



# **Student Code of Conduct**

## **2018-2019**

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## I. Introduction

### Student Code of Conduct

Students who enroll at College of Coastal Georgia are expected to conduct themselves responsibly and to pursue their studies with integrity. By enrolling at College of Coastal Georgia, students agree to comply with the College's rules and regulations. When students act as individuals or in concert to violate any of the following College regulations, they have individual and joint responsibility for such violations. The following delineation of these regulations is not exhaustive and may be added to, changed, and/or superseded. This document does not create a contract. All regulations are subject to the policies of the Board of Regents.

College of Coastal Georgia reserves the right to change its policies without notice. Every effort will be made to keep students advised of such changes. Information regarding academic requirements for graduation will be available in the offices of the Registrar, Vice President for Academic Affairs, and the Director of the Camden Center. Although every effort is made to insure accuracy, in the case of any divergence from or conflict with the *Bylaws* of the Board of Regents, the official *Bylaws* of the Board of Regents shall prevail.

## II. Definitions

### Definition of Student

Student, for the purposes of this document, means any person who is registered for study in the College for the current academic period. A person shall be considered a student during any period which follows the end of an academic period in which the student has completed, until the last day for registration for the next succeeding academic period, or until fourteen calendar days have elapsed after the commencement of classes for the next succeeding academic period, whichever occurs first. The College conduct regulations shall also apply to students after receipt of an offer of admission but prior to arrival on campus for orientation or enrollment. The Office of Admissions shall review an admission decision in light of allegations of misconduct that occur during this period.

### Alcohol & Other Drug Definitions

- **Possession of alcohol or drugs** – refers, but is not limited, to holding, no matter the duration, alcohol or illegal drugs/controlled substances in hand or, having them in one's clothing, purse/book bag (or similar case), automobile, or residence.
- **Consumption of alcohol** – refers to the act of drinking or ingesting any amount of an alcoholic beverage.
- **Use of drugs** – refers to the act of ingesting, inhaling, drinking, eating, and/or any other method of introducing an illegal drug or controlled substance into one's body.
- **Distribution of drugs** – refers to the sharing of illegal drugs/controlled substances with or giving them to others.
- **Sale of alcohol or drugs** – refers to the exchange of alcohol or illegal drugs/controlled substances for money or other forms of compensation (sale).
- **Facilitating the possession/use of alcohol or drugs** – refers to the act of allowing others to possess, consume, or use alcohol or illegal drugs/controlled substances in one's residence or automobile.

## III. College Authority

### Violations of Law & Disciplinary Regulations

Students may be accountable to both civil authorities and to the College for acts which constitute

violations of law and of this code. Disciplinary action at the College will normally proceed regardless of the status of criminal proceedings. Decisions about the timing of specific actions will be made by the Dean of Students on the status of the evidence and other relevant case factors.

#### Interpretation of Regulations

Disciplinary regulations at the College are set forth in writing in order to give students general notice of prohibited conduct. The regulations should be read broadly and are not designed to define misconduct in exhaustive terms.

#### Inherent Authority

The College reserves the right to take necessary and appropriate action to protect the safety and well-being of the campus community. Generally, the College conduct regulations shall apply to conduct which occurs on College premises and to conduct which occurs while a student is attending or participating in any College related activity wherever that activity may take place, or any behavior, on or off College premises, which adversely affects the College community or the pursuit of its objectives.

#### Off-Campus Activities and Behaviors

The College of Coastal Georgia is not responsible or liable for off-campus activities and behaviors; however, it reserves the right to take action in response to off-campus activities and behaviors that contradict the College's interests and purposes. Students and student organizations are expected to conduct themselves as representatives of the College.

When a student is charged both with a criminal offense off campus and charged with a violation of the Student Code of Conduct or Honor Code at the College, the two processes are unrelated and conducted independently of each other. A student found not guilty in one setting may be found guilty in the other.

### **IV. Student & Student Organization Rights & Responsibilities**

Students and student organizations are not only members of the academic community, but they are also members of the larger society. Students, therefore, retain the rights, guarantees, and protections afforded to and the responsibilities held by all citizens. A student is not immune to prosecution by local, state, or federal law enforcement agencies irrespective of whether the College initiates judicial proceedings in a given situation. As members of the College community, students have a responsibility to know and follow the College conduct regulations. Violations of these regulations will result in action by the Dean of Students.

As would be expected, standards for CCGA students and student organizations are higher than those of communities not engaged solely in scholarly pursuits. Not every situation a student or student organization may encounter can be anticipated in a written document. Therefore, students and student organizations are expected to act in a manner that demonstrates integrity and respect for others and the campus environment.

### **V. College Conduct Regulations**

#### **1. Alcohol Possession and Use**

The College of Coastal Georgia follows the Board of Regents' Policy 4.6.4 (<http://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section4/C332>) on alcohol on campus.

The sale, possession, distribution, and consumption of alcoholic beverages are prohibited on the campus and at off-campus College sponsored or registered student organization sponsored events.

## **2. Assault**

Defined as any intentional physical contact of an insulting or provoking nature; or any physical abuse, intentional injury, or physical harm of another person.

## **3. Children on Campus**

It is the goal of the College of Coastal Georgia to provide a safe and effective learning environment for all students and a safe and effective workplace for all faculty and staff. Any action which interferes with this goal will not be permitted. At no time may a child who is not a currently enrolled CCGA student be left unattended on campus, including in a campus building, on campus grounds, or in a vehicle. Children must be under the direct supervision of a parent, legal guardian, or responsible adult at all times while on campus. Parents, legal guardians, or responsible adults of children considered disruptive or unsupervised will be asked to remove the children from the campus immediately. A copy of the full policy may be obtained at:

[http://www.ccg.edu/uploaded/Policy/files/Children\\_on\\_Campus\\_Policy\\_Jan\\_16.pdf?version=1](http://www.ccg.edu/uploaded/Policy/files/Children_on_Campus_Policy_Jan_16.pdf?version=1)

## **4. Damage to College Property or to Property at College-Sponsored Events**

Malicious or unauthorized intentional damage or destruction of property belonging to the College, to a member of the College community, or to a visitor to the campus or to facilities used for College-sponsored events is prohibited.

## **5. Deception**

Any misuse of any College records, forms, or documents through forgery, unauthorized alteration, reproduction, or other means; any giving or receiving of false information to the College or to any College official, administrator, or administrative unit; providing false information to law enforcement officials; any attempt to perpetrate a fraud against the College or a member of the College community is prohibited.

## **6. Disruptive Behavior**

The College of Coastal Georgia follows the Board of Regents' Policy 6.8 (<https://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section6/C2661>) on disruptive behavior. Any student or employee, acting individually or in concert with others, who clearly obstructs or disrupts or attempts to obstruct or disrupt any teaching, research, administrative, disciplinary, public service or other activity at any University System of Georgia (USG) institution is considered by the Board to have committed an act of gross irresponsibility and shall be subject to disciplinary procedures, possibly resulting in academic dismissal or termination of employment. Please also refer to the College of Coastal Georgia's Freedom of Expression policy located at

[http://www.ccg.edu/uploaded/Policy/files/Freedom\\_of\\_Expression.pdf](http://www.ccg.edu/uploaded/Policy/files/Freedom_of_Expression.pdf).

## 7. Disorderly Conduct

Disorderly conduct or breach of the peace on College property or in College facilities (this includes all classroom situations) is prohibited. The following behaviors are considered a violation of the conduct policy:

- Physically assaulting, otherwise harassing, or threatening to do the same to a person on the College premises or at College-sponsored events
- Conduct on College property or in College facilities which materially interferes with the normal operation of the College
- Entering or attempting to enter any dance, or any social, athletic, or other event sponsored or supervised by the College or any recognized College organization without credentials for admission (e.g., ticket, identification card, invitation, and so on)
- Conduct that is a crime under local, state, or federal law and which takes place on College property or at a College-sponsored event.
- Interference with or failing to cooperate with any college faculty member or employee while these persons are in the performance of their duties including the disruption of the teaching or learning process within the classroom or laboratory.

## 8. Drug-Free Policy

Unauthorized manufacture, distribution, or possession for purposes of distribution of any controlled substance or illegal drug/illegal synthetic drug on College premises or at College-sponsored activities is prohibited. Use or possession of any illegal drug or controlled substance (without valid prescription) on College premises or at College-sponsored activities is prohibited. Conviction for a felony offense includes forfeiture of academic credit and may result in permanent suspension. The College of Coastal Georgia's Drug-Free Policy can be accessed at:

[http://www.ccg.edu/uploaded/Student\\_Affairs/files/StudentHandbook.pdf](http://www.ccg.edu/uploaded/Student_Affairs/files/StudentHandbook.pdf)

## 9. Explosives

No student shall possess, furnish, sell, or use explosives of any kind in or on College property or at College-sponsored events.

## 10. Facilities Usage Policies

No student shall make unauthorized entry into any College building, office, or other facility, nor shall any person remain without authorization in any building after normal closing hours. Certain rooms on campus are available in which students may enjoy a snack or meal. However, where designated, eating and/or drinking are prohibited. A complete listing of facility usage policies and facility reservation procedures can be found in the Student Handbook at:

<http://www.ccg.edu/SDServices/Policies.asp>.

## 11. Failure to Comply

A student may be found in violation of the Student Code of Conduct if they fail to respond to a lawful request by properly identified College officials or law enforcement officers in the performance of their duties; fail to appear and cooperate as a witness in a disciplinary case when properly notified; fail to comply with any disciplinary condition imposed on a person by any judicial body or administrator; or flee from law enforcement or College officials.

## 12. Falsification of Records

No student shall alter, counterfeit, forge, falsify, or cause to be altered, counterfeited, forged, or falsified, any record, form, or document used by the College. Nor shall a student furnish false information to the College.

## 13. Fire Safety

No student shall tamper with fire safety equipment. The unauthorized possession, sale, furnishing, or use of any incendiary device is prohibited. No student shall set or cause to be set any unauthorized fire in or on College property or at a College-sponsored event. The possession or use of fireworks in or on College property or at a College-sponsored event is prohibited. No student shall make or cause to be made a false fire alarm.

## 14. Gambling

No student shall conduct, organize, or participate in any activity involving games of chance or gambling except as permitted by law and College policy.

## 15. Harassment & Cyberstalking

### *Harassment*

All employees and students have the opportunity to work and attend classes in an atmosphere and environment free from any form of harassment or retaliation based on race, color, religion, gender, sex, national origin, age, or disability. Such forms of harassment or retaliation constitute discrimination under various state and federal laws and will not be tolerated by the College. For a complete copy of the Non-Discrimination and Harassment Policy, please go to:

<http://www.coga.edu/uploaded/Policy/files/NonDiscriminationandHarassmentPolicy.pdf?version=1> To file a complaint, please see VII.)Conduct Procedures, 1.) Reports of Student Misconduct in this document.

### *Cyberstalking*

Georgia Law O.C.G.A. § 16-5-90 (2011) defines stalking as:

A person commits the offense of stalking when he or she follows, places under surveillance, or contacts another person at or about a place or places without the consent of the other person for the purpose of harassing and intimidating the other person. For the purpose of this article, the terms "computer" and "computer network" shall have the same meanings as set out in Code Section 16-9-92; the term "contact" shall mean any communication including without being limited to communication in person, by telephone, by mail, by broadcast, by computer, by computer network, or by any other electronic device; and the place or places that contact by telephone, mail, broadcast, computer, computer network, or any other electronic device is deemed to occur shall be the place or places where such communication is received. For the purpose of this article, the term "place or places" shall include any public or private property occupied by the victim other than the residence of the defendant. For the purposes of this article, the term "harassing and intimidating" means a knowing and willful course of conduct directed at a specific person which causes emotional distress by placing such person in reasonable fear for such person's safety or the safety of a member of his or her immediate family, by establishing a pattern of harassing and intimidating behavior, and which serves no legitimate purpose. This Code section shall not be construed to require that an overt threat of death or bodily injury has been made. See also the Acceptable Use of Computers Policy for information at:

[http://www.coga.edu/uploaded/Technology\\_Services/files/AcceptableUsePolicy.pdf](http://www.coga.edu/uploaded/Technology_Services/files/AcceptableUsePolicy.pdf)

## 16. Hazing

The College does not condone hazing in any form. Hazing is defined as any intentional, negligent or reckless action, activity or situation that causes another pain, embarrassment, ridicule or harassment, regardless of the individual's willingness to participate. Such actions and situations include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Forcing or requiring the drinking of alcohol or any other substance;
- Forcing or requiring the consumption of food or any other substance; Calisthenics (push-ups, sit-ups, jogging, runs, etc.);
- Paddle swats;
- Line ups;
- Theft of any property;
- Road trips;
- Scavenger hunts;
- Causing fewer than six (6) continuous hours of sleep per night;
- Conducting activities that do not allow adequate time for study;
- Forcing or requiring nudity at any time;
- Performing acts of personal servitude for members;
- Forcing or requiring the violation of College policies, federal, state, or local law.

## 17. Housing Regulations

Residential students are expected to adhere to guidelines and policies laid out in the Residence Life Handbook found at: <http://www.cega.edu/StudentConduct>.

## 18. Parking Regulations

All College of Coastal Georgia students are required to purchase a parking decal and affix it to their vehicles. Those who do not have a parking decal on their vehicles will be ticketed. Parking is not permitted in drives, roadways, sidewalks, crosswalks, or yellow curb areas. Parking on grass is permissible only in clearly marked and specifically designated temporary lots. Traffic flow directions are clearly marked and should be adhered to at all times.

## 19. Shared Responsibility

Students who knowingly act or plan to act in concert to violate College regulations have individual and joint responsibility for their behavior; any student who knowingly allows another student to violate College regulations without reporting to a College Official is in violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

## 20. Solicitation

Advertising, solicitation and selling of a commercial nature, directly by a vendor or through a campus organization, are not permitted except in campus publications and through contractual arrangements with the Office of Business Affairs, as stipulated in the policies of the Board of Regents.

Non-commercial selling by college affiliated organizations and distribution of non-commercial information, such as pamphlets, handbills and other materials protected by the first amendment, is allowed in public areas when approved by the Office of Student Life located in the Campus

Center. The Office of Student Life establishes specific procedures for such activities. Soliciting on campus (door to door; office to office; or through use of campus wide distribution lists) is expressly prohibited. The following procedures apply to on campus sales and solicitations. CCGA student organizations and administrative offices should refer to the fundraising policy at: <http://www.ccgga.edu/uploaded/Policy/files/CampusFundraising.pdf?version=1>

## **21. Student Identification Card**

The Mariner Access Card (MAC) is the official College of Coastal Georgia identification card and the key to the campus. Students are required to present the MAC card to any properly identified faculty or staff member upon request, and the MAC card may be required for admission to certain student activities and College facilities. Students must retain possession of their MAC card at all times and are prohibited from sharing or giving other students or non- students access to their MAC card.

## **22. Theft**

No student shall take, attempt to take, or keep in his/her possession items of College property or items belonging to students, faculty, staff, student groups, or visitors to the campus.

## **23. Threats**

An expression of intention to inflict injury or damage which may cause another person to feel fear for their safety or well-being is prohibited.

## **24. Tobacco-Free Campus**

College of Coastal Georgia prohibits the use of tobacco products on any property owned, leased or controlled by the College of Coastal Georgia effective July 1, 2009. All faculty, staff, students, visitors, vendors, contractors, and all others are prohibited from using any tobacco products i.e. cigarettes, cigars, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chewing tobacco, etc. while on CCGA property. The complete policy can be accessed at: <http://www.ccgga.edu/uploaded/Policy/files/TobaccoFreeCampusPolicy.pdf?version=1>

Faculty, staff and students of CCGA are expected to be positive role models and good ambassadors of the Tobacco Free initiative to non-CCGA persons on campus. All CCGA supervisors must inform subordinate staff members of this policy and inform them that failure to comply can be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. Employees will be informed of the penalties for violation of work rules and policies for faculty and students. The monitoring and enforcement of the tobacco free workplace policy is the responsibility of all CCGA faculty, staff and students. Each member should consistently and politely bring any infraction of this policy to the attention of the person or persons observed violating the policy.

Visitors, vendors, or contractors, and others not specifically employed by CCGA will be reported to the department responsible for their presence on campus. Attempts should be made to remedy violations prior to contacting CCGA Campus Police. In circumstances where departmental leadership is unable to remedy the situation, then CCGA Campus Police will be contacted for assistance.

CCGA will inform and remind faculty, staff, students, visitors, vendors and contractors of this policy by posting signage in strategically located areas. Faculty and staff will also be informed and

reminded of this policy as part of pre-employment processes, new employee orientation and other general employee communications. CCGA will make every effort to make available referral options and support to faculty, staff, students, and others who choose to pursue cessation programs. Visitors who violate this policy will be informed that they may be asked to leave the premises. Vendors and contractors may be subject to action, up to and including, the legal termination of a contract.

## **25. Unauthorized Entry/Use of Property/Facilities/Keys**

Unauthorized entry or attempted entry into any building, office, or other facility on or off campus is prohibited. Making or attempting to make unauthorized use of College facilities and unauthorized possession, use, or duplication of keys or other methods of controlled access (i.e. cards, codes) is prohibited.

## **26. Use of Computers Policy**

Technology resources (hardware and software) provided by College of Coastal Georgia are made available to students, faculty, and staff primarily as tools for enhancing and facilitating teaching, learning, scholarly research, communications, and the operation and administration of the institution. Uses which are not directly related to these purposes shall be considered secondary activities and should such secondary activities in any way interfere with the primary activities, access to institutional technology resources may be terminated immediately. Access to and usage of such resources is a privilege and is not a right; it is therefore deemed appropriate and necessary that certain guidelines for the use of these technology resources be set forth and explained. For a complete copy of the “Use of Computers Policy” go to:

[http://www.ccg.edu/uploaded/Technology\\_Services/files/AcceptableUsePolicy.pdf](http://www.ccg.edu/uploaded/Technology_Services/files/AcceptableUsePolicy.pdf)

## **27. Weapons**

Possession of weapons on the College of Coastal Georgia campus is governed by Georgia law (O.C.G.A. §16-11-127.1). Under the law, weapons are not allowed on the College of Coastal Georgia campus, subject only to certain exceptions found in O.C.G.A. §16-11-127.1.

The Prohibition of Weapons On Campus policy may be accessed at:

<http://www.ccg.edu/uploaded/Policy/files/ProhibitionofWeaponsPolicy.pdf?version=2>

## **VI. Inspection, Search, & Seizure Policy**

The Fourth Amendment to the United States Constitution protects College students from unreasonable searches and seizures. Nonetheless, it is self-evident that an institution of higher education has certain powers that may be exercised in carrying out the institution’s educational mission. Students are entitled to an atmosphere that is conducive to educational pursuits, and it is the institution’s responsibility to provide that atmosphere. This is especially true within the College’s residence halls, generally considered to be a student’s “home away from home.”

Accordingly, the College has developed and adopted reasonable measures in its housing regulations that are intended to provide a clean, safe environment in its residence halls. Pursuant to these regulations:

- The College reserves the right to conduct administrative inspections of residence hall rooms for cleanliness, health hazards, and to enforce housing regulations. These limited inspections are permissible in light of the institution’s interest in the maintenance of the

- residence hall and the health of the students residing within it.
- Additionally, the College reserves the right to carry out administrative inspections in cases of emergencies, such as in the case of a fire, or as part of its fire safety program, such as during fire drills to ensure the building has been vacated.
  - College law enforcement officials may enter any student's residence hall room pursuant to a search warrant. While efforts will be made to have the student available during the search, this is not required and the search will not be unreasonably delayed to allow for the student's presence.
  - In addition, College officials, including law enforcement personnel, may enter a student's residence hall room based upon the consent of the occupant of the room.

Any illegal items lawfully observed during the course of these searches may be seized, as long as the seizure is made in accordance with the Fourth Amendment. Further, all illegal items seized may be used in any administrative and/or disciplinary hearing that is conducted by the institution.

**VII. Conduct Procedures** (References University System of Georgia policy located at <http://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section4/C332>)

These procedures apply to matters relating to student misconduct. Please note that the Sexual Misconduct procedures is located in Section XIV. and Academic Integrity Policy and Procedures is located in Section VIII.

### **1.) Reports of Student Misconduct**

Complaints to the appropriate department and/or person(s) should include as much information as possible – such as: (1) the type of misconduct alleged; (2) the name and contact information of the individual(s) accused of misconduct; (3) the date(s), time(s), and place(s) of the misconduct; (4) the name(s) and contact information of any individual(s) with knowledge of the incident; (5) whether any tangible evidence has been preserved; and (6) whether a criminal complaint has been made.

Information from complaints may be shared as necessary to investigate and to resolve the alleged misconduct. Complaints shall be investigated and resolved as outlined below. The need to issue a broader warning to the community in compliance with the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act (“Clery Act”) shall be assessed in compliance with federal law.

Where appropriate, complainants may file a law enforcement report as well as an institutional report, but are not required to file both.

- A. **Confidentiality:** Where a complainant or alleged victim requests that his or her identity be withheld or the allegation(s) not be investigated, the College should consider whether or not such request(s) can be honored while still providing a safe and nondiscriminatory environment for the College and conducting an effective review of the allegations. The institution should inform the requesting party that the College cannot guarantee confidentiality.
- B. **Retaliation:** Anyone who, in good faith, reports what she or he believes to be student misconduct participates or cooperates in, or is otherwise associated with any investigation, shall not be subjected to retaliation. Anyone who believes he or she has been the target of retaliation for reporting, participating or cooperating in, or otherwise being associated with an investigation should immediately contact the appropriate department or individual(s) for

that institution. Any person found to have engaged in retaliation in violation of the student conduct policy shall be subject to disciplinary action, pursuant to the institution's policy.

- C. **False Complaints/Statements:** Individuals are prohibited from intentionally giving false statements to a College official. Any person found to have intentionally submitted false complaints, accusations, or statements, including during a hearing, in violation of this Policy shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action (up to and including suspension or expulsion) and adjudicated under the student conduct policy.
- D. **Amnesty:** Students should be encouraged to come forward and report violations of the law and/or student code of conduct notwithstanding their own improper use of alcohol or drugs. Any student(s) who voluntarily and in good faith reports information to the College faculty or staff prior to any investigation concerning use of drugs or alcohol will not be voluntarily reported to law enforcement; nor will information that the individual provides be used against the individual for purposes of conduct violations. Nevertheless, these students may be required to meet with staff members in regard to the incident and may be required to participate in appropriate educational program(s). The required participation in an educational program under this amnesty procedure will not be considered a sanction. Nothing in this amnesty procedure shall prevent a university staff member who is otherwise obligated by law (the Clery Act) to report information or statistical data as required.

## **2.) Process for Investigating and Resolving Disputed Reports**

**Jurisdiction:** The College shall take necessary and appropriate action to protect the safety and well-being of its community. Accordingly, student conduct should be addressed when such acts occur on College property, at College-sponsored or affiliated events, or otherwise violate the College's student conduct policies, regardless as to where such conduct occurs. If the student has admitted responsibility and has voluntarily decided to participate in the informal process, the procedures outlined in this section will not apply.

**Access to Advisors:** The respondent and alleged victim (where applicable), as parties to these proceedings, shall have the right to have an advisor (who may or may not be an attorney) of his or her choosing, and at his or her own expense, for the express purpose of providing advice and counsel. The advisor may be present during meetings and proceedings during the investigatory and/or resolution process at which his or her advisee is present. The advisor may advise his or her advisee in any manner, including providing questions, suggestions, and guidance on responses to any questions posed to the advisee, but shall not participate directly during the investigation or hearing process. The College shall not prohibit family members of a party from attending the hearing if the party requests such attendance, but may limit each participant to having two family members present.

**Initial Evaluation of Student Conduct Reports:** Regardless of how the College becomes aware of misconduct, the College shall ensure a prompt, fair, and impartial review and resolution of complaints alleging student misconduct. Where a report of student misconduct has been made to the appropriate department and/or person, the College shall review the complaint to determine whether the allegation(s) describes conduct in violation of the College's policies and/or code of conduct. If the reported conduct would not be a violation of the College's policies and/or code of conduct, even if true, then the report should be dismissed. Otherwise, a prompt, thorough, and impartial investigation, and review shall be conducted into each complaint received to determine whether charges against the respondent should be brought.

Where a report of student misconduct alleges sexual misconduct or other forms of harassment and/or discrimination, the report will be referred to and the investigation will be conducted through or as directed by the appropriate office trained and equipped to investigate such matters.

Any report that involves allegation(s) of conduct that could lead to the suspension or expulsion of the respondent(s) in an initial violation must be promptly reported to the System Director by the institution. The System Director will work with the College to determine whether any interim measure(s) are necessary, to assign an investigator and will collaboratively supervise the investigation with the appropriate College professional (e.g., the Title IX Coordinator, Dean of Students). If an allegation is not initially identified as one that could lead to suspension or expulsion of the respondent(s), but facts arise during the course of the investigation that would require oversight from the System Director, then the College shall report that case to the System Director or her designee prior to proceeding.

### **Investigation**

Throughout any investigation and resolution proceedings, a party shall receive written notice of the alleged misconduct, shall be provided an opportunity to respond, and shall be allowed to remain silent or otherwise not participate in or during the investigation and resolution process without an adverse inference resulting. If a party chooses to remain silent or otherwise not participate in an investigation, the investigation may still proceed and policy charges may still result and be resolved. Additionally, in any investigation involving allegations of sexual misconduct, timely notice of meetings shall be provided to each party of any meeting at which the complainant, respondent or alleged victim may be present. Timely and equal access to information that will be used during the investigation will be provided to the complainant, respondent and alleged victim (where applicable).

Where the potential sanctions for the alleged misconduct may involve a suspension or expulsion (even if such sanctions were to be held “in abeyance,” such as probationary suspension or expulsion) the College’s investigation and resolution procedures must provide the additional minimal safeguards outlined below.

- A. The alleged victim and respondent shall be provided with written notice of the complaint/allegations, pending investigation, possible charges, possible sanctions, and available support services. The notice should also include the identity of any investigator(s) involved. Notice should be provided via College email to the address on file.
- B. Upon receipt of the written notice, the respondent shall have at least three business days to respond in writing. In that response, the respondent shall have the right to admit or to deny the allegations, and to set forth a defense with facts, witnesses, and supporting materials. A non-response will be considered a general denial of the alleged misconduct. Any alleged victim shall also be provided three business days to respond to or to supplement the notice.
- C. If the respondent admits responsibility, the process may proceed to the sanctioning phase or may be informally resolved, if appropriate.
- D. If at any point the investigator determines there is insufficient evidence to support a charge or to warrant further consideration of discipline, then the complaint should be dismissed.
- E. An investigator shall conduct a thorough investigation and should retain written notes and/or obtain written or recorded statements from each interview. The investigator shall also keep a record of any party’s proffered witnesses not interviewed, along with a brief, written explanation of why the witnesses were not interviewed.
- F. The initial investigation report shall be provided to the respondent and the alleged victim (where applicable). This report should clearly indicate any resulting charges (or

alternatively, a determination of no charges), as well as the facts and evidence in support thereof, witness statements, and possible sanctions. For purposes of this Policy, a charge is not a finding of responsibility, but indicates that there is sufficient evidence to warrant further consideration and adjudication.

- G. The final investigation report should be provided to the Conduct Board or conduct officer for consideration in adjudicating the charges brought against the respondent. A copy shall also be provided to the respondent and alleged victim (where applicable) before any hearing. The investigator may testify as a witness regarding the investigation and findings, but shall otherwise have no part in the hearing process and shall not attempt to otherwise influence the proceedings outside of providing testimony during the hearing.

### **Resolution/Hearing**

In no case shall a hearing to resolve charge(s) of student misconduct take place before the investigative report has been finalized.

Where the respondent indicates that he or she contests the charges, the matter shall be set for a hearing and once the investigative report has been finalized and copies provided to the respondent and alleged victim (where applicable); however, the alleged victim (where applicable) and respondent may have the option of selecting informal resolution as a possible resolution in certain student misconduct cases where they mutually agree, except where deemed inappropriate by the Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management (or his/her designee) or the System Director.

Where a case is not resolved through informal resolution or informal resolution is not available due to the nature of the charges, the respondent shall have the option of having the charges heard either by an administrator (conduct officer) or the Conduct Board. However, all cases involving charges of sexual misconduct that go to a hearing shall be heard by a Conduct Board of staff and/or faculty. Sexual misconduct Conduct Board members shall receive appropriate annual training as directed by the System Director or Coordinator and required by the Clery Act. If an administrative hearing is requested, the respondent shall use his or her discretion to determine whether the case should be heard by the Conduct Board. Notice of the date, time, and location of the hearing shall be provided to the respondent, complainant, and alleged victim (where applicable) at least five business days prior to the hearing. Notice shall be provided via College email where applicable. Additionally, the following standards will apply to any such hearing:

The respondent shall have the right to present witnesses and evidence to the conduct officer or Conduct Board. Witness testimony, if provided, shall pertain to knowledge and facts directly associated with the case being heard. Both parties shall have the right to confront any witnesses, including the other party, by submitting written questions to the conduct officer for consideration. Advisors may actively assist in drafting questions. The Conduct Board shall ask the questions as written and will limit questions only if they are unrelated to determining the veracity of the charge leveled against the respondent(s). In any event, the Conduct Board shall err on the side of asking all submitted questions and must document the reason for not asking any particular questions.

- A. Where the conduct officer or Conduct Board determines that a party or witness is unavailable and unable to be present due to extenuating circumstances, the conduct officer or Conduct Board may establish special procedures for providing testimony from a separate location. In doing so, the conduct officer or Conduct Board must determine whether there is a valid basis for the unavailability, ensure proper sequestration in a manner that ensures

testimony has not been tainted, and make a determination that such an arrangement will not unfairly disadvantage any party. Should it be reasonably believed that a party or witness who is not physically present has presented tainted testimony, the conduct officer or Conduct Board will disregard or discount the testimony.

- B. In sexual misconduct cases, the conduct officer reserves the right to allow a party to testify in a separate room, so long as no party is unfairly disadvantaged by this procedure. A party must still give testimony in the presence of the Conduct Board, and the opposing party must have the opportunity to view the testimony remotely and to submit follow-up questions.
- C. Formal civil rules of evidence do not apply to the investigatory or resolution process.
- D. The standard of review shall be a preponderance of the evidence; however, any decision to suspend or to expel a student must also be supported by substantial evidence at the hearing.
- E. The College should maintain documentation of the proceedings, which may include written findings of fact, transcripts, audio recordings, and/or video recordings.
- F. Following a hearing, both the respondent and alleged victim (where applicable) shall be simultaneously provided a written decision via College email (where applicable) of the outcome and any resulting sanctions. The decision should include details on how to appeal, as outlined below. Additionally, the written decision must summarize the evidence in support of the sanction. The same form will be completed, regardless of whether the student opts for a Conduct Board or an administrative proceeding.

## **VIII. Academic Integrity Policy and Procedures**

### **Introduction:**

Academic and intellectual integrity is expected of all individuals at the College of Coastal Georgia. The College expects students to be honest and present work that is only their own. Scholarship and fairness require that improper work be rejected and that violations be investigated and, appropriate sanctions administered. Academic dishonesty includes plagiarism, cheating, giving or receiving assistance not authorized by the instructor, using one's own prior work, and in any other way presenting work that is not that of the student to whom an assignment was made.

### **Definitions:**

**Cheating** is the use or the attempt to use materials, information, or study aids not permitted by the instructor in exams or other assigned work. This can occur by obtaining materials for tests or assignments not authorized by the instructor, giving unauthorized aid to a student before or during an examination, taking an exam for another student, and submitting significant portions of the same work in two different classes without prior approval by both instructors.

**Plagiarism** is defined as representing another person's work (including a student's own prior work), ideas, data or words as one's own or as original. It is expected that all work must properly credit sources of information. Instructors should explain to students their expectations with respect to sourcing and documentation.

Students may not sell papers or additional services that assist other students in their creation of academic work for course requirements. Students not enrolled in a particular course, but who assist students in completing work for a course, may still be found in violation of the student academic honesty policy.

### **Procedure:**

The following process outlines the steps taken to resolve issues of academic dishonesty. This process is centered on the faculty member's right to manage the classroom environment and administer course grades as well as the student's right to due process if accused of misconduct. It is important that at the start of every semester faculty state to the class and in the syllabus the importance of academic integrity. Examples of cheating or plagiarism should be given to students. Faculty should also include on their syllabi the description of the process of resolving questions of academic integrity and honesty. This description should include the sanctions the instructor will impose for academic dishonesty in his or her course if the accused student accepts responsibility and chooses to handle the matter internally. These penalties, however, may not include a final grade of 'F' in the course in question. This penalty can only be assigned by the Conduct Board.

Classroom instructors initiate the academic integrity process. Upon suspicion of an instance of academic dishonesty, the faculty member must inform the student of their concerns through the Academic Integrity Incident Report **within five business days** and ultimately file a copy of the Academic Integrity Incident Report with the Dean of Students, acting as Chair of the Conduct Board, **within two business days** after meeting with the student. At the point that the faculty member shares their concern with a student, a student may accept responsibility for their actions and allow the faculty member to levy a sanction.

In a case where a student accepts responsibility and the faculty member's sanction, the Academic Integrity Report remains on file with the Dean of Students for future reference in case of a repeat offense by a given student. Faculty-levied sanctions should be described on the course syllabus. If the student does not accept responsibility, the faculty member advises the student that the incident will be referred to the Dean of Students and **within one business day**, the faculty member submits the Academic Integrity Incident Report to the Dean of Students and requests that the Dean take action.

It should be noted that if a student (complainant) initiates a report of academic dishonesty of another student to a faculty member, the faculty member is obligated to follow the same process as outlined above and submit a report to the Dean of Students.

In cases where a student (complainant) reports another student, the faculty member outlines the details of the incident as reported by the complainant along with any additional information the faculty member may have regarding the accusation. The complainant needs to be identified on the report and is permitted to submit a report that is attached to the Academic Integrity Incident Report.

Upon receiving the report, the Dean of Students will schedule a date for a hearing. The student, faculty member, and, if appropriate, the complainant will receive a **minimum of a three-day** advance notification of the hearing date and time along with a copy of the report. At the hearing, the Dean of Students shall read to the student the charges and ask the student to present his or her perspective on what happened. At that point, the Dean of Students and members of the Conduct Board may ask questions, first of the faculty member and then second, of the student(s).

After questioning is completed, the Conduct Board will go into executive session to discuss the issue and then vote "responsible" or not "responsible."

If the finding is “responsible,” the Conduct Board must decide a sanction. Sanctions may include one or all of the following:

1. **Academic warning** – The Dean of Students sends a letter to the student (and a copy to the faculty member) stating that the student was found responsible for the alleged act. However, this finding will not be used to determine the student’s grade. A copy of the letter will be placed in the student’s permanent file.
2. **Failing grade for the assignment** – The Dean of Students informs the instructor that a grade of zero should be assigned to that part of the course in question. The final course grade is to be determined as described in the syllabus with the zero included. **This assigned grade of F may not be appealed.**
3. **Failing grade for the course** – The Dean of Students instructs the faculty member to assign a course grade of F to the student(s) in question. **This grade may not be appealed.**
4. **Academic suspension** – For repeat offenses, a student may be recommended for academic suspension. This recommendation will be sent to the Vice President for Student Affairs (VPSA) who will make the final decision on whether a student will be dismissed from the College. The decision of the VPSA may not be appealed to the President of the College.

A student may submit a letter of appeal to the VPSA within five business days of receiving a decision letter from the Dean of Students (on behalf of the Conduct Board). The appeal to the VPSA is not to rehear the matter, but rather must illustrate re-consideration of the sanctions based on missing evidence or the failure of the faculty or Conduct Board to follow the hearing process outlined above. No additional appeals are available once the Vice President for Student Affairs renders a decision.

Recordings of the hearing of the Conduct Board will be made and if a grade adjustment or academic suspension is the resulting sanction, the results will be filed in the Office of the Registrar. All reports will be filed under the student’s conduct record in the Office of Student Affairs.

A student found responsible for a violation of the academic integrity policy may not appeal the grade for that particular course under the Student Academic Appeal Policy. However, a final grade appeal, which does not involve a violation of the academic integrity policy, may be made to the appropriate academic dean according to normal procedures. A copy of the Student Academic Appeal Policy can be found in the College catalog posted online through the CCGA website as well as the Student Code of Conduct.

## **IX. Possible Sanctions**

In determining the severity of sanctions or corrective actions the following should be considered: the frequency, severity, and/or nature of the offense; history of past conduct; an offender’s willingness to accept responsibility; previous College response to similar conduct; strength of the evidence; and the wellbeing of the university community. The Conduct Board, conduct officer or administrator that found that a policy violation occurred will determine sanctions and issue notice of the same, as outlined above.

The broad range of sanctions includes: expulsion; suspension for an identified time frame or until satisfaction of certain conditions or both; temporary or permanent separation of the parties (e.g.,

change in classes, reassignment of residence, no contact orders, limiting geography of where parties can go on campus) with additional sanctions for violating no-contact orders; required participation in sensitivity training/awareness education programs; required participation in alcohol and other drug awareness and abuse prevention programs; counseling or mentoring; volunteering/community service; loss of College privileges; delays in obtaining administrative services and benefits from the College (e.g., holding transcripts, delaying registration, graduation, diplomas); additional academic requirements relating to scholarly work or research; financial restitution; or any other discretionary sanctions directly related to the violation or conduct.

### Monetary Sanctions

Below are the Board of Regents approved monetary sanctions:

<b>Violation</b>	<b>Monetary Sanction</b>
Smoking Policy – 1 <sup>st</sup> offense	\$25.00
Smoking – 2 <sup>nd</sup> offense	\$50.00
Smoking – 3 <sup>rd</sup> offense	\$100.00
Marijuana, less than one ounce – 1 <sup>st</sup> offense	\$250.00 and subject to residence hall contract termination
Marijuana, less than one ounce – 2 <sup>nd</sup> offense	\$500.00 and six months suspension from the College
Marijuana or any other drug more than one ounce	\$250.00, residence hall contract termination, one year suspension from the College, and automatically referred to local law enforcement for disposition
Alcohol – 1 <sup>st</sup> offense	\$100.00 fine and three month disciplinary probation
Alcohol – 2 <sup>nd</sup> offense	\$150.00, treatment program at student's expense, six month disciplinary probation
Alcohol – 3 <sup>rd</sup> offense	Suspended for a minimum of one semester

### Interim Measures For Policy Violations That Does Not Include Academic Integrity

Interim measures may be provided by the College at any point during an investigation and should be designed to protect the alleged victim and the community. To the extent interim measures are imposed, they should minimize the burden on both the alleged victim and the respondent, where feasible. Interim measures may include, but are not limited to:

- A. Change of housing assignment;
- B. Issuance of a “no contact” directive;
- C. Restrictions or bars to entering certain College property;
- D. Changes to academic or employment arrangements, schedules, or supervision;
- E. Interim suspension; and
- F. Other measures designed to promote the safety and well-being of the parties and the College's community.

An interim suspension should only occur where necessary to maintain safety and should be limited to those situations where the respondent poses a serious and immediate danger or threat to persons or property. In making such an assessment, the institution should consider the existence of a significant risk to the health or safety of the alleged victim or the campus community; the nature, duration, and severity of the risk; the probability of potential injury; and whether less restrictive means can be used to significantly mitigate the risk.

Before an interim suspension is issued, the College must make all reasonable efforts to give the respondent the opportunity to be heard on whether his or her presence on campus poses a danger. If an interim suspension is issued, the terms of the suspension take effect immediately. Upon request, the respondent will have an opportunity to be heard by the respective conduct officer, Title IX Coordinator, or System Director, as appropriate, within three business days in order to determine whether the interim suspension should continue.

#### **X. Appeals Process For Policy Violations That Does Not Include Academic Integrity**

Where the sanction imposed includes a suspension or expulsion (even for one held in abeyance), the following appellate procedures must be provided. The alleged offender (and in cases involving sexual misconduct or other forms of discrimination and/or harassment, the alleged victim) shall have the right to appeal the outcome on any of the following grounds: (1) to consider new information, sufficient to alter the decision, or other relevant facts not brought out in the original hearing, because such information was not known or knowable to the person appealing during the time of the hearing; (2) to allege a procedural error within the hearing process that may have substantially impacted the fairness of the hearing, including but not limited to whether any hearing questions were improperly excluded or whether the decision was tainted by bias; or (3) to allege that the finding was inconsistent with the weight of the information.

Appeals may be made for the above reasons in any case where sanctions are issued, even when such sanctions are held “in abeyance,” such as probationary suspension or expulsion. The appeal must be made in writing, and must set forth one or more of the bases outlined above, and must be submitted within five business days of the date of the final written decision. The appeal should be made to the institution’s Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management or his/her designee.

The appeal shall be a review of the record only, and no new meeting with the respondent or any alleged victim is required. The Vice President, or his or her designee, may affirm the original finding and sanction, affirm the original finding but issue a new sanction of lesser severity, remand the case back to the decision-maker to correct a procedural or factual defect, or reverse or dismiss the case if there was a procedural or factual defect that cannot be remedied by remand. The Vice President or his or her designee shall then issue a decision in writing to the respondent within a reasonable time period.

The decision of the Vice President or his or her designee may be appealed in writing within five business days (as determined by the date of the decision letter) to the President of the College solely on the three grounds set forth above.

The President may affirm the original finding and sanction, affirm the original finding but issue a new sanction of greater or lesser severity, remand the case back to the decision maker to correct a procedural or factual defect, or reverse or dismiss the case if there was a procedural or factual defect that cannot be remedied by remand. The President’s decision shall be simultaneously issued in writing to the complainant, the respondent and the alleged victim (where applicable) within a reasonable time period. The President’s decision shall be the final decision of the College.

Should the respondent or alleged victim (where applicable) wish to appeal the President’s decision, he or she may request review by the Board of Regents in accordance with the Board of Regents’ Policy on Discretionary Review.

## **XI. Recusal / Challenge for Bias For Policy Violations That Does Not Include Academic Integrity**

Any party may challenge the participation of any College official, employee or Conduct Board member in the process on the grounds of personal bias by submitting a written statement to the College's designee setting forth the basis for the challenge. The designee shall not be the same individual responsible for investigating or adjudicating the conduct allegation. The written challenge should be submitted within a reasonable time after the individual knows or reasonably should have known of the existence of the bias. The College's designee will determine whether to sustain or deny the challenge and, if sustained, the replacement to be appointed.

## **XII. Parental Notification**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) has given colleges/universities the option to notify parents or guardians about specific types of information from a student's judicial record. The Office of Student Affairs will notify parents or guardians the first time and every subsequent time a student is found to have violated Code of Conduct policies on the use or possession of alcohol or other drugs when he/she is under the age of 21. Please note that the Office of Student Affairs only notifies parents when a student is found to have violated Code of Conduct policies on the use or possession of alcohol or other drugs through a formal hearing or informal resolution.

## **XIII. Records**

### *Confidentiality of Records*

A student may authorize the release of his/her disciplinary record to any party by making a written request. Any other party seeking access to a record of College conduct hearing must file a written request pursuant to the Georgia Open Records Act.

## **XIV. Sexual Misconduct Policy** (References University System of Georgia policy located at <http://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section6/policy/C2655>)

In accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 ("Title IX"), the University System of Georgia (USG) does not discriminate on the basis of sex in any of its education programs or activities or in employment. The USG is committed to ensuring a safe learning and working environment for all members of the USG community. To that end, this Policy prohibits sexual misconduct, as defined herein.

In order to reduce incidents of sexual misconduct, the College is required to provide prevention tools and to conduct ongoing awareness and prevention programming and training for the campus community. Such programs will promote positive and healthy behaviors and educate the campus community on consent, sexual assault, alcohol use, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, bystander intervention, and reporting.

When sexual misconduct does occur, all members of the College community are strongly encouraged to report it promptly through the procedures outlined in this Policy. The purpose of this Policy is to ensure uniformity throughout the University System of Georgia in reporting and addressing sexual misconduct.

## **Reporting Structure**

All Equal Opportunity directors and others having responsibility for coordination of Title IX (“Coordinators”) at USG institutions shall have a direct reporting relationship to both the institution’s President or the President’s designee and the USG System Director for Equity and Investigations (“System Director”). The President of each College shall determine the organizational and operating reporting relationships for the Coordinators at the College and exercise oversight of College issues relating to sexual misconduct. However, the System Director shall have authority to direct the Coordinators’ work at each institution as needed to address system-wide issues or directives. The President of each College shall consult with the System Director on significant personnel actions involving Coordinators, to include but not be limited to, appointment, evaluation, discipline, change in reporting structure, and termination.

## 1. Definitions and Prohibited Conduct

- **Community:** Students, faculty, and staff, as well as contractors, vendors, visitors and guests.
- **Complainant:** An individual lodging a complaint. The complainant may not always be the alleged victim.
- **Consent:** Words or actions that show a knowing and voluntary willingness to engage in mutually agreed-upon sexual activity. Consent cannot be gained by force, intimidation or coercion; by ignoring or acting in spite of objections of another; or by taking advantage of the incapacitation of another where the respondent knows or reasonably should have known of such incapacitation. Minors under the age of 16 cannot legally consent under Georgia law. Consent is also absent when the activity in question exceeds the scope of consent previously given. Past consent does not imply present or future consent. Silence or an absence of resistance does not imply consent. Consent can be withdrawn at any time by either party by using clear words or actions.
- **Dating Violence:** Violence committed by a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the alleged victim. Dating violence includes, but is not limited to, sexual or physical abuse or the threat of such abuse. Dating violence does not include acts covered under the definition of domestic violence.
- **Domestic Violence:** Violence committed by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the alleged victim; by a person with whom the alleged victim shares a child in common; by a person who is cohabitating with, or has cohabitated with, the victim as a spouse or intimate partner, or by a person similarly situated to a spouse of the alleged victim.
- **Incapacitation:** The physical and/or mental inability to make informed, rational judgments. It can result from mental disability, sleep, involuntary physical restraint, status as a minor under the age of 16, or from intentional or unintentional taking of alcohol and/or other drugs. Whether someone is incapacitated is to be judged from the perspective of an objectively reasonable person.
- **Nonconsensual Sexual Contact:** Any physical contact with another person of a sexual nature without the person’s consent. It includes but is not limited to touching (or penetrating) of a person’s intimate parts (such as genitalia, groin, breasts, or buttocks); touching (or penetrating) a person with one’s own intimate parts; or forcing a person to touch his or her own or another person’s intimate parts.
- **Confidential Employees:** Institution employees who have been designated by the College’s Coordinator to talk with an alleged victim in confidence. Confidential Employees must only report that the incident occurred and provide date, time, location, and name of alleged respondent (if known) without revealing any information that would personally identify the alleged victim. This minimal reporting must be submitted in compliance with

Title IX and the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act (“Clery Act”). Confidential Employees may be required to fully disclose details of an incident in order to ensure campus safety.

- **Privileged Employees:** Individuals employed by the College to whom a complainant or alleged victim may talk in confidence, as provided by law. Disclosure to these employees will not automatically trigger an investigation against the complainant’s or alleged victim’s wishes. Privileged Employees include those providing counseling, advocacy, health, mental health, or sexual-assault related services (e.g., sexual assault resource centers, campus health centers, pastoral counselors, and campus mental health centers) or as otherwise provided by applicable law. Exceptions to confidentiality exist where the conduct involves suspected abuse of a minor (in Georgia, under the age of 18) or otherwise provided by law, such as imminent threat of serious harm.
- **Respondent:** Individual who is alleged to have engaged in conduct that violates this Policy.
- **Responsible Employees:** Those employees who must promptly and fully report complaints of or information regarding sexual misconduct to the Coordinator. Responsible Employees include any administrator, supervisor, faculty member, or other person in a position of authority who is not a Confidential Employee or Privileged Employee. Student employees who serve in a supervisory, advisory, or managerial role are in a position of authority for purposes of this Policy (e.g., teaching assistants, residential assistants, student managers, orientation leaders).
- **Sexual Exploitation:** Taking non-consensual or abusive sexual advantage of another for one’s own advantage or benefit, or for the benefit or advantage of anyone other than the one being exploited. Examples of sexual exploitation may include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - Invasion of sexual privacy;
  - Prostituting another individual;
  - Non-consensual photos, video, or audio of sexual activity;
  - Non-consensual distribution of photo, video, or audio of sexual activity, even if the sexual activity was consensual;
  - Intentional observation of nonconsenting individuals who are partially undressed, naked, or engaged in sexual acts;
  - Knowingly transmitting an STD or HIV to another individual through sexual activity;
  - Intentionally and inappropriately exposing one’s breasts, buttocks, groin, or genitals in non-consensual circumstances; and/or
  - Sexually-based bullying.
- **Sexual Harassment:** Unwelcome verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct, based on sex or on gender stereotypes, that is implicitly or explicitly a term or condition of employment or status in a course, program, or activity; is a basis for employment or educational decisions; or is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive to interfere with one’s work or educational performance creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or learning environment, or interfering with or limiting one’s ability to participate in or to benefit from a College program or activity.
- **Sexual Misconduct:** Includes, but is not limited to, such unwanted behavior as dating violence, domestic violence, nonconsensual sexual contact, sexual exploitation, sexual harassment and stalking.
- **Stalking:** Engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a

reasonable person to fear for his or her safety or the safety of others or suffer substantial emotional distress. Course of conduct means two or more acts, including, but not limited to, acts in which the stalker directly, indirectly, or through third parties, by any action, method, device, or means, follows, monitors, observes, surveils, threatens, or communicates to or about a person, or interferes with person's property. Reasonable person means a reasonable person under similar circumstances and with similar identities to the victim. Substantial emotional distress means significant mental suffering or anguish that may but does not necessarily, require medical or other professional treatment or counseling.

## **2. Reporting Sexual Misconduct**

A complainant of sexual misconduct may, but need not, file a criminal complaint with law enforcement officials; file a misconduct report with a Responsible Employee or Coordinator; or file both. A report may be filed anonymously, although anonymous reports may make it difficult for the College to address the complaint. Any individual who believes that he or she has been a victim of sexual misconduct is encouraged to report allegations of sexual misconduct promptly.

All reports of sexual misconduct alleged to have been committed by a student must be handled consistently with requirements set forth in VII. Conduct Procedures.

All reports of sexual misconduct alleged to have been committed by a non-student member of the College community will be addressed and/or resolved through the College's and the Board of Regents' applicable policies for discipline of non-students.

Complainants of sexual misconduct who wish to file a report with the College should notify a Responsible Employee or the Coordinator. Responsible Employees informed about sexual misconduct allegations involving any student should not attempt to resolve the situation, but must notify and report all relevant information to the Coordinator as soon as practicable. Confidential Employees are not bound by this requirement but may be required to report limited information about incidents without revealing the identities of the individuals involved to the Title IX Coordinator, consistent with their ethical and legal obligations. All members of the College are encouraged to report incidents of sexual misconduct promptly.

The Coordinator's identity and contact information shall be published by each institution prominently on the College's website, as well as in any relevant publication. This information is located at <http://www.ccg.edu/page.cfm?p=1488>. Each College may choose to have Deputy Title IX Coordinators to whom reports may be made, as well. The College should encourage complainants to report their complaints in writing, though oral complaints should also be accepted, taken seriously, and investigated, to the extent possible. While complaints should be made as quickly as possible following an alleged incident of sexual misconduct, all reports should be accepted regardless of when reported.

The Coordinator shall refer to the System Director any allegation(s) of sexual misconduct that could, standing alone as reported, lead to the suspension or expulsion of the respondent(s). The System Director will work with the College to determine whether any interim measure(s) are necessary and to assign an investigator who will work under the direction of the System Director or designee, if directed by System Director. If an allegation is not initially identified as one that would lead to the suspension or expulsion of the respondent(s), but facts arise during the course of

the investigation that would require transfer to the System Director, the Title IX Coordinator shall transfer oversight to the System Director or designee. The System Director shall have the discretion to retain oversight or transfer oversight to the College.

### **Law Enforcement Reports**

Because sexual misconduct may constitute criminal activity, a complainant also has the option, should he or she so choose, of filing a report with campus or local police, for his or her own protection and that of the surrounding community. The College may assist the complainant in reporting the situation to law enforcement officials.

Complainants considering filing a report of sexual misconduct with law enforcement should preserve any evidence of sexual misconduct, including, but not limited to, the following:

1. Clothing worn during the incident including undergarments;
2. Sheets, bedding, and condoms, if used;
3. Lists of witnesses with contact information;
4. Text messages, call history, social media posts;
5. Pictures of injuries; and/or
6. Videos.

### **Anonymous Reports**

The College of Coastal Georgia's anonymous report form is located at <http://www2.ccg.edu/PublicSafety/AnonymousTipsForm.asp>. Complainants should understand, however, that it will be more difficult for the College to investigate and to take action upon anonymous reports.

### **Retaliation**

Anyone who, in good faith, reports what he or she believes to be misconduct under this Policy, or who participates or cooperates in, or is otherwise associated with any investigation, shall not be subjected to retaliation. Anyone who believes that he or she has been the target of retaliation for reporting, participating, cooperating in, or otherwise being associated with an investigation should immediately contact the Coordinator for the College. Any person found to have engaged in retaliation in violation of this Policy shall be subject to disciplinary action.

### **False Complaints**

Individuals are prohibited from intentionally giving false statements to a system or College official. Any person found to have intentionally submitted false complaints, accusations, or statements, including during a hearing, in violation of this Policy shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action (up to and including suspension or expulsion) and adjudicated under the student conduct policy.

### **Amnesty**

Individuals should be encouraged to come forward and to report sexual misconduct notwithstanding their choice to consume alcohol or to use drugs. Information reported by an individual during an investigation concerning use of drugs or alcohol will not be used against the particular individual in a disciplinary proceeding or voluntarily reported to law enforcement; however, individuals may be provided with resources on drug and alcohol counseling and/or education, as appropriate.

### 3. Handling Reports of Sexual Misconduct

#### Support Services

Once a student or employee makes a complaint or receives notice that a complaint has been made against him or her, or the coordinator otherwise learns of a complaint of sexual misconduct. The complainant, respondent and alleged victim (where applicable) should receive written information about support services, such as counseling, advocacy, housing assistance, academic support, disability services, health and mental services, and legal assistance, available at the student's institution.

Information on support services will be provided regardless as to whether an individual elects to go forward with filing a formal complaint of sexual misconduct or with notifying law enforcement. Information on support services will also be provided to students and employees, regardless of where the alleged misconduct occurs.

Available support services should also be listed on the College's Title IX website. This information is located at <http://www.coga.edu/page.cfm?p=1488>.

#### Interim Measures

Interim measures may be undertaken at any point after the College becomes aware of an allegation of sexual misconduct and should be designed to protect the alleged victim and the community.

Before an interim suspension is issued, the College must make all reasonable efforts to give the respondent the opportunity to be heard, consistent with the provisions in VII. Conduct Procedures.

#### Jurisdiction

The College shall take necessary and appropriate action to protect the safety and well-being of its community. Sexual misconduct allegedly committed by a student are addressed by this Policy when the misconduct occurs on College property, or at College-sponsored or affiliated events, or off-campus, as defined by the College's student conduct policies.

#### Advisors

Both the alleged victim and respondent, as parties to the matter, shall have the opportunity to use an advisor (who may or may not be an attorney) of the party's choosing at the party's own expense for the express purpose of providing advice and counsel, pursuant to the provisions of Policy 4.6.5.

#### Informal Resolutions

Allegations of sexual misconduct may be resolved informally, without a determination of misconduct, if all of the following are met:

- A. When complainant(s) and respondent agree to an informal resolution;
- B. When the initial allegation could not result in expulsion;
- C. When the complainant(s) and respondent(s) agree to the terms of the informal resolution; and
- D. When the investigator concludes that informal resolution is in the best interest of the parties and the College's community.

The alleged victim(s) and respondent(s) have the option to end informal resolution discussions and request a formal process at any time before the terms of an informal resolution are reached. However, matters resolved informally shall not be appealable.

**Timeframe**

Efforts will be made to complete the investigation within a reasonable timeframe, which will be determined based upon the allegations, availability of witnesses and/or evidence, etc. in a particular case. When the timeframe will extend past the reasonable timeframe, the parties will be informed of the delay and the reason for the delay. The investigator shall keep the parties informed of the status of the investigation.

**4. Investigations**

All sexual misconduct investigations involving a student respondent, whether overseen by the institution's Coordinator or the System Director, shall follow the investigation process set forth in VII. Conduct Procedures

**5. Hearings, Possible Sanctions, and Appeals**

All sexual misconduct hearings, sanctions, and appeals involving a student respondent, whether overseen by the institution's Coordinator or the System Director, shall follow the investigation process set forth in VII. Conduct Procedures.

All sexual misconduct adjudication involving an employee respondent, shall be addressed utilizing the College's employment policies and procedures.