



# **Student Code of Conduct**

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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 The following delineation of these regulations is not exhaustive and may be added to, changed, and/or superseded.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.

### **Definition of a Student Organization**

A Student Organization is an organization at an institution of higher education (such as a club, society, association, varsity or junior varsity athletic team, club sports team, fraternity, sorority, band, or student government) of which two or more the members are students enrolled at the institution of higher education, whether or not the organization is established or recognized by the institution.

### **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 ([https://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section4/C332/#p4.6.4\\_alcohol\\_and\\_drugs\\_on\\_campus](https://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section4/C332/#p4.6.4_alcohol_and_drugs_on_campus)) 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: [https://www.ccgga.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Children\\_on\\_Campus\\_Policy\\_Jan\\_16.pdf](https://www.ccgga.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Children_on_Campus_Policy_Jan_16.pdf).

## **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 and Academic Freedom policy located at <https://portside.ccgga.edu/policies/displayPolicy.php?pid=49>.

## **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.

## **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:

<https://www.ccca.edu/studentlife/studentresources/student-conduct-handbooks/>.

## **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: <https://fishnet.ccca.edu/policies/displayPolicy.php?pid=11>. 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:

<https://portside.ccca.edu/uploaded/TechnologyServices/AcceptableUsePolicy.pdf>.



## 16. Hazing

The College does not condone hazing in any form. Hazing is defined as any intentional, knowing, or reckless act committed by a person (whether individually or in concert with other persons) against another person or persons regardless of the willingness of such other person or persons to participate, that –

- I. is committed in the course of an initiation into, an affiliation with, or the maintenance of membership in a student organization; and
- II. causes or creates a risk, above the reasonable risk encountered in the course of participation in the institution of higher education or the organization (such as the physical preparation necessary for participation in an athletic team), of physical or psychological injury including –
  - a. whipping, beating, striking, electronic shocking, placing of a harmful substance on someone’s body, or similar activity;
  - b. causing, coercing, or otherwise inducing sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement in a small space, extreme calisthenics, or other similar activity;
  - c. causing, coercing, or otherwise inducing another person to consume food, liquid, alcohol, drugs, or other substances;
  - d. causing, coercing, or otherwise inducing another person to perform sexual acts;
  - e. any activity that places another person in reasonable fear of bodily harm through the use of threatening words or conduct;
  - f. any activity against another person that includes a criminal violation of local, State, Tribal, or Federal law; and
  - g. any activity that induces, causes, or requires another person to perform a duty or task that involves a criminal violation of local, State, Tribal, or Federal law.

### Max Gruver Act:

Hazing incidents will be recorded on CCGA’s website within 15 days of final adjudication in accordance with Ga. Code 16-5-61. The public disclosure of each incident of hazing adjudicated pursuant to this Code section, criminal convictions for hazing pursuant to this Code Section, and other criminal convictions arising from any incident of hazing shall require the following minimum information be posted prominently on the school’s website for a period of not less than five years after final adjudication or conviction: (1) the name of any school organization involved; (2) the date or dates on which the hazing occurred; and (3) a description of the specific hazing-related findings, sanctions, adjudications, and convictions for any person or school organization.

For more information about our anti-hazing policy and the Max Gruber Act, please see our Student Conduct and Handbooks website at: <https://www.cpga.edu/studentlife/studentresources/student-conduct-handbooks/>.

## 17. Housing Regulations

Residential students are expected to adhere to guidelines and policies laid out in the Residence Life Handbook found at: <https://www.cpga.edu/studentlife/studentresources/student-conduct-handbooks/>.

## 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: <https://fishnet.ccgga.edu/policies/displayPolicy.php?pid=32>.

### **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: <https://fishnet.ccgga.edu/policies/displayPolicy.php?pid=23>.

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:

<https://portside.ccgga.edu/uploaded/TechnologyServices/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:

<https://fishnet.ccgga.edu/policies/displayPolicy.php?pid=14>.

## **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>)

This Policy establishes minimum procedural standards for investigations and resolutions of alleged student conduct violations, which each institution must incorporate into its respective student conduct policies. The purpose of this Policy is to ensure uniformity in the quality of investigations while providing for due process that affords fairness and equity in all student conduct investigations. This Policy is not intended to infringe or restrict rights guaranteed by the United States Constitution including free speech under the First Amendment, or the due process clauses of Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments.

These procedures apply to matters relating to student misconduct, except matters relating to academic dishonesty, which may be covered under separate institutional policies. Institutions shall inform students of their procedures governing student misconduct complaints and investigations. For the purposes of this Policy the term Complainant means an individual who is alleged to be a victim of conduct that would violate any Board or other applicable institution policy. The term Respondent means an individual who is alleged to have engaged in behavior that would violate any Board or other applicable institution policy. Other individuals who report information to an institution regarding alleged policy violations are deemed Reporters.

Institutions may establish to what extent the procedures outlined in this Policy may apply to Reporters.

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

Institutions must provide clear notice to students and other campus community members as to how to file complaints of 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.

1. **Confidentiality:** Where a Complainant (where applicable) requests that their identity be withheld or the allegation(s) not be investigated, the institution should consider whether or not such request(s) can be honored while still promoting a safe and nondiscriminatory environment for the institution and conducting an effective review of the allegations. The institution should inform the requesting party that the institution cannot guarantee confidentiality and that even granting requests for confidentiality shall not prevent the institution from reporting information or statistical data as required by law, including the Clery Act.
2. **Retaliation:** Anyone who has made a report or complaint, provided information, assisted, participated or refused to participate in any investigation or resolution under applicable Board or institution policy shall not be subjected to retaliation. Anyone who believes they have been subjected to retaliation should immediately contact the appropriate department or individual(s) for that institution. Any person found to have engaged in retaliation shall be subject to disciplinary action, pursuant to the institution’s policy.
3. **False Complaints/Statements:** Individuals are prohibited from knowingly giving false statements to an institution official. Any person found to have knowingly submitted false complaints, accusations, or statements, including during a hearing, in violation of applicable Board or institution policy shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action (up to and including suspension or expulsion) and adjudicated pursuant to the institution’s policy.
4. **Amnesty:** Students should be encouraged to come forward and report violations of the law and/or student code of conduct notwithstanding their choice to consume alcohol or drugs. Information reported by a student during the conduct process concerning their consumption 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 regarding 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 Student Conduct Reports

**Jurisdiction:** Each institution 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 institution property, at institution-sponsored or affiliated events, or otherwise violate the institution’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 Complainant (where applicable), as parties to these proceedings, shall have the right to have an advisor (who may or may not be an attorney) of the party’s choosing, and at their 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 their 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.

**Initial Evaluation of Student Conduct Reports:** Regardless of how an institution becomes aware of alleged misconduct, the institution 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 institution shall review the complaint to determine whether the allegation(s) describes conduct in violation of the institution's policies and/or code of conduct. If the reported conduct would not be a violation of the institution'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.

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 Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs or designee by the institution. The Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs or designee will work with the institution to determine whether any interim measure(s) are necessary, to determine if an investigator needs to be assigned and may collaboratively supervise the investigation with the appropriate institution 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 notice to the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs or designee, then the institution shall report that case to the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs or their designee prior to proceeding.

### **Interim Measures**

Interim measures may be implemented by the institution at any point after the institution becomes aware of the alleged student misconduct and should be designed to protect any student or other individual in the USG community. To the extent interim measures are imposed, they should minimize the burden on both the Complaint (where applicable) and the Respondent, where feasible. Interim measures may include, but are not limited to:

1. Change of housing assignment;
2. Issuance of a "no contact" directive;
3. Restrictions or bars to entering certain institution property;
4. Changes to academic or employment arrangements, schedules, or supervision;
5. Interim suspension; and
6. Other measures designed to promote the safety and well-being of the parties and the institution'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 Complainant (where applicable) 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 institution must make all reasonable efforts to give the Respondent the opportunity to be heard on whether the Respondent's presence on campus poses a danger. If an interim suspension is issued, the terms of the suspension take effect immediately. The Respondent shall receive notice of the interim suspension and the opportunity to respond to the interim suspension.

Within three business days of receiving a challenge the institution will determine whether the interim suspension should continue.

### **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. Timely and equal access to information that will be used during the investigation will be provided to the Complainant (where applicable) and Respondent.

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 institution’s investigation and resolution procedures must provide the additional minimal safeguards outlined below:

1. The Complainant (where applicable) 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 institution email to the address on file.
2. 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 Complainant (where applicable) shall also be provided three business days to respond to or to supplement the notice.
3. If the Respondent admits responsibility, the process may proceed to the sanctioning phase or may be informally resolved, if appropriate.
4. 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.
5. 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.
6. The initial investigation report shall be provided to the Respondent and the Complainant (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.
7. The final investigation report should be provided to the misconduct panel or hearing officer for consideration in adjudicating the charges brought against the Respondent. A copy shall also be provided to the respondent and Complainant (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 they contest 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 Complainant (where applicable); however, the Complainant (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 (or their 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 (Hearing Officer) or a Hearing Panel. If an administrative hearing is requested, the Respondent shall use their discretion to determine whether the case should be heard by a Hearing Panel. Notice of the date, time, and location of the hearing shall be provided to the Respondent and Complainant (where applicable) at least five business days prior to the hearing. Notice shall be provided via institution email where applicable. Hearings shall be conducted in person or via conferencing technology as reasonably available. Additionally, the following standards will apply to any such hearing:

The Respondent and Complainant (where applicable) shall have the right to present witnesses and evidence to the hearing officer or panel. Witness testimony, if provided, shall pertain to knowledge and facts directly associated with the case being heard. The Respondent and Complainant (where applicable) shall have the right to confront any witnesses, including the other party, by submitting written questions to the Hearing Officer or Hearing Panel for consideration. Advisors may actively assist in drafting questions. The Hearing Officer or Hearing Panel 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 Hearing Officer or Hearing Panel shall err on the side of asking all submitted questions and must document the reason for not asking any particular questions.

1. Where the Hearing Officer or Hearing Panel determines that a party or witness is unavailable and unable to be present due to extenuating circumstances, the Hearing Officer or Hearing Panel may establish special procedures for providing testimony from a separate location. In doing so, the Hearing Officer or Hearing Panel 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 Hearing Officer or Hearing Panel will disregard or discount the testimony.
2. Formal judicial rules of evidence do not apply to the investigatory or resolution process.
3. The standard of review shall be a preponderance of the evidence.
4. Institutions should maintain documentation of the proceedings, which may include written findings of fact, transcripts, audio recordings, and/or video recordings.
5. Following a hearing, both the Respondent and Complainant (where applicable) shall be simultaneously provided a written decision via institution 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 relied on in support of the outcome and the rationale for the resulting sanction. The same form will be completed, regardless of whether the student opts for a hearing panel or an administrative proceeding.

### **3.) Reports of Sexual Misconduct**

**Initial Evaluation of Sexual Misconduct Reports:** Upon notice of the alleged Sexual Misconduct the institution's Title IX Coordinator ("Coordinator") will assess whether a formal investigation, informal resolution, or dismissal would be appropriate. In making this determination, the Coordinator will assess whether the allegation(s), if true, would rise to the level of prohibited conduct, whether a Formal Complaint must be filed, whether an investigation is appropriate in light of the circumstances, whether the parties prefer an informal resolution, and whether any safety concerns exist for the campus community. The need to issue a broader warning to the community in compliance with the Clery Act shall be assessed in compliance with federal law.

**Confidentiality:** Where a Complainant requests that their identity be withheld or the allegation(s) not be investigated, the Coordinator should consider whether or not such request(s) can be honored in a manner consistent with the institution's obligations to promote a safe and nondiscriminatory environment. The institution should inform the Complainant that the institution cannot guarantee confidentiality. Honoring a Complainant's request for confidentiality shall not prevent the institution

from reporting information or statistical data as required by law, including the Clery Act.

**Retaliation:** Anyone who has made a report or complaint, provided information, assisted, participated, or refused to participate in any manner in the Sexual Misconduct process, shall not be subjected to retaliation. Anyone who believes that they have been subjected to retaliation should immediately contact the Coordinator or their designee. Any person found to have engaged in retaliation shall be subject to disciplinary action.

**False Complaints/Statements:** Individuals are prohibited from knowingly making false statements or knowingly submitting false information to a system or institution official. Any person found to have knowingly submitted false complaints, accusations, or statements, including during a hearing, shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action (up to and including suspension or expulsion) under the appropriate institutional process.

**Amnesty:** Students should be encouraged to come forward and to report Sexual Misconduct notwithstanding their choice to consume alcohol or to use drugs. Information reported by a student during the Sexual Misconduct process concerning the consumption of drugs or alcohol will not be used against the particular student in a disciplinary proceeding or voluntarily reported to law enforcement; however, students may be provided with resources on drug and alcohol counseling and/or education, as appropriate. Nevertheless, these students may be required to meet with staff members regarding 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 provision shall prevent an institution staff member who is otherwise obligated by law (the Clery Act) to report information or statistical data as required.

**Jurisdiction:** Each institution shall take necessary and appropriate action to promote the safety and well-being of its community. Accordingly, Sexual Misconduct should be addressed when such acts occur on institution property, at institution-sponsored or affiliated events, or otherwise violates the institution's student conduct policies, regardless as to where such conduct occurs.

#### **Access to Advisors:**

1. For Formal Title IX Complaints: Both the Complainant and the 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. The advisor may accompany the party to all meetings and may provide advice and counsel to their respective party throughout the Sexual Misconduct process, including providing questions, suggestions and guidance to the party, but may not actively participate in the process except to conduct cross-examination at the hearing as outlined in the Resolution/Hearing section below. If a party chooses not to use an advisor during the investigation, the institution will provide an advisor for the purpose of conducting cross-examination on behalf of the relevant party. All communication during the Sexual Misconduct process will be between the institution and the party and not the advisor. The institution will copy the party's advisor prior to the finalization of the investigation report when the institution provides the parties the right to inspect and review directly related information gathered during the investigation. With the party's permission, the advisor may be copied on all communications.
2. For Non-Title IX Sexual Misconduct Complaints: Both the Complainant and the 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. The advisor may accompany the party to all meetings and may provide advice and counsel to their respective party

throughout the Sexual Misconduct process but may not actively participate in the process. All communication during the Sexual Misconduct process will be between the institution and the party and not the advisor. With the party's permission, the advisor may be copied on all communications.

**Interim Measures:** Interim measures may be implemented at any point after the institution becomes aware of an allegation of Sexual Misconduct and should be designed to protect any student or other individual in the USG community. Such measures are designed to restore or preserve equal access to the education program or activity without unreasonably burdening the other party, including measures designed to protect the safety of all parties or the recipient's educational environment, or deter Sexual Misconduct and retaliation. Interim measures must be implemented consistent with the provisions in applicable Board and institutional policies and procedures.

An interim suspension should only occur where necessary to promote 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 Complainant 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 institution must make reasonable efforts to give the Respondent the opportunity to be heard on whether the Respondent's presence on campus poses a danger. If an interim suspension is issued, the terms of the interim suspension take effect immediately. The Respondent shall receive notice of the interim suspension and the opportunity to respond to the interim suspension.

Within three business days of receiving a challenge the institution will determine whether the interim suspension should continue.

#### **4.) Process for Investigating and Resolving Sexual Misconduct Reports**

##### **Investigation**

Throughout any investigation and resolution proceeding, a party shall receive written notice of the alleged Sexual Misconduct, shall be provided an opportunity to respond, and shall be allowed the right 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 the investigation or resolution process, the investigation and resolution process may still proceed, and policy violations may result.

Until a final determination of responsibility, the Respondent is presumed to have not violated the Sexual Misconduct Policy. Prior to the finalization of the investigation report, timely and equal access to information directly related to the allegations that has been gathered during the investigation and may be used at the hearing will be provided to the Complainant, the Respondent, and a party's advisor (where applicable).

Formal judicial rules of evidence do not apply to the investigation process, additionally the standard of review throughout the Sexual Misconduct process is a preponderance of the evidence.

The parties shall be provided with written notice of the: report/allegations with sufficient details, pending investigation, possible charges, possible sanctions, available support services and interim measures, and other rights under applicable institutional policies. For the purposes of this provision sufficient details include the identities of the parties involved, if known, the conduct allegedly constituting Sexual Misconduct, and the date and location of the alleged incident, if known. This

information will be supplemented as necessary with relevant evidence collected during the investigation. The notice should also include the identity of any investigator(s) involved. Notice should be provided via institution email to the party's institution email.

1. The parties shall be provided with written notice of the: report/allegations with sufficient details, pending investigation, possible charges, possible sanctions, available support services and interim measures, and other rights under applicable institutional policies. For the purposes of this provision sufficient details include the identities of the parties involved, if known, the conduct allegedly constituting Sexual Misconduct, and the date and location of the alleged incident, if known. This information will be supplemented as necessary with relevant evidence collected during the investigation. The notice should also include the identity of any investigator(s) involved. Notice should be provided via institution email to the party's institution email.
2. Upon receipt of the written notice, the parties shall have at least three business days to respond in writing. In that response, the Respondent shall have the right to admit or deny the allegations, and to set forth a defense with facts, witnesses, and supporting materials. A Complainant shall have the right to respond to and supplement the notice. Throughout the Sexual Misconduct process the Complainant and the Respondent shall have the right to present witnesses and other inculpatory and exculpatory evidence.
3. If the Respondent admits responsibility, the process may proceed to the sanctioning phase or may be informally resolved, if appropriate.
4. 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.
5. An investigator shall not access, consider, disclose, or otherwise use a party's records made or maintained by a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, or other recognized professional made in connection with the party's treatment unless the party has provided voluntary written consent. This also applies to information protected by recognized legal privilege.
6. The initial investigation report shall be provided to the Complainant, the Respondent, and a party's advisor (if applicable). This report should fairly summarize the relevant evidence gathered during the investigation and clearly indicate any resulting charges or alternatively, a determination of no charges. For purposes of this Policy, a charge is not a finding of responsibility.
7. The Complainant and the Respondent shall have at least 10 calendar days to review and respond in writing to the initial investigation report and directly related information gathered during the investigation. The investigator will review the Complainant's and the Respondent's written responses, if any, to determine whether further investigation or changes to the investigation report are necessary.
8. The final investigation report should be provided to the Complainant, the Respondent, and a party's advisor, if applicable, at least 10 calendar days prior to the Hearing. The final investigation report should also be provided to all Hearing Panel members for consideration during the adjudication process.

### **Resolution/Hearing**

The Respondent and the Complainant, as parties to the matter, may have the option of selecting informal resolution as a possible resolution in certain cases where the parties agree, and it is deemed appropriate by the institution. Where a matter is not resolved through informal resolution a hearing shall be set. All Sexual Misconduct cases shall be heard by a panel of faculty and/or staff. All institutional participants in the Sexual Misconduct resolution process shall receive appropriate annual training as directed by the System Director or Coordinator and required by the Clery Act and Title IX.

In no case shall a hearing to resolve a Sexual Misconduct allegation take place before the investigation report has been finalized. 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. All directly related evidence shall be available at the hearing for the parties and their advisors to reference during the hearing.

Relevant facts or evidence that were not known or knowable to the parties prior to the issuance of the final investigative report shall be admissible during the hearing. The institution will determine how the facts or evidence will be introduced. The admissibility of any facts or evidence known or knowable by the parties prior to the issuance of the final investigative report, and which were not submitted during the investigation, shall be determined by the institution in compliance with the obligation to provide both parties an equal opportunity to present and respond to witnesses and other evidence. Notice of the date, time, and location of the hearing as well as the selected hearing panel members shall be provided to the Complainant and the Respondent at least 10 calendar days prior to the hearing. Notice shall be provided via institution email to the parties' institution email. Parties may attend the hearing with their advisor.

Hearings shall be conducted in-person or via video conferencing technology. Where the institution determines that a party or witness is unable to be present in person due to extenuating circumstances, the institution may establish special procedures to permit that individual to provide testimony from a separate location. In doing so, the institution must determine whether there is a valid basis for the individual's unavailability, require that the individual properly sequester in a manner that ensures testimony has not been tainted, and make a determination that such arrangement will not unfairly disadvantage any party. Should it be reasonably believed that the individual presented tainted testimony, the hearing panel will disregard or discount the testimony. Parties may also request to provide testimony in a separate room from the opposing party, so long as no party is unfairly disadvantaged, and they have the opportunity to view the testimony remotely and submit follow-up questions.

At all times participants in the hearing process, including parties, a party's advisor, and institution officials, are expected to act in a manner that promotes dignity and decorum throughout the hearing. Participants are expected to be respectful to others and follow procedural formalities outlined by this Policy and the institution. The institution reserves the right to remove any participant from the hearing environment if the participant refuses to adhere to the institution's established rules of decorum.

Each institution shall maintain documentation of the investigation and resolution process, which may include written findings of fact, transcripts, audio recordings, and/or video recordings. Any documentation shall be maintained for seven years.

Additionally, the following standards will apply to Title IX and Non-Title IX Sexual Misconduct hearings respectively:

A. Title IX Hearings

1. Where a party or a witness is unavailable, unable, or otherwise unwilling to participate in the hearing, including being subject to cross-examination, the hearing panel shall not draw an adverse inference against the party or witness based solely on their absence from the hearing or refusal to subject to cross-examination.
2. The parties shall have the right to present witnesses and evidence at the hearing.

3. The parties shall have the right to confront any witness, including the other party, by having their advisor ask relevant questions directly to the witness. The Hearing Officer shall limit questions raised by the advisor when they are irrelevant to determining the veracity of the allegations against the Respondent(s). In any such event, the Hearing Officer shall err on the side of permitting all the raised questions and must document the reason for not permitting any particular questions to be raised.
4. Questions and evidence about the Complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior, shall be deemed irrelevant, unless such questions and evidence are offered to prove that someone other than the Respondent committed the alleged conduct or consent between the parties during the alleged incident.
5. The hearing panel shall not access, consider, disclose, or otherwise use a party's records made or maintained by a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, or other recognized professional made in connection with the party's treatment unless the party has provided voluntary written consent. This also applies to information protected by recognized legal privilege.
6. Formal judicial rules of evidence do not apply to the resolution process and the standard of evidence shall be a preponderance of the evidence.
7. Following a hearing, the parties shall be simultaneously provided a written decision via institution email of the hearing outcome and any resulting sanctions or administrative actions. The decision must include the allegations, procedural steps taken through the investigation and resolution process, findings of facts supporting the determination(s), determination(s) regarding responsibility, and the evidence relied upon and rationale for any sanction or other administrative action. The institution shall also notify the parties of their right to appeal as outlined below.

#### B. Non-Title IX Sexual Misconduct Hearings

1. The parties shall have the right to present witnesses and evidence at the hearing. Witness testimony, if provided, shall pertain to knowledge and facts directly associated with the case being heard.
2. The parties shall have the right to confront any witnesses, including the other party, by submitting written questions to the Hearing Officer for consideration. Advisors may actively assist in drafting questions. The Hearing Officer shall ask the questions as written and will limit questions only if they are irrelevant to determining the veracity of the allegations against the Respondent(s). In any such event, the Hearing Officer shall err on the side of asking all submitted questions and must document the reason for not asking any particular questions.
3. Questions and evidence about the Complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior, shall be deemed irrelevant, unless such questions and evidence are offered to prove that someone other than the Respondent committed the alleged conduct or consent between the parties during the alleged incident.
4. The hearing panel shall not access, consider, disclose, or otherwise use a party's records made or maintained by a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, or other recognized professional made in connection with the party's treatment unless the party has provided voluntary written consent. This also applies to information protected by recognized legal privilege.

5. Formal judicial rules of evidence do not apply to the resolution process and the standard of evidence shall be a preponderance of the evidence.
6. Following a hearing, the parties shall be simultaneously provided a written decision via institution email of the hearing outcome and any resulting sanctions or administrative actions. The decision must include the allegations, procedural steps taken through the investigation and resolution process, findings of facts supporting the determination(s), determination(s) regarding responsibility, and the evidence relied upon and rationale for any sanction or other administrative action. The institution shall also notify the parties of their right to appeal, as outlined below.

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

### **Introduction**

Academic and intellectual integrity is critical to all individuals comprising the community at the College of Coastal Georgia, in order to develop a sense of ethics and social responsibility and maintain the validity of grades and degree programs. Any instance of dishonesty hurts both the individual(s) involved and the entire community. Coastal Georgia expects students to be honest and present work that is their own, with proper citation for portions of work from other sources, and group work or help from others only occurring as permitted in each course. Scholarship and fairness require that improper work be rejected, violations be reported, and appropriate investigations and sanctions be administered.

Throughout all sections, the term “faculty” broadly covers faculty members and all other academic staff members and administrative officers.

Dropping or withdrawing from a course will not prevent a student from being charged with academic dishonesty.

Lack of knowledge of this policy is not an acceptable defense to any charge of academic dishonesty. Note that individual Schools may have additional academic integrity policies/procedures.

### **Faculty and Student Expectations**

- Faculty Expectations
  - Practice and preserve academic honesty
  - Be aware of and follow the academic integrity policy and procedures
  - Foster an environment that encourages academic honesty among students
  - Provide appropriate oversight of assignments, examinations, and other course requirements
- Student Expectations
  - Practice and preserve academic honesty
  - Be aware of and follow the academic integrity policy and procedures
  - Read all syllabi in their entirety and seek clarification if needed

### **Examples of Academic Dishonesty**

No student shall perform, attempt to perform, or assist another student in performing any act of dishonesty on academic work of any kind. A student does not have to intend to violate the academic integrity policy to be found in violation. For example, plagiarism, intended or unintended, is a violation of this policy.

Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to the following:

## Plagiarism

- Representing another person's work, ideas, data, theories, opinions, or words as one's own
- Representing one's own prior work (e.g., work submitted in another class) as original
- Work that does not credit sources for quotations, paraphrases, summaries, statistics, and ideas according to course and/or discipline-specific guidelines
  - It is each student's responsibility to seek assistance as needed for properly crediting sources for each course and discipline. For help with learning to cite, consult
    - Faculty
    - **The Writing Center**
    - The **Resources** section of this policy
- Obtaining a paper or other assignment that is the work of another person and submitting that paper or other assignment as the student's own work

## Cheating/Unauthorized Assistance

- Attempting to use materials, calculators, electronic devices, information, or study aids not authorized by the faculty in exams or other assigned work
- Giving or obtaining unauthorized aid to/from another person before or during an examination or other assigned work

## Lying/Tampering

- Giving false reasons for failure to complete academic work. This includes, for example, giving false excuses for failure to attend an exam or to complete academic work
- Falsifying or fabricating any data or results
- Altering any academic work after it has been submitted for academic credit and requesting academic credit for the altered work, unless such alterations are part of an assignment (such as a request by the faculty to revise the academic work)
- Altering grades, attendance, or other academic records. This includes, for example, the forgery of college forms
- Signing into class for someone who is not there, or having someone sign in for you
- Damaging hardware, software, or college equipment in order to alter or prevent the evaluation of academic work
- Disrupting the content or accessibility of an internet resource
- Impersonating someone to access resources, including unauthorized use of another person's computer password
- Giving or encouraging false information or testimony in connection with academic work
- Submitting a group assignment, or allowing that assignment to be submitted, which misrepresents the level of work or contribution of one or more of the members of the group

## Theft

- Stealing, taking, or procuring in any other unauthorized manner information related to any academic work
- Stealing, taking, or procuring in any other unauthorized manner college equipment in order to alter or prevent the evaluation of academic work



### Violations Specific to a Course or Discipline

- Violations of academic integrity not covered by the above examples may exist for specific courses and/or disciplines.
- For additional information, you may consult, in the order listed: Syllabi, Faculty, Department Chairs, School Deans, Office of Academic Affairs

### Procedures for Violations

Faculty are responsible for initiating the academic integrity procedures, which are outlined below. These procedures enable faculty to manage the classroom environment and administer grades based on student performance per evaluation procedures cited in the course syllabus and student handbook.

#### Faculty Procedures

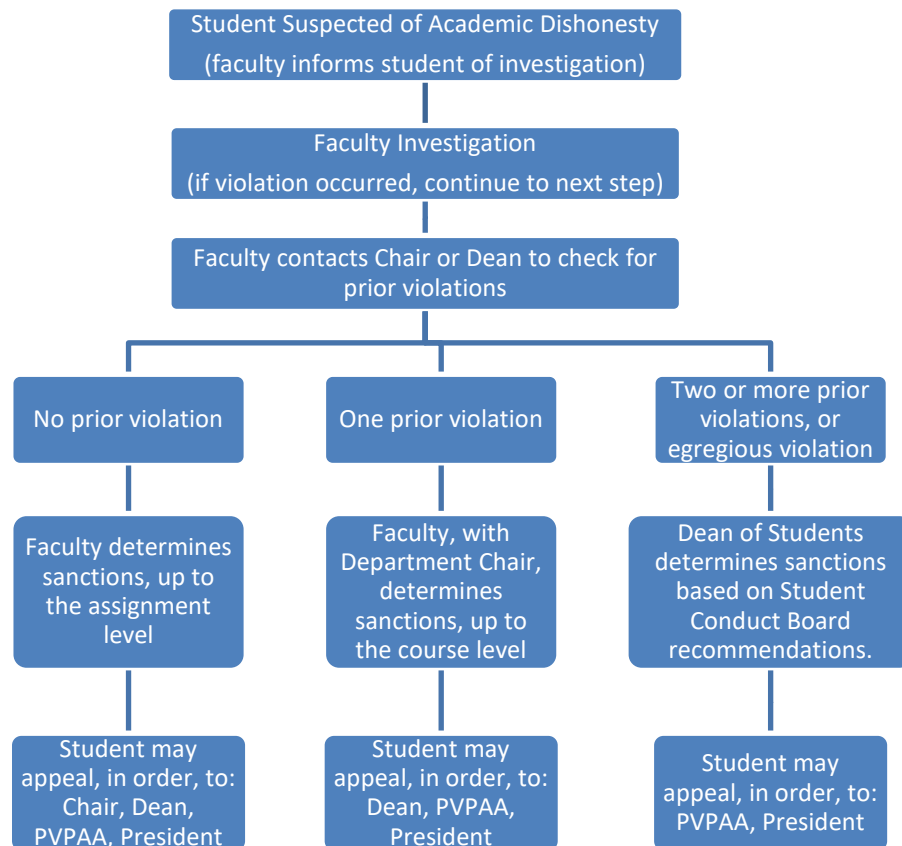
Upon suspicion of academic dishonesty, which may come from the observations of faculty, other student(s), complainant(s), or other members of the College community

1. Within five business days of discovery,
  - A faculty member may have an initial meeting with the student to discuss the suspected misconduct. In no case should sanctions be determined at this initial stage.
  - If the faculty member believes academic dishonesty may have occurred, they must provide written notice to the student of a pending investigation.
2. The faculty member conducts a thorough, but prompt, investigation and determines whether charges to the student should be brought.
  - a. If charges are not recommended, the faculty member will submit written notification of their conclusion to the student. This ends the process.
  - b. If charges are recommended, the faculty member must contact their Dean/Chair to determine if the student has had a previous violation(s).
    - i. If a previous violation(s) has not occurred, the faculty member must submit an Academic Integrity Incident Report to the Office of Academic Affairs listing their findings. The Office of Academic Affairs will send a copy of the report, with appeal information, to the student and the Office of Student Conduct.
      - Sanctions issued by the faculty member may only affect up to the assignment level (e.g., an “F” for the assignment).
      - Faculty who believe a stricter sanction(s) should be considered must request a Student Conduct Board hearing on the Incident Report and provide justification in writing describing why a stricter sanction may be warranted.
    - ii. If one previous violation has occurred, the Chair will contact the Office of Academic Affairs to determine the nature of the previous violation. The faculty member must consult with their Department Chair to discuss appropriate sanctions and then submit an Academic Integrity Incident Report to the Office of Academic Affairs listing their findings. The Office of Academic Affairs will send a copy of the report, with appeal information, to the student and the Office of Student Conduct.
      - Sanctions issued by the faculty member, in conjunction with the department chair, may only affect up to the course level (e.g., an “F” for the course).
      - Faculty who believe a stricter sanction(s) should be considered must request a Student Conduct Board hearing on the Incident Report and provide justification in writing describing why a stricter sanction may be warranted.
    - iii. If at least two previous violations have occurred, the faculty member must submit an Academic Integrity Incident Report listing their findings to the Office of Academic Affairs, which will forward the information to the Office of Student

Conduct to initiate the Student Conduct Board process outlined in the Conduct Board Procedures section. The Office of Academic Affairs will also send a copy of the report to the student with notification that the case has been referred to the Student Conduct Board.

Only those students who complete a course may participate in the end of course evaluation.

A summary of this procedure is provided below.



### Student Conduct Board Procedures

The Dean of Students schedules all Conduct Board Hearings, notifying both faculty and students (and complainant(s), if applicable).

**Conduct Board Hearings** occur when a student has multiple alleged violations of the Academic Integrity Policy and/or when a violation is egregious, in the faculty member's professional judgment, to warrant consideration of a more severe sanction(s) by the Student Conduct Board. When a Conduct Board Hearing is scheduled, the student and faculty member will receive notice of the hearing date and time at least three business days prior to the hearing. All hearings regarding charges against individual students will be closed to observers in accordance with FERPA to maintain the confidentiality of student records.

The following occurs in this order at a Conduct Board Hearing

1. The alleged charges are presented against the student along with the evidence in support of a finding against the student

2. The student has the opportunity to respond with additional information, evidence, clarification, or a rebuttal and to present witnesses
3. The faculty also has the opportunity to respond with additional information, evidence, clarification, or a rebuttal and to present witnesses
4. The Conduct Board may ask questions of the faculty or state there are no questions for the faculty
5. The Conduct Board may ask questions of the student or state there are no questions for the student

Formal civil rules of evidence do not apply to the investigatory or resolution process. In a timely manner after the hearing, the Conduct Board will meet separately to deliberate on the hearing and evidence. After deliberation, the Conduct Board will provide its findings regarding whether the student is not responsible or responsible. A recommendation of responsibility by the Conduct Board will be based on a preponderance of the evidence. It must be shown that it is more likely than not that the violation(s) alleged occurred. The College will maintain documentation of the proceedings in accordance with the Board of Regents' Documents Retention Policies.

If the recommended finding is not responsible, the Conduct Board notifies the Dean of Students, who sends email notification to the faculty and student. The Academic Integrity Incident Report will NOT be filed under the student's conduct record in the Office of Student Conduct.

If the recommended finding is responsible, the Conduct Board determines whether a sanction(s) will be recommended and provides its findings and recommendation to the Dean of Students, who will review the case and make the decision on the sanction(s) to be issued. The egregiousness of the violation and number of violations will guide this determination. Sanction(s) may include one or more of the following

- Academic Notice
  - This sanction is not used to determine the student's grade
  - A copy of the letter will be placed in the student's permanent file
- A grade of zero for the assignment
- Failing grade for the course
  - The instructor will inform the Office of the Registrar
- Academic Suspension
- Expulsion

The Dean of Students will email the faculty and the student the findings and the final sanctions.

### Student Appeals Procedures

Students wishing to appeal academic integrity decisions may do so following the procedures outlined in the Academic Appeal Policy, as listed in the *College Catalog*.

- No prior violation: Students wishing to appeal the faculty member's decision, may direct an appeal to the department chair. If the matter is not resolved, subsequent appeals may be directed to the School Dean, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, and then the President.
- One prior violation: Students wishing to appeal a joint faculty member/department chair decision, may direct an appeal to the School Dean. If the matter is not resolved, subsequent appeals may be directed to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, and then the President.
- Two or more prior violations, or egregious violation: Students wishing to appeal the Dean of Students' decision, may direct an appeal to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. If the matter is not resolved, students may appeal to the President.

## Access to Records

The records concerning any accusation made under the College's Academic Integrity Policy are not open to the public. Those records, or any part thereof, will be made available to people other than the student only upon receipt of a written request by the student or in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. 1232g, *et seq.*

## Resources

- Brief overview "Giving Credit Where Credit is Due: Copyright, citing sources, and the perils of plagiarism" created by the University System of Georgia:  
<https://slideplayer.com/slide/7010161/>
- Research and citation resources at Purdue University's Online Writing Lab (OWL):  
[https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/resources.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/resources.html)

## 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 institutional response to similar conduct; strength of the evidence; and the wellbeing of the university community. The institution 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 institutional privileges; delays in obtaining administrative services and benefits from the institution (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.

For suspension and expulsion, the institution must articulate, in its written decision, the substantial evidence relied upon in determining that suspension or expulsion were appropriate. For purposes of this Policy substantial evidence means evidence that a reasonable person might accept to support the conclusion.

## 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

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

### *Non-Title IX and Sexual Misconduct Cases*

Appeals may be allowed in any case where sanctions are issued, even when such sanctions are held “in abeyance,” such as probationary or expulsion. Where the sanction imposed includes a suspension or expulsion (even for one held in abeyance), the following appellate procedures must be provided.

The Respondent (and in cases involving forms of discrimination and/or harassment, the Complainant) 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 (or appeal), because such information was not known or knowable to the person appealing during the time of the hearing (or appeal); (2) to allege a procedural error within the hearing process that may have substantially impacted the fairness of the hearing (or appeal), including but not limited to whether any hearing questions were improperly excluded or whether the decision was tainted by a conflict of interest or bias by the Conduct Officer, investigator(s), decision makers(s); or (3) to allege that the finding was inconsistent with the weight of the information. The appeal must be made in writing, 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 President or their designee.

The appeal shall be a review of the record only, and no new meeting with the Respondent or any Complainant is required. The President or their designee 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 any lower 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 or their designee's decision shall be simultaneously issued in writing to the parties within a reasonable time period. The President or their designee's decision shall be the final decision of the institution.

Should the Respondent or Complainant (where applicable) wish to appeal the final institutional decision, they may request review by the Board of Regents in accordance with the Board of Regents' Policy on Discretionary Review.

Appeals received after the designated deadlines above will not be considered unless the institution or Board of Regents has granted an extension prior to the deadline. If an appeal is not received by the deadline the last decision on the matter will become final.

### *Title IX and Sexual Misconduct Cases*

Within five (5) business days of receiving the Notice of Determination from the decision maker (panel or single), either Party may appeal the decision by submitting a written letter of appeal to Dean of Students, Dr. Michael Butcher, at [m butcher@ccga.edu](mailto:m butcher@ccga.edu). Where an office or individual other than the Title IX Coordinator is designated to receive and/or facilitate the appellate process, the Title IX Coordinator must be copied on appellate correspondence for compliance and record-keeping purposes. The President or their designee shall serve as the Appellate Officer for all outcomes other than case dismissal. For appeals of Title IX case dismissals, the Dean of Students or designee shall serve as the appellate officer. Either Party shall have the right to appeal an 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 process that may have substantially affected the fairness of the investigation, hearing, or other process, including but not limited to whether any hearing questions were improperly excluded or whether the decision was tainted by a conflict of interest or bias by the Title IX Coordinator, Conduct Officer, investigator(s), or decision-maker(s).
- 3.) To allege that the finding was inconsistent with the weight of the information.

The Party submitting the appeal must set forth, in writing and in detail, the grounds for the requested review and attach all materials that they wish to have considered in the appeals process. The institution will notify the non-appealing Party of the appeal, provide that Party with a copy of the appeal, and allow for an opportunity for the non-appealing party to respond in writing. The non-appealing Party's response must be submitted to the institution within five (5) business days of the date of Notification of Appeal. If a response is submitted by the non-appealing Party, the institution will provide copies of the original appeal and information submitted by the non-appealing Party to the Appellate Officer and the Parties.

The appeal shall be a review of the record only, and no new meeting with either Party is required.

The Appellate Officer may:

- 1.) Affirm the original finding and sanction, (if any);
- 2.) Affirm the original finding but issue a new sanction of greater or lesser severity, (if any);
- 3.) Remand the case back to correct a procedural or factual defect; or
- 4.) Reverse or dismiss the case if a procedural or factual defect cannot be remedied by remand.

The institution will inform Parties of any change to the results of a disciplinary process that occurs prior to the time that such results become final and when such results become final. The Appellate Officer may consult with the Title IX Coordinator for clarification on questions of procedure or rationale, if needed. Documentation of all such consultations will be maintained. Sanctions of all types will not be imposed, in full or in part, while an appeal is pending at the institutional level.

The Appellate Officer will render a decision no later than seven (7) business days after receiving all materials, barring exigent circumstances. The Appellate Officer's decision will be in writing and include a rationale. The institution will inform the Parties simultaneously and in writing of the outcome of the appeal. Further review, such as a Discretionary Review, if available, is governed under the policies and procedures of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia.

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

Any party may challenge the participation of any institution official, employee or student panel member in the process on the grounds of personal bias by submitting a written statement to the institution'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 institution'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 <https://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section6/C2655>)

In accordance with federal and state law including, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (“Title IX”) and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII), the University System of Georgia (USG) prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in any of its education programs or activities or in employment. The USG is committed to ensuring the highest ethical conduct of the members of its community by promoting a safe learning and working environment. To that end, this Policy prohibits Sexual Misconduct, a form of sex discrimination, as defined herein.

USG institutions are committed to reducing incidents of Sexual Misconduct, providing prevention tools, conducting ongoing awareness and prevention programming, and training the campus community in accordance with the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act (“Clery Act”) and the Violence Against Women Act (“VAWA”). Prevention programming and training will promote positive and healthy behaviors and educate the campus community on consent, sexual assault, sexual harassment, alcohol and drug use, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, bystander intervention, and reporting.

When Sexual Misconduct does occur, all members of the USG 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 USG in reporting and addressing sexual misconduct. This Policy applies to all members of the USG community. This Policy is not intended to infringe or restrict rights guaranteed by the United States Constitution including free speech under the First Amendment, or the due process clauses of Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments.

### **Reporting Structure**

Title IX Coordinators (“Coordinators”) at USG institutions shall have a direct reporting relationship to both the institution’s President or the President’s designee and the USG Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs or their designee. The President of each institution shall determine the organizational and operating reporting relationships for the Coordinators at the institution and exercise oversight of institutional issues relating to Sexual Misconduct. However, the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs or designee shall have authority to direct the Coordinators’ work at each institution as needed to address system-wide issues or directives. The President of each institution shall consult with the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs 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 who is alleged to have experienced conduct that violates this Policy.

**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 a 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. The existence of such relationship shall be determined based on the totality of the circumstances including, without limitation to: (1) the length of the relationship; (2) the type of relationship; and (3) the frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship.

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 or any state of unconsciousness, 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 the touching of a person's intimate parts (for example, genitalia, groin, breasts, or buttocks); touching a person with one's own intimate parts; or forcing a person to touch his or her own or another person's intimate parts. This provision also includes "Fondling" as defined by the Clery Act.

**Nonconsensual Sexual Penetration:** Any penetration of the vagina, anus, or mouth by a penis, object, tongue, finger, or other body part; or contact between the mouth of one person and the genitals or anus of another person. This provision also includes "Rape, Incest, and Statutory Rape" as defined by the Clery Act.

**Confidential Employees:** Institution employees who have been designated by the institution to talk with a Complainant or Respondent in confidence. Confidential Employees must only report that the incident occurred and provide date, time, location, and name of the 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 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 institution 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.

**Reasonable Person:** An individual who is objectively reasonable under similar circumstances and with similar identities to the person being evaluated by the institution.

**Reporter:** An individual who reports an allegation of conduct that may violate this Policy but who is not a party to the complaint.

**Respondent:** An 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:

1. Invasion of sexual privacy;
2. Prostituting another individual;
3. Non-consensual photos, video, or audio of sexual activity;
4. Non-consensual distribution of photo, video, or audio of sexual activity, even if the sexual activity or capturing of the activity was consensual;
5. Intentional observation of nonconsenting individuals who are partially undressed, naked, or engaged in sexual acts;
6. Knowingly transmitting an STD or HIV to another individual through sexual activity;
7. Intentionally and inappropriately exposing one's breasts, buttocks, groin, or genitals in non-consensual circumstances; and/or
8. Sexually-based bullying.

**Sexual Harassment (Student on Student):** Unwelcome verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct based on sex (including gender stereotypes), determined by a Reasonable Person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to participate in or to benefit from an institutional education program or activity.

**Sexual Harassment (Other than Student on Student):** Unwelcome verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct, based on sex (including gender stereotypes), that may be any of the following:

1. Implicitly or explicitly a term or condition of employment or status in a course, program, or activity;

2. A basis for employment or educational decisions; or
3. 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 an institutional program or activity.

The USG also prohibits unwelcome conduct determined by a Reasonable Person to be so severe, pervasive and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to a USG education program or activity in violation of Title IX.

**Sexual Misconduct:** Includes, but is not limited to, such unwanted behavior as dating violence, domestic violence, nonconsensual sexual contact, nonconsensual sexual penetration, 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 their safety or the safety of others or suffer substantial emotional distress.

For the purposes of this definition:

1. 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.
2. 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

USG encourages the reporting of all Sexual Misconduct as soon as possible. While there is no statute of limitations on an institution's ability to respond to a report, the ability to respond diminishes with time as information and evidence may be more difficult to secure.

### A. Institutional Reports

An institutional report occurs when the institution has notice of a complaint. That notice occurs in two instances:

1. When a Responsible Employee receives a complaint; or
2. When the Title IX Coordinator or their designee receives a complaint.

Any individual may make a report, but the institution does not have notice of the report until information is known to a Responsible Employee or the Coordinator. The report may be made directly to the Coordinator in multiple formats to include: writing, email, phone, letter, fax, interview, or other method that provides the basis of the complaint of sexual misconduct. There is no specific information required to constitute a report; however, the report should contain as much information as can be provided. Reporting options should be included on the Title IX website.

Complainants, or anyone with knowledge of Sexual Misconduct, may file a report with a Responsible Employee or the Coordinator. That Responsible Employee must provide a complete reporting of all information known to them to the Coordinator. Responsible

Employees informed about Sexual Misconduct allegations should not attempt to resolve the situation, but must notify and report all relevant information to the Coordinator as soon as practicable

Upon receipt of an institutional report, the Coordinator will contact the Complainant. That contact will discuss the availability of supportive measures, the invitation to discuss their wishes with respect to implementation of supportive measures, and explain the process of filing a complaint. An institutional report does not automatically prompt an investigation.

The Coordinator's identity and contact information shall be published by each institution prominently on the institution's website, as well as in any relevant publication. Each institution may choose to have Deputy Title IX Coordinators to whom reports may be made, as well.

The Coordinator shall notify the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs or their designee of any allegation(s) of Sexual Misconduct that could, standing alone as reported, lead to the suspension or expulsion of the Respondent(s). The Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs or designee will work with the institution to determine whether any support services or 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 could lead to the Respondent's suspension or expulsion, the Title IX Coordinator shall notify the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs or designee. The Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs or designee shall have the discretion oversee the handling of the complaint.

#### B. Confidential Reports

Confidential Employees or Privileged Employees may receive reports of Sexual-based Misconduct without the requirement to report that information to the Coordinator, except as dictated by law or professional standards. Upon request by the Complainant, Confidential Employees and Privilege Employees may make a report to the Coordinator within the degree of specificity dictated by the Complainant.

Nothing in this provision shall prevent an institution staff member who is otherwise obligated by law (i.e, the Clery Act) to report information or statistical data as required.

#### C. Law Enforcement Reports

Because Sexual Misconduct may constitute criminal activity, a Complainant also has the option, should the Complainant so choose, of filing a report with campus or local police, for the Complainant's own protection and that of the surrounding community. The institution may assist the Complainant in reporting the situation to law enforcement officials. Filing a criminal report does not automatically constitute an institutional report.

#### D. Anonymous Reports

The College of Coastal Georgia's anonymous report form is located at <https://www.coga.edu/title-ixsexual-misconduct/anonymous-report-form>. Individuals should understand, however, that it will be more difficult for the institution to respond and to take action upon anonymous reports.

#### E. Complaint Consolidation

Each institution may consolidate complaints as to allegations of Sexual Misconduct against more than one Respondent, by more than one Complainant against one or more Respondents, or cross-complaints between parties, where the allegations of sexual misconduct arise out of the same facts or circumstances.

Parties shall have the opportunity to request or object to the consolidation; however, the institution shall have the authority to make the final determination. For the purpose of this Policy consolidation may occur during the investigation and/or the adjudication phases of the sexual misconduct process.

#### F. Complaint Dismissal

Each institution is permitted, but not required, to dismiss complaints on the following grounds:

1. The alleged conduct, even if proved, would not constitute sexual misconduct;
2. The Complainant notifies the Coordinator in writing that they would like to withdraw the complaint;
3. The Respondent is no longer enrolled or employed by the institution; or
4. There are circumstances that prevent the institution from gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination regarding the complaint.

The parties shall receive simultaneous written notice of the dismissal and the reason(s) for the dismissal. The parties shall have a right to appeal the institution's decision to dismiss the complaint.

#### G. Retaliation

Anyone who has made a report or complaint, provided information, assisted, participated or refused to participate in any manner in the Sexual Misconduct Process, shall not be subjected to retaliation. Anyone who believes that of they have subjected to retaliation should immediately contact the Coordinator or their designee. Any person found to have engaged in retaliation in violation of this Policy shall be subject to disciplinary action.

#### H. False Complaints

Individuals are prohibited from knowingly making false statements or knowingly submitting false information to a system or institution official. Any person found to have knowingly 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 appropriate institutional process.

#### I. 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 a student during an investigation concerning the consumption of drugs or alcohol will not be used against the particular student in a disciplinary proceeding or voluntarily reported to law enforcement; however, students may be provided with resources on drug and alcohol counseling and/or education, as appropriate. Nevertheless, these students may be required to meet with staff members in regards 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 provision shall prevent an institution staff member who is otherwise obligated by law (the Clery Act) to report information or statistical data as required.

### **3. Responding to Reports of Sexual Misconduct**

#### **A. Support Services**

Once the Title IX Coordinator has received information regarding an allegation of Sexual Misconduct the parties will be provided written information about support services. Support services are non-disciplinary, non-punitive individualized services offered as appropriate, as reasonably available, and without charge that are made available to the Complainant and Respondent before or after the filing of a complaint or where no complaint has been filed. Support services include counseling, advocacy, housing assistance, academic support, disability services, health and mental services, and other services, available at the student's institution. Available support services should also be listed on the institution's Title IX website.

#### **B. Interim Measures**

Interim measures may be implemented at any point after the institution becomes aware of an allegation of sexual misconduct and should be designed to protect any student or other individual in the USG community. Such measures are designed to restore or preserve equal access to the education program or activity without unreasonably burdening the other party, including measures designed to protect the safety of all parties or the campus community, or deter Sexual Misconduct and retaliation. Interim measures must be provided consistent with the provisions in applicable Board and institutional policies and procedures.

#### **C. Jurisdiction**

Emergency removal 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 Complainant 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.

#### **D. Jurisdiction**

Each USG institution shall take necessary and appropriate action to protect the safety and well-being of its community. Sexual misconduct allegedly committed is addressed by this Policy when the misconduct occurs on institution property, or at institution-sponsored or affiliated events, or off-campus, as defined by other Board or institution student conduct policies.

#### **E. Advisors**

Both the Complainant and the 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. The advisor may accompany the party to all meetings and may provide advice and counsel to their respective party throughout the Sexual Misconduct process, including providing questions, suggestions and guidance to the party, but may not

actively participate in the process except as outlined in BOR 6.7.4 (E). All communication during the Sexual Misconduct process will be between the institution and the party and not the advisor. With the party's permission, the advisor may be copied on all communications.

#### F. Informal Resolutions

Allegations of Sexual Misconduct may be resolved informally. The Complainant, the Respondent, and the institution must agree to engage in the informal resolution process and to the terms of the informal resolution. The Complainant(s) and the 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.

#### G. Timeframe

Efforts will be made to complete the investigation and resolution within 120 business days. Temporary delays and limited extensions may be granted by the institutions for good cause throughout the investigation and resolution process. The parties will be informed in writing of any extension or delay and the applicable reason. The institution shall keep the parties informed of the status of the investigation.

### 4. Responding to Reports of Sexual Harassment Pursuant to Title IX

The implementing Title IX regulations require special handling of complaints of sexual harassment, as defined in the regulations and listed below. The following section outlines the required specialized handling of these matters that may differ from an institution's handling of Sexual Misconduct, as defined in this Policy. Unless expressly mentioned in this section, other provisions of this Policy shall apply to all alleged Sexual Misconduct.

Other Title IX sex-discrimination allegations are handled pursuant to other applicable Board and/or institutional policies.

#### A. Definition of Sexual Harassment

Under Title IX sexual harassment means conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

- (1) An employee conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the institution on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct
- (2) Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the institution's education program or activity; or
- (3) "Sexual assault" as defined by the Clery Act and "dating violence," "domestic violence," and "stalking" as defined by the VAWA Amendments.

#### B. Jurisdiction

Alleged misconduct is addressed by Title IX when the misconduct occurs against a person in the United States on institution property, or at institution-sponsored or affiliated events where the institution exercises substantial control over both the Respondent and the context, or in buildings owned or controlled by a student organization that is officially recognized by the institution.

### C. Formal Complaints

A Formal Complaint is a written document filed by the Complainant or signed by the Coordinator alleging sexual harassment, as defined by Title IX and its implementing regulations, against a Respondent and requesting that the institution open an investigation. In order to file a Formal Complaint, the Complainant must be participating in or attempting to participate in the education program or activity of the institution occurring within the United States at the time of the filing.

### D. Informal Resolution

Formal Complaints may be resolved informally, except in the instance of an allegation by a student against an institution employee. The following must be met in order to proceed with the informal resolution process:

1. The parties have received written notice of the allegations
2. The parties have received written explanation of the informal process to include, but not limited to:
  - a. Written agreement of the parties to initiate the informal resolution process;
  - b. Written notice that the parties may withdraw from the process at any time prior to the agreement of the terms of the resolution;
  - c. Written notice that the final resolution precludes any further institutional actions on the allegations
3. The institution has agreed to engage in the informal resolution process.

### E. Advisors

Both the Complainant and the 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. The advisor may accompany the party to all meetings and may provide advice and counsel to their respective party throughout the Sexual Misconduct process but may not actively participate in the process except to conduct cross-examination at the hearing. If a party chooses not to use an advisor during the investigation, the institution will provide an advisor for the purpose of conducting cross-examination on behalf of the relevant party.

All communication during the Sexual Misconduct process will be between the institution and the party and not the advisor. The institution will copy the party's advisor prior to the finalization of the investigation report when the institution provides the parties the right to inspect and review directly related information gathered during the investigation. With the party's permission, the advisor may be copied on all communications.

## 5. Investigations

All Sexual Misconduct investigations involving a student Respondent shall follow the investigation process set forth in [Section 4.6.5, Standards for Institutional Student Conduct Investigation and Disciplinary Proceedings](#).

All Sexual Misconduct investigations involving an employee Respondent, shall be addressed utilizing Board and institutional employment policies and procedures including [Human Resources Administrative Practice Manual, Prohibit Discrimination & Harassment](#).

## 6. Hearings, Possible Sanctions, and Appeals

All Sexual Misconduct hearings, sanctions, and appeals involving a student Respondent shall follow the investigation hearing and resolution process set forth in this Policy and [Section 4.6.5, Standards for Institutional Student Conduct Investigation and Disciplinary Proceedings](#).

All Sexual Misconduct adjudication involving an employee Respondent, shall be addressed utilizing the Board and institutional institution's employment policies and procedures including [Human Resources Administrative Practice Manual, Prohibit Discrimination & Harassment](#).