- 23. Trespassing.** Unauthorized presence in or use of university premises, facilities, or properties. Prohibited acts include, but are not limited to, accessing locations that are locked, closed to student use, or otherwise restricted from use (Reference to Violation 14; Policy 4).
- 24. Unauthorized Recording.** Any actual or attempted unauthorized use of electronic or other devices to make an audio, video, or photographic recording of any person without their prior

knowledge or without their consent is prohibited. Prohibited acts include, but are not limited to, recording when the person or persons being recorded have a reasonable expectation of privacy (i.e. restroom, locker room, residential room); when such recording is likely to cause injury or distress; or when a recording is shared without the consent of those that were recorded (Reference to Violation 5; Policy 4).

- 25. University Housing Policies.** All students, regardless of residential status, are expected to comply with all regulations outlined in the University Housing Handbook, all regulations stated within the housing contract, as well as any supplementary expectations communicated by the University Housing staff in the performance of their duties. Additional information about these regulations can be found within the University Housing Handbook (Reference to Violation 20; Policy 4).

## Academic Misconduct

### A. Academic Misconduct

All violations of academic honesty related to fulfilling academic requirements, including but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and/or knowingly assisting other students to engage in such conduct.

*(Additional details are found in Academic Honesty Policy 24; [www.govst.edu/policies](http://www.govst.edu/policies))*

### B. Faculty & Academic Colleges Authority

The faculty member has initial jurisdiction over instances of academic misconduct that occur in association with a course being taught by the faculty member.

1. The faculty member may personally meet with the student to discuss misconduct and its consequences (e.g., zero on an exam, a lower grade for the course, etc.). If the faculty member determines that this consequence is sufficient to resolve the misconduct, a written record of the incident and its resolution needs to be drafted by the faculty member to record the resolution of this matter.
2. A copy of the letter of understanding and/or record of disciplinary action shall be sent to the chair of the program offering the course. The chair will then forward a copy to the Dean of their college and the Office of the Dean of Students. The Office of the Dean of Students will keep a record of the academic misconduct on file.
3. If the faculty member determines that the student's misconduct cannot be resolved by reducing the grade for the test, paper, or other course-related activity in question and/or by adjusting the grade for the course, the faculty member must request a meeting with the division/department chair/unit director to discuss the matter.
4. The division/department chair/unit director and faculty member shall meet to determine if the misconduct warrants additional disciplinary action. If so, the division/department chair/unit director drafts a letter to the Dean of the college and the Dean of Students outlining the details of the misconduct and recommendations for sanctions or further action.
5. If a student wishes to appeal any sanctions imposed by a faculty member of division/department chair, students may pursue an academic grievance following the

procedures outlined in Policy 5 (See Academic Grievances). The appellate body for faculty disciplinary actions is the division/department chair.



**C. Office of the Dean of Students Authority for Academic Misconduct**

If the Dean of Students (or designee) receives a request for disciplinary sanctions from a faculty member or division/department chair, per the process stated above, the report will be reviewed in consultation with the academic college. The case will follow the Student Conduct procedures as detailed in this handbook and the faculty member and division/department chair will be notified of the outcome.

**Standards of Classroom Behavior**

Students are expected to demonstrate behavior in the classroom that is not disruptive to the educational/learning environment. The primary responsibility for managing classroom behavior rests with the faculty. Students who engage in any behavior that results in the disruption of a class may be directed by the faculty member to leave the classroom for the remainder of the class period. A student dismissed from a class may be required to meet with an academic administrator, faculty member, or the Office of the Dean of Students before the student is permitted to return to the class. If the disruptive behavior persists, the matter may be referred for conduct action. In addition, any behavior that occurs in the classroom that constitutes a violation of the Student Code of Conduct may be referred for conduct action.

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## SECTION FIVE: STUDENT CONDUCT PROCEDURES

### A. Reporting Student Misconduct

The Office of the Dean of Students encourages students and any other member of the university community to report violations of the Student Code of Conduct by filing a formal complaint/incident report. A complaint/incident report is the written record of the information brought forth regarding the alleged violation(s) of the Student Code of Conduct.

#### Responsibility to Report Violations

Although other policies and procedures may exist to address student misconduct, the following matters must be referred to the Office of the Dean of Students for consideration of formal Student Conduct proceedings (either instead of or in addition to other applicable policies or procedures):

1. Behavior that poses an imminent risk to the safety of the student or any members of the university community;
2. Serious infractions of the Student Code of Conduct including, but not limited to: the destruction of property; possession of weapons; bomb threats; use, sale, or possession of controlled substances; or violations of local, state, or federal laws;
3. All incidents of alleged sexual misconduct, which include sexual assault, domestic violence, stalking, and dating violence.

#### Submitting an Incident Report

A complaint/incident report should be filed as soon as possible after the alleged misconduct occurred and should describe the incident, the alleged violation(s) of the Student Code of Conduct, and identify the individuals involved in or witness to the incident.

Additional materials that support the complaint should be submitted (e.g. photos, written correspondence, copies of emails and/or text messages). Upon review, if the complaint does not contain adequate documentation, the complainant may be contacted to provide additional information or clarification regarding the incident.

1. To report **non-academic misconduct**, please use the Student Conduct Incident Report at [www.govst.edu/conductIR](http://www.govst.edu/conductIR).
2. To report **academic misconduct**, please use the Academic Misconduct Incident Report at [www.govst.edu/academicIR](http://www.govst.edu/academicIR).
3. Complaints will be reviewed by the Office of the Dean of Students, and if there is reliable information indicating that misconduct may have occurred, the Student Conduct process will be initiated, creating a conduct case (see Report Review Process). The office reserves the right to initiate a case without a formal complaint and to investigate anonymous report.
4. False Reports: The University considers the intentional filing of a false complaint as a serious matter. It is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct to make an intentionally false report.
5. Records containing complaints, reports involving student conduct, procedures for handling conduct cases, and the outcomes of hearings are maintained in the Office of the Dean of Students.

## Report Review Process

- A. Case Not Pursued:** If there does not appear to be credible or sufficient information to suggest that a violation occurred, the complaint will not move forward through the formal Student Conduct process. The complaint and any information gathered will be kept to document that the situation was reviewed.
- B. Informal Response:** If the behavior described is concerning, but does not appear to be a violation or falls outside the jurisdiction of the policy, there may still be an institutional response without the initiation of the formal Student Conduct process. For example, the student may be asked to meet with a staff member to discuss the incident or participate in a mediated conversation.
- C. Referral to Academic Colleges:** Complaints alleging a violation related to academic honesty that are submitted by someone other than the instructor of record will be referred to the academic college.
- D. Community Standards Review:** Complaints alleging a violation of non-academic conduct policies will be reviewed by Community Standards and referred for a conduct hearing.
- E. Referral to University Department:** Community Standards may determine that the case should be handled—instead of or in addition to Community Standards—by another office (e.g. University Housing, Center for Student Engagement and Intercultural Programs).
- F. Referral to Title IX Coordinator for Investigation:** If the conduct described in the complaint suggests a possible violation of the Title IX/Sexual Misconduct Policy ([www.govst.edu/titleix](http://www.govst.edu/titleix)), the information will be submitted to the Title IX Coordinator for review. Once the investigation is complete, the complaint may be referred back to Community Standards for conduct proceedings.
- G. Request for a Delayed Process:** Requests for a delay related to the Student Conduct process must be submitted in writing to the Office of the Dean of Students and will be considered only in extraordinary circumstances.

## B. Notice to the Student

All official communication to the student regarding the conduct process will be sent to the GSU student email account. Students are responsible for reading and responding to their university email. If a conduct case is pursued, the student will be notified of the alleged violations and student conduct procedures. In extenuating circumstances, notices may also be mailed to a student's address as listed in their official records held by the Registrar or hand-delivered to the student on campus.

## C. Interim Measures

Interim measures may be put into place at any time after the initial reporting of alleged misconduct, prior to a conduct hearing, for reasons including, but not limited to:

1. To protect the health, welfare, or safety of a student or the university community;
2. To prevent or address significant disruption to the educational process and/or the normal operations of the university;
3. To provide legally mandated interim remedies, such as may be required for the university to comply with Title IX or as ordered by a court;
4. If the student cannot be located and/or does not participate in the conduct process.

Interim measures will not include a termination of the respondent's status as a student, and will not be considered as a finding of responsibility. A student's failure to abide by any or all of the interim measures may be considered an additional violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

### Notification of Interim Measures

If interim measures are necessary, the students' affected by the measures will be provided with a written notice outlining the restrictions or changes that have been imposed. The interim measure notices will be sent to both parties and will specify the measures that have been put into place and the reason(s) for the action. Interim measures will vary depending upon the facts of each case.

### Types of Interim Measures

Interim measures may include, but are not limited to:

- A. Change of University Housing room assignment or removal/ban from University Housing;
- B. Change of dining/parking/transportation arrangements;
- C. Restrictions on participation in student organizations and student activities;
- D. Change in work schedules/assignments;
- E. Alteration of academic schedules;
- F. Withdrawal from/retake of a class without penalty;
- G. Limited access to university services;
- H. Restricted access to university buildings/facilities;
- I. Campus no-contact order;
- J. Hold on student account.

## D. Summary Suspension

If the Office of the Dean of Students becomes aware of a student whose continued participation within the university community poses an immediate threat to the health or safety of themselves or others, or poses an imminent threat of significant disruption to normal campus operations, the Dean of Students or designee may implement summary suspension procedures. These procedures are to be utilized only in those extraordinary situations where, in the judgment of the Dean of Students, the prescribed Student Conduct process is not appropriate, or cannot be applied in a timely manner.

A summary suspension may include, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Restriction from some or all university premises, including University Housing;
2. Loss of privilege to participate in classes, either in person or electronically/virtually;
3. Loss of privilege to participate in some or all university-related activities;
4. Registration hold;
5. Graduation hold (if student is on the graduation list or scheduled to graduate within the semester of the suspension); and/or
6. Notification of suspension to academic program.

### Notification of Summary Suspension

- A. The student will be notified of the summary suspension status by official GSU student email, telephone, and/or in person. The notification will include an explanation for the imposition of the summary suspension and outline the restriction(s) imposed on the student during their suspension.
- B. After the issuance of the summary suspension notice, the Office of the Dean of Students will inform all appropriate campus administrative units of the imposition of the summary suspension. Failure to abide by this terms of the summary suspension may result in additional disciplinary action.
- C. A student who questions the summary suspension may submit a written request for a hearing before the Dean of Students to review the summary suspension.

### Hearing following Summary Suspension

Within seven (7) working days of the student's receipt of the notice of the summary suspension, the Office of the Dean of Students will send the student an additional notification with a date and time for the Student Conduct Committee (SCC) hearing. The hearing will be conducted as described within this handbook. At the discretion of the Dean of Students or designee, the hearing may be delayed or rescheduled; however, the suspension will remain in effect until the hearing has been completed.

## E. Conduct Hearings

Student(s) who have allegedly violated the Student Code of Conduct will be invited to participate in a conduct hearing to discuss the alleged violations and respond to the charges. The conduct process is not a criminal or judicial trial/practice. The hearing process is designed to educate students and hold them accountable for their conduct and decision making.

During the course of the academic year, cases are typically assigned to an Administrative Hearing Officer (AHO) or the Student Conduct Committee (SCC) for hearing and resolution purposes. Exceptions to this procedure include, but are not limited to:

- Periods when the committee is not in session (e.g., academic break periods, summer session, university break periods, periods at the start of each semester prior to the convening of the committee);
- Cases that required special need for confidentiality (e.g., sexual misconduct cases).

**Preponderance of Evidence:** The standard of proof that applies to all university student conduct proceedings or determinations is a preponderance of evidence. A finding of a violation of the Student Code of Conduct must be supported by evidence that is “more likely than not” that the violation occurred.

### Administrative Hearing

An administrative hearing is an informal conversation between a responding student and the AHO to discuss the incident and alleged violations. The student may accept or deny responsibility for the alleged violations. The hearing officer may find a student responsible, not responsible, or further investigate as needed.

### Administrative Hearing Format

#### A. *Student attends the administrative hearing:*

1. The students may ask questions about the process;
2. The administrative hearing officer will review the facts of the report, as well as any other relevant case information received;
3. Students can respond to the information by providing their perspectives on the incident and alleged behaviors;
4. Students may present information and/or witnesses relevant to the charges;
5. The hearing officer will ask questions of the students and witnesses;
6. Students can acknowledge or deny responsibility for the alleged violation(s);
7. The hearing officer will determine whether the respondent is responsible for the alleged actions/behavior and, if so, will consider and impose appropriate sanctions;
8. At the conclusion of the hearing, Community Standards will inform the students of the decision in writing.

#### B. *Student does not attend administrative hearing.*

1. If the student chooses not to meet with the administrative hearing officer by the given deadline, the hearing officer may proceed with the determination of responsibility and any sanctions without input from the student.

2. Students who are entering the conduct process for the first time may be offered a second opportunity to attend a hearing.
3. Depending on the nature of the case, the hearing officer may place a hold on the student's record, preventing registration until the student has met with the administrative hearing officer.

### **Student Conduct Committee (SCC)**

A Student Conduct Committee hearing is a formal conversation between the responding student and the committee to hear alleged serious or repeat minor/moderate academic and non-academic violations of the Student Code of Conduct. The committee is comprised of students, faculty, and administrators who are trained to hear conduct cases.

All hearings of the Student Conduct Committee are audio recorded and stored electronically in the student's case file in a manner consistent with Policy 12: Access to Student Educational Records Policy.

The conduct committee hearing process provides the student with an opportunity to:

- Review the available case information, including the alleged violations;
- Share their perspective on what happened, including presenting witnesses and relevant evidence; and/or
- Describe the effects the incident has had on the student and others, both negative (harm caused) and positive (lessons learned).

**A. Notice of the Hearing:** Complainants and respondents will be provided written notice of the hearing date, time, and location prior to the hearing date. The notice will include a description of the procedures to be followed at the hearing.

**B. Student Conduct Committee Hearings:** Hearing proceedings will follow the format described below. The hearing is not conducted as a civil or criminal proceeding and consequently strict rules of evidence do not apply. At the discretion of the members, changes may be made to the hearing format to accommodate special circumstances. The Committee/Hearing Chair is responsible for asking all relevant questions, making decisions based on the materials and information provided, and imposing sanctions where appropriate. The Hearing Chair/Student Conduct Committee determines the relevance of any information, materials, or testimony, and may refuse to direct questions to the parties/witness and/or refuse to accept information, materials, or testimony it considers immaterial or irrelevant.

The Student Conduct Committee hearing will utilize the following format:

1. **Introduction/Review of Alleged Violations:** The Chair of the Student Conduct Committee will convene the hearing by requesting that all individuals present state their name and role. The Chair will then review the alleged violations of the Standards of Conduct.
  2. **Opening Statements:** The complainant and respondent may each make a brief opening statement for the purpose of providing the hearing committee with a short summary of their positions relevant to the complaint and the materials/witnesses to be presented.
  3. **Presentation of Evidence:** The complainant and respondent may present to the committee any and all information, materials, and witness testimony to support their position. Community Standards may call any witnesses or investigators to present relevant findings to the hearing committee. Witnesses may only be present at the hearing while providing their testimony.
  4. **Questioning of Parties/Witnesses:** After each respective presentation, the hearing committee, complainant, and respondent will have the opportunity to ask questions. The Hearing Chair/Student Conduct Committee may recall any witnesses. Once all information, materials, and testimony have been presented, the hearing committee, complainant and respondent are provided a final opportunity to ask additional questions or provide additional information to the Student Conduct Committee.
  5. **Closing Statements:** The complainant and respondent may each make a closing statement. The closing statement should be a short summary of the materials and information presented during the hearing and any relevant information that the student would like to share with the hearing committee.
  6. **Executive Session:** The hearing committee will excuse all participants and enter into executive session during which the committee will assess the information presented as well as the credibility of the parties and witnesses. The hearing committee will decide (based on a simple majority vote): (a) whether or not, by a preponderance of the evidence, the respondent is responsible for the alleged violation(s) of the Student Code of Conduct, and, if so, (b) what sanctions are appropriate. Only after determining responsibility will the committee review and consider any previous sanctions imposed on the respondent. The review of any previous sanctions will include all disciplinary actions taken in any prior conduct proceedings. The deliberations of the executive committee are not recorded.
- C. **Notice of Outcome:** Following all hearings, the Office of the Dean of Students will formally notify the student in writing of the findings and sanction(s) to be imposed, if applicable. Students will also be informed of their right to appeal.



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## F. Rights of Students in the Conduct Process

Students are given due process rights in compliance with the Fourteenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. The Fourteenth Amendment requires all public institutions of higher learning to afford students due process prior to taking disciplinary actions, including notifying students of allegations and providing an opportunity for the student to respond to the allegations.

Students charged with violations of the Student Code of Conduct are advised of their due process rights when they meet with the Office of the Dean of Students staff and designees, and throughout the process, they are entitled to the procedural rights listed below. All students should familiarize themselves with the following rights and procedures.

The hearing information and procedures apply to Administrative Hearings and Student Conduct Committee hearings unless otherwise noted. Please note that processes for sensitive cases such as sexual misconduct may differ from the list below.

- A. Notice of Charges:** The student will be given the opportunity, upon request, to read all written reports to be presented at the hearing regarding the circumstances and allegations of the case. (To protect the rights of others involved, presented documentation may be redacted.)
- B. Respond to Charges:** It is presumed that a student charged with a violation of the Code is not responsible for such violations unless the student accepts responsibility or is found responsible following a hearing. Both the responding student(s) and the complainant(s) will be provided with an opportunity to meet with the hearing officer/committee to share information about the incident. Students have the right to questions persons presenting information regarding the alleged incident. Contact between the responding and complainant parties may be limited to necessity.
- C. Choosing Not to Participate:** Students are encouraged but not required to appear at a hearing or participate in the resolution of their charges. In this situation, the Office of the Dean of Students will proceed to resolve the charge without the participation of the student.
- D. Hearing Body:** For an Administrative Hearing, a hearing officer hears the case and determines the outcome. For a Student Conduct Committee Hearing, a quorum consists of four voting members of the Student Conduct Committee from at least two groups (student, staff, and faculty).
- E. Incidents Involving Multiple Students/Separate Hearing:** When more than one student is involved in the same incident, the Office of the Dean of Students will determine the appropriate approach to resolution, balancing students' privacy rights with the university resources available to provide a timely and fair resolution.
  - 1. Combined Hearings:** If a decision is made to combine the hearings of all the students involved in an incident, all parties (complainants and respondents) will be present for the reading of the charges, opening remarks, complainant's presentation of evidence and witness testimony, and closing statements.

2. *Separate Statements*: If a combined hearing occurs, at the time the individual respondent presents their case, the other respondent(s) and their advisor and witnesses may be excused from the hearing unless otherwise agreed upon by the respondent(s) and the committee.
- F. Information about Conduct Process**: The student has the right to information about the conduct process and procedures and to have their questions answered about the process.
- G. Notification of Hearing Outcome**: Within seven (7) working days following the conclusion of the hearing, a written decision will be sent to the respondent and all appropriate parties. Decision notices are sent to GSU student email and including information about charge(s), sanction(s), and appeal processes. If there is no disciplinary action needed, the decision letter will communicate that no action is required from the student.
- H. Participants in Hearing**: All hearings are closed and not open to the public except for the following individuals: administrative hearing officer or members of the Student Conduct Committee, the complainant(s), the respondent(s), advisors, witnesses, Office of the Dean of Students staff, and the Department of Public Safety. The responding student may request that the hearing be open to member of the university community and this request must be approved by the Committee and the Office of the Dean of Students.
- I. Personal Safety Considerations**: The student will be given reasonable accommodations for concerns related to personal safety, well-being, and/or fears of confrontation of persons involved with the case during the hearing process. In situations where reasonable fear for physical safety and/or retaliation exists, the Conduct Committee Hearing Chair reserves the right to take appropriate and reasonable measures to adjust the hearing format, including having police present and/or using technology to allow parties to participate in a manner that addresses the concerns while allowing the process to move forward.
- J. Privacy of Information**: Student conduct records are maintained in accordance with the GSU Student Records Policy (Policy 12), as well as applicable federal and state laws. All hearings, proceedings, and case information are considered confidential except to those who have a legitimate educational interest in them, or as permitted or required under FERPA, the Clery Act, or any other legal mandate.
- K. Reasonable Accommodation**: Any student with a disability involved in the conduct process has the right to request reasonable accommodations in order to ensure their full and equal participation. Students wishing to request reasonable accommodations should submit requests directly to Access Services for Students with Disabilities.
- L. Record of Hearing**: For a Student Conduct Committee Hearing, Community Standards will maintain a record of the hearing which may be in the form of a written summary of the proceedings or an audio recording. Administrative Hearings are not recorded.
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- M. Remote Participation:** Any party, including the respondent, complainant, or any witness, may request to participate in a hearing remotely by way of telephone, videoconferencing, or other appropriate means provided the identity of the person participating remotely is known to all parties and all other guidelines and procedures described in this handbook are followed. Requests for remote participation will only be considered in extenuating circumstances and must be approved by the Office of the Dean of Students.
- N. Right to an Advisor:** Students have the right to an advisor to provide advice and or support to a student during the conduct process. The role of the advisor will be restricted to advising and supporting the student. Advisors are not permitted to speak on behalf of the student.
1. Students who wish to have an advisor participate must notify Community Standards in writing at least 48 hours in advance of the hearing.
  2. Advisors who do not comply with the above guidelines or otherwise interfere with the hearing process will not be permitted to participate in the hearing.
- O. Right to Submit Witnesses:** Students have the right to submit witnesses who directly observed an incident or have direct or indirect knowledge related to an incident. Witnesses should be able to speak knowledgeably about the incident and be able to provide relevant facts. Reliable witnesses are critical to the integrity and effectiveness of the process.
1. Students who wish to have witnesses participate must notify Community Standards in writing at least 48 hours in advance of the hearing. Witnesses must be pre-approved by Community Standards and will receive an email notification with guidance on serving as a witness.
  2. Witnesses cannot participate solely to speak about an individual's character.
  3. The respondent, the complainant, and/or the Office of the Dean of Students may request relevant witnesses to participate in the process and limit the number of witnesses.
  4. The Office of the Dean of Students may request a written statement from the witness and/or a meeting with the witness prior to the hearing.
  5. Witnesses who do not comply with the above guidelines or otherwise interfere with the hearing process will not be permitted to participate in the hearing.
- P. Standard of Proof:** A preponderance of the evidence, or "more likely than not," standard is the official evidence standard of the Student Code of Conduct. In this context, the respondent will be found to be responsible for the alleged violations if the hearing officer/hearing committee concludes that it is more likely than not that, based on careful review of all information presented, the respondent is responsible for the alleged behavior and these behaviors constitute a violation.
- Q. Statements and Evidence:** The hearing committee/hearing officer will make determinations based on all available information and materials. Failure of the respondent to be present or participate in the proceedings will not be seen as an admission of responsibility. Likewise, failure of the complainant to participate in the proceedings will not be seen as evidence that favors the respondent.

**R. Timeliness of Conduct Process:** The University strives to complete the Student Conduct process, including the time for any hearings or appeal processes, within sixty (60) days. There are, however, many factors that may affect the length of time needed to complete various portions of the resolution process fairly and equitably. Consequently, some matters will be resolved before the designated time frame and some may require additional time.

## G. Sanctions

Sanctions are designed to promote the university's educational mission, safety of the university community, and to deter students from behavior that violates the Standards of Conduct. Some behavior may be so harmful or disruptive to the university community or to the educational process that it may require more severe sanctions. More than one sanction may be imposed in any one case.

The following factors are generally considered when determining sanctions for a particular case:

- The nature of the violation(s);
- Prior findings of responsibility and sanction(s);
- Mitigating circumstances surrounding the violation;
- The student's motivation(s) for engaging in the behavior;
- Impact of the behavior;
- Sanctions which have been imposed in similar cases in the past;
- The developmental and educational impact on the student; and
- The overall impact on the university community.

**The following disciplinary sanctions shall comprise the range of official sanctions which may be imposed for violation of the Student Code of Conduct.**

### Administrative Sanctions

- A. Disciplinary Warning:** Official notice to a student that previous conduct was unacceptable and that future misconduct may result in additional disciplinary action.
- B. Disciplinary Probation:** Disciplinary probation is a trial period for a specific time during which a student must behave in a manner acceptable to the university. Terms of the probation shall reflect the purpose of the disciplinary sanction. Disciplinary probation status may affect qualification for student leadership positions, awards, prizes, or student aid, when conduct acceptable to the university is a condition of such benefits. Violation of the terms of probation or of a further incident of misconduct may result in further disciplinary action.
- C. Loss of Privilege:** Loss of privilege is the withdrawal of a privilege or use of a service for a specific period of time commensurate with the violation committed. Loss of privilege may be imposed separately or in addition to any other sanction(s).
- D. No Contact Directive:** A no contact directive may be issued on an interim or permanent basis prior to and/or after a hearing if it is believed necessary to protect the safety of a person and or preserve a safe environment. A no contact directive prohibits contact with a specific individual or individuals through use of ANY means, including, but not limited to direct or indirect contact (e.g., by having

others act of their behalf), contact via verbal, physical (e.g., gestures on paper), or electronic means (e.g., email or social media).

- E. **Restitution:** Requires a student to pay for damages to, or misappropriation of, university property, or the property of visitors to, or members of, the university community. Such restitution may be charged to any student who alone, or through group conducted activities, organizes or knowingly participates in the events causing the damages or costs. Restitution may be imposed separately or in addition to any other sanction(s).
- F. **Loss of Recognized Student Organization/Club Status:** Loss of all privileges identified within the student club/organization protocols, for a specified period of time.

### University Housing Sanctions

- A. **University Housing Probation:** Housing probation may be imposed for a specific period of time, during which the student must demonstrate conduct consistent with the Student Code of Conduct and University Housing Conduct Policies. Any misconduct by the student while on Housing Probation may result in additional conduct action, including suspension or dismissal from University Housing or the university.
- B. **University Housing Suspension:** Separation of the student from University Housing for a definite period of time, after which the student is eligible to return. Conditions for readmission may be specified.
- C. **University Housing Expulsion:** Permanent separation of the student from University Housing.

### Educational/Developmental Sanctions

- A. **Educational Paper or Program:** Educational programs include activities and assignments designed to increase awareness and education about the impact of policy violations on the self and community, and/or educate students about the Student Code of Conduct. This may include written assignments, completion of learning modules, or attendance at campus programs.
- B. **Community Service Hours:** Community services hours must be completed (1) at a non-profit organization, (2) under the supervision of an employee or volunteer coordinator who is not a relative of the student, and (3) without payment or other compensation for the work performed. Community service hours may not count towards service learning hours or other community service required by another program, scholarship, or organization. Students must obtain prior written approval for their intended service. Students are recommended to contact the Center for Civic Engagement ([www.govst.edu/service](http://www.govst.edu/service)) for assistance in identifying service opportunities.
- C. **Recommendations for Assistance/Counseling Assessment:** A recommendation may be made for the student to seek assistance from various resources (e.g., counseling services). The intent of the initial counseling assessment is to evaluate harm to self/others as well as determine a plan for further counseling should it be deemed necessary. Counseling Center staff will report attendance to Community Standards, but will keep session content confidential.

## Elevated Sanctions

**A. University Disciplinary Suspension:** Suspension means temporary exclusion from the university for a specified period of time and includes (a) both a withdrawal from all classes and a prohibition on registration and/or enrollment in classes until the end of the suspension period; (b) removal/exclusion from University Housing; and (c) revocation of all student privileges and rights related to access to and participation in university facilities (subject to arrest for trespassing and a charge of failure to comply), resources, activities, and events (including graduation privileges).

A student may be required to fulfill one or more conditions during the period of suspension in order to qualify for readmission. The student has the right to re-enter the university or have their privileges reinstated after the specified time only if the student provides the required verification that the conditions of suspension, if any, have been met. A student who is suspended from the university is nonetheless responsible for all financial obligations to the university that they incurred. There will be a notation on the student's transcript during the period of suspension which is permanently removed upon reinstatement. Further incidents of misconduct, after the student is readmitted, may result in disciplinary dismissal.

**B. University Disciplinary Dismissal:** Dismissal means exclusion from the university with no promise (implied or otherwise) that the student may return at any future time. Dismissal includes (a) both a withdrawal from all classes and a prohibition on registration/enrollment in classes, (b) removal from University Housing; and (c) revocation of all student privileges and rights related to access to and participation in university facilities (subject to arrest for trespassing and a charge of failure to comply), resources, activities, and events including graduation privileges.

A student may also be required to fulfill one or more conditions prior to becoming eligible for readmission. A student who is dismissed is nonetheless responsible for any and all financial obligations to the university that they incurred. There will be a permanent notation of dismissal on the student's transcript, to be removed only if and when the student is reinstated. A student on disciplinary dismissal may be readmitted only by action of the university president. A student who has been dismissed is not eligible for readmission sooner than one year from the date of dismissal. Students must reapply which the student must reapply to be considered for admission. Readmission is not automatic or guaranteed.

## Parent/Guardian Notification

Parents, or designated guardians, will receive written notification when a student is found responsible for violating the Student Code of Conduct or engaging in the following behaviors:

- Alcohol Policy Violation
- Controlled Substances (Drugs) Policy Violation
- Firearms, Weapons, & Dangerous Substances Policy Violation
- Alcohol/Drug Citation Issued by University Police
- Medical/Intoxication Transport: The student received medical assistance due to incapacitation, suspected incapacitation, and/or self-injury.

This notification is supported by FERPA, which allows colleges and universities who receive federal funding to notify parents/guardians of dependent students when a student has been found responsible for violating university alcohol, drug, or weapons policies.

This notification occurs because of the significant health and safety risks and consequences associated with underage alcohol consumption, drug use, and weapons possession. Governors State University supports the idea that the student, their parents/guardians, and the university are engaged in a partnership in which each partner has the responsibility to promote a healthy and productive educational experience for the student.

### **Registration Hold for Failure to Complete Sanctions**

**Conduct Hold/Office of the Dean of Students Hold:** A hold is an administrative notation on a student's account which prevents the student from registering for classes, dropping or adding courses, and/or obtaining transcripts.

1. A hold may be issued when a student has failed to complete a sanction by the deadline, failed to attend a required meeting with the Office of the Dean of Students, or was not currently enrolled when the alleged violation was reported.
2. The Office of the Dean of Students reserves the right to place disciplinary holds at any point during and after the Community Standards process.
3. Once imposed, a hold will not be removed until the student has completed their outstanding sanctions and/or resolved any pending disciplinary matters. Students who wish to have their hold temporarily removed to register for classes must contact the Office of the Dean of Students.

### **Financial Responsibility**

A student who is suspended or dismissed from the university and/or from university housing due to misconduct is nonetheless responsible for all financial obligations to the university that they incurred.

### **Transcript Notations**

When a sanction of Disciplinary Suspension is issued due to conduct action, a notation will be placed on the academic transcript for the duration of the suspension period. When a sanction of University Dismissal is imposed, the Dismissal sanction will remain as a permanent notation on the transcript.

### **Sanction Review**

All sanctions that require follow up submission should be submitted online at [www.govst.edu/sanctions submission](http://www.govst.edu/sanctions submission). Sanctions will be reviewed and marked complete if the stated guidelines have been met. Sanctions which do not meet the stated guidelines will be returned to the student for revision.

## **H. Student Conduct Appeals**

Students have the right to file a written appeal request of the findings of responsibility or the sanctions following a conduct hearing. The Office of the Dean of Students will review all requests for appeal to

determine if the student has demonstrated appropriate grounds for appeal. Appeals will not be granted based solely on a student's disagreement with the outcome.

**Grounds for Appeal:** Appeals must be based upon one or more of the following grounds:

- 1. Procedural Error:** A procedural error occurred in the handling of the complaint which substantially affected the outcome of the hearing.
- 2. New Evidence:** New evidence exists, sufficient to alter a decision, which was not available at the time of the original hearing. Information will not be considered "new evidence" if the respondent or complainant did not attend the original hearing or voluntarily withheld information during the original hearing.
- 3. Sanction(s) not appropriate for Violation(s):** The sanction(s) imposed are substantially disproportionate to the severity of the violation(s) for which the respondent was found responsible.

### **Appeal Requests**

**Filing an Appeal:** The student may file a request for appeal no later than **five (5) working days** after the decision letter was issued and the respondent has been found responsible for violating the Student Code of Conduct. An appeal must include a one (1) page maximum statement explaining the grounds for the appeal and the desired outcome of the appeal request. Students may submit relevant supporting evidence and documentation. Appeals may be submitted online at [www.govst.edu/conductappeal](http://www.govst.edu/conductappeal).

*Request for extension of timeline:* A student may file a one-time request for an extension to submit an appeal in extenuating circumstances but this request must be filed within the five (5) day timeline. Requests for extensions will be reviewed by the Dean of Students (or designee). A delay in the student opening/receiving the emailed decision letter will not be grounds for submitting a delayed appeal.

**Review of Appeal Request:** After receiving an appeal request, Community Standards will review all materials submitted and make a determination regarding whether or not the appeal request contains sufficient merit to grant an appeal hearing. Students will receive a written response to the appeal request within five (5) working days.

- 1.** If the appeal request is granted, Community Standards will notify all parties (i.e., the responding student, the complainant) and will schedule an appeal hearing.
- 2.** If the appeal request is denied, Community Standards will notify the student of the decision along with the rationale for denial.

### **Appeal Hearings**

Appeal hearings will seek to address if a case will need to be reheard, if imposed sanctions need to be changed, or if the original decision will be upheld. If granted, an appeal hearing will be scheduled within ten (10) working days of the student's appeal request. Appointments with the complainant/reporter and responding student may be arranged to discuss an appeal.



- A. Appeal of an Administrative Hearing:** The appellate body for an administrative hearing is the Student Conduct Committee, depending on the violation(s). Appeals can be submitted online at [www.govst.edu/conductappeal](http://www.govst.edu/conductappeal).
  
- B. Appeal of a Student Conduct Committee Hearing:** The appellate body for the Student Conduct Committee is the Dean of Students (or designee). Appeals can be submitted online at [www.govst.edu/conductappeal](http://www.govst.edu/conductappeal).
  
- C. Appeal of a Dean of Students Decision:** Students who wish to appeal a conduct decision by the Dean of Students must submit a written appeal to the Office of the Provost, following instructions in the decision letter. The decision of the Provost is final and binding and there are no further options for appeal.

*Handbook information adapted from the University of Illinois at Chicago Student Disciplinary Policy.*