

Student Responsibilities and Rights

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I. Student Responsibilities

The following is an outline of the responsibilities of students, both as individuals and as groups at Columbus State University. It is the official record of all conduct regulations, rules affecting student organizations and group activities, and both student and administrative oriented policies and procedures. Columbus State University will not tolerate academic misconduct or non-academic misconduct.

Columbus State University exists to serve the higher education needs of those students who qualify for admission. The essence of higher education is found in the unhampered freedom to study, investigate, write, speak and debate on any aspect or issue of life. In attempting to achieve that unhampered freedom, the students acquire certain fundamental rights and responsibilities. These rights and responsibilities, as defined below, are considered an integral part of the educational process at Columbus State University. Any additional rights or responsibilities may be promulgated under established procedures during the school year as required for the general well being of the student body and university. A student is expected to follow these rules and the university is expected to enforce them. At the same time, the university is expected to acknowledge the student's rights stated herein and respect the student's autonomy in these areas.

Unfamiliarity is not an excuse for infractions of the regulations. Knowledge of them, on the other hand, can help the student use these rights to the fullest and avoid having others infringe on these rights.

II. Academic Freedom

Academic freedom refers to the rights and responsibilities essential to the task of scholarship in its broadest sense. It extends to the entire academic community, including faculty, students, administrators, and the institution itself. While many rights and responsibilities may be shared simultaneously by every member, the expression of academic freedom requires complementarity and civility. Access to grievance/appeal procedures and to conflict mediation is a basic component of academic freedom available to all members of the academic community.

Columbus State University, within the context of the policies of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, has the authority to determine on academic grounds who may be admitted to study, what may be taught, how it may be taught, and who may teach. Administering these fundamental freedoms involves all members of the academic community.

III. Student Rights

Students have the right to learn and to inquire. They have a right to examine and discuss questions of interest, to take stands on issues, and to support causes, by orderly means which do not impede the collegial process of learning.

Students have corresponding obligations to be honest in performing their academic work, to be punctual in their assignments, and to cooperate in the process of teaching and learning.

Students shall have the right to take stands on issues, the right to examine and discuss questions of interest to them, and the right to support causes, by orderly means which do not disrupt the regular and essential campus operation.

Recognized student organizations shall be allowed to invite and to hear any person of their own choosing for the purpose of hearing that person's ideas and opinions. However, the University President has final responsibility for campus events and activities and may affirm or cancel a speaker's appearance. Scheduling of such events shall be made through the Office of the Dean of Students to ensure that there is orderly scheduling of facilities and observance of University regulations. This requires filing a registration form one week before the speaker is to appear (see section on speakers). The Dean of Students does not approve or disapprove, but may specify the time, location, or place.

Students shall have the right to have their academic records kept confidential. Disciplinary records are subject to current state law. All practices and policies dealing with the acquisition and retention of information for records shall be formulated with due regard for the student's right to privacy. No records shall be available to unauthorized persons without the express consent of the student involved except under legal compulsion or in cases where the safety of persons or property is involved. No permanent records shall be kept which reflect any alleged political activities or beliefs of students.

Students shall have the right of protection against prejudiced academic evaluation. At the same time, students are responsible for maintaining the standards of academic performance established by the faculty for each course in which they are enrolled. Any student who believes that individual academic rights have been violated may seek redress by contacting the Director of Judicial Affairs, the Dean of Students, or the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs for direction in filing a formal grievance. Individual students and recognized campus organizations have the right to publish and distribute written materials provided that the material is identified by the name of the student or organization, done in accordance with university regulations, and which follows the guidelines established by the publications committee. Student publications shall be guaranteed the rights inherent in the concept of "freedom of the press." The publications committee shall protect those rights and enforce standards of responsible journalism.

IV. University Police/Motor Vehicle Regulations

The CSU University Police Main Campus office is located at the University Police Department. The CSU University Police RiverPark campus office is located at 1013 Broadway. The department has sworn police officers who are responsible for life and property safety, parking enforcement and enforcement of state and local laws. The officers also secure campus buildings, assist motorists with battery jump-offs and patrol the university campus on foot, bikes, and marked patrol cars. The University Police Department has membership in the Georgia Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators and the Georgia Association of Chiefs of Police.

Operation and parking of a motor vehicle on campus is a privilege. All motor vehicles (including motorcycles) parked on campus, CSU Courtyard I & II and RiverPark campus are required to have a university decal. Students must first register online thru ISIS for a temporary parking decal, valid for five (5) business days, and then obtain their permanent parking decal at the University Police located in the University Police Department. Decals for Courtyard residents may be obtained at the Residence Life Office. Permits are issued and valid for the school year. Students, faculty, and staff are responsible for vehicles (to include parking citations) while their vehicles are located on university property. Temporary permits are available for students, faculty, and staff online thru ISIS. Temporary permits should be obtained and placed on vehicles upon arrival on campus. Two parking decals are included in the university access fee. Additional decals maybe purchased for \$5.00 each.

Habitual parking violators will be booted and/or towed. Tow and Boot Fees are the responsibility of the violator. The Boot Fee is \$50 and can be paid at the Bursars Office located in University Hall.

A complete code of motor vehicle regulations may be found in the Student Handbook and the University Police Department. For more information, visit the University Police website at www.ColumbusState.edu/police

Permit Requirement

1. All vehicles parked on the CSU campus must have a parking permit or a temporary permit.
2. Permits are issued for the school year.
3. Temporary permits are issued for a maximum of two weeks.
4. All handicapped permits are issued by the City of Columbus and may be obtained at the tag office. (The tag office requires medical documentation.)

Display of Decal/Permit

1. All student permits will be affixed to the inside of the rear window either upper or lower corner.
 2. Temporary permits will be placed on the dash in front of the driver.
 3. Handicapped permits will be displayed per state statute.
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1. All parking spaces on Main Campus are designated faculty, staff, student, handicapped, services or visitor.
 2. Downtown Campus has designated parking for faculty, staff and students:
 - Dillingham – Faculty/Staff parking ONLY
 - One Arsenal – Faculty/Staff parking ONLY
 - River Park Parking garage – Levels 3, 4 & 5 are Student parking (Levels 4 & 5 require an access card – student housing)
 3. Parking is allowed only in marked spaces.
 4. Vehicles not parked in appropriate spaces are subject to towing and fines.
 5. Parking is also prohibited on university roads, drives, driveways, walkways and seeded areas.
 6. Parking lot color definitions
 - a. White spaces - Student/Visitor
 - b. Blue spaces - Handicapped
 - c. Yellow spaces - No Parking and Tow Away Zone
 - d. Green spaces - Faculty/Staff
 - e. Orange spaces - Service Vehicles

Improper Parking

1. Vehicles must be parked between the painted lines.
2. Vehicles must be headed into diagonal parking spaces. They must not pull through or back into said spaces.

Pedestrians

1. Pedestrians in crosswalks have the right of way over vehicles.
2. Pedestrians walking through parking lots have the right of way over vehicles.

Non-Motorized Vehicle Policy

Non-motorized vehicle are defined as: bicycles, roller blades, roller skates, skateboard and any other device used to transport persons which is not covered in the motor vehicle code section.

Non-motorized vehicles (except bicycles):

1. Are prohibited on university streets, sidewalks, buildings, and lawn areas.

2. Are only allowed during daylight hours in parking lots away from parked vehicles.
3. Games are not allowed in the parking lots or on campus (i.e. hockey). Bicycles are not allowed in buildings and must be chained to a bike rack and not chained to stairs, trees, or handrails on campus.

University Speed Limits

The speed limit on all roadways and in all parking lots at Columbus State University is 15 mph.

Towing /Booting Policy

1. Vehicles parked illegally are subject to be towed or booted at drivers/owners expense.
2. Anyone accumulating three or more outstanding parking citations will be subject to having their vehicle towed or booted. All fines must be paid prior to the release of the vehicle. Driver/owner is responsible for all towing and storage fees incurred. Boot fee is \$50.00.
NOTE: Vehicles are subject to being towed or booted on the third violation in Courtyard I and Courtyard II.
3. Parking privileges on campus may be revoked for repeated offenses. Fines for violation of these regulations are:
Parking in handicap spaces \$100.00
All other parking violations \$20.00 and up per violation
NOTE: All University Police fines must be paid at the Bursars Office in University Hall.

Moving Violations

The University Police Department issues Georgia State Uniform Traffic Citations for moving violations on campus. All traffic citations issued for moving violations are adjudicated in Records Court, located at 702 10th Street.

Parking Appeals

1. All parking appeals should be in writing and submitted on the appropriate form to the office of the Dean of Students (Schuster 216) within thirty (30) days of the citation in order to be heard by the Student Judicial Council.
2. All appealed traffic fines must be paid prior to appeal.

V. Student Organizations

Columbus State University encourages students in the development of their special interests and talents through participation in student organizations insofar as the aims and objectives of the organizations are consistent with those of the university. The value of student organizations as means of providing opportunities for students to enrich their educational experiences outside of the classrooms and laboratories is recognized by the university. To facilitate the development of constructive student organizations, it is necessary for the academic community to subscribe guidelines and procedures for the orderly and responsible operation of student organizations.

1. When groups of students wish to establish organizations to promote their common interests, it is appropriate that they seek recognition and approval by the university. In order to start an organization, there must be at least 5 interested students. Procedures for obtaining a charter for new student organizations are available in the Office of Student Life & Engagement. The essential steps in obtaining charters include:
 - a. Filing of a written petition of intent to organize.
 - b. It is the responsibility of the campus organization to seek a campus advisor. While the university recognizes that some organizations also have a community member serving in an advisor's capacity,

it is the university faculty or staff member who will be regarded as the primary contact and responsible advocate for the organization.

- c. Faculty advisor should embody a positive attitude and should maintain positive relations with the student affairs staff as student advocates.
 - d. Approval of the petition by the Dean of Students.
 - e. If, at anytime, the Director of Student Activities feels that an advisor isn't acting in the best interest of the organization and / or Student Life Department, he / she reserves the right to remove and replace the individual from this capacity.
2. To facilitate communications, to provide necessary services, and to allocate the use of university facilities, all student organizations are required to file an annual registration form with the coordinator of students activities. Organizations failing to satisfy requirements will be considered inactive. Organizations wishing to renew their status should confer with the coordinator of student activities.
 3. It is the responsibility of each organization to inform the Office of Student Life & Engagement of the names and addresses of new officers and faculty advisors and changes in their constitutions.
 4. Organizations wishing to effect changes in their affiliations must have the approval of the activities committee.
 5. Each organization should have at least one faculty or staff advisor at all times. Organizations may seek the assistance of the Office of Student Life & Engagement in obtaining names of faculty members willing to serve in this capacity.
 6. The membership, policies, and actions of student organizations are to be determined by vote of only those who hold bona fide status in Columbus State University. All officers of student organizations are to be currently enrolled during the terms of their offices, with the exception of the summer term.
 7. No student club or organization may adopt any provisions that discriminate against membership or participation based on race, creed, religion, sex, national origin, or physical disability, except where such provisions have been authorized by federal laws or directives.
 8. Each organization is expected to conduct its affairs in accordance with democratic principles and sound fiscal management. Misappropriation of an organization's funds by officers or members is contrary to these principles and may be considered as the basis for disciplinary action by the university and legal action by the organization against violators. An internal audit should be conducted annually and, in addition, each time there is a change of officers entrusted with organizational funds.
 9. All organizations are expected to conduct their activities in such a manner as to reflect credit on the university. Organizations must comply with all applicable social regulations. Failure to do so may result in revocation of an organization's charter and subject the group and/or individual to disciplinary action.
 10. Special rules and policies governing the establishment and operation of social fraternities and sororities have been promulgated by the university and are available in the Student Life Office.

VI. Student Publications

Columbus State University student publications exist primarily to provide participating students and the student body the following:

1. Experience in self-expression.
2. Training in the aspects of publishing.
3. Outlets for creative work.
4. Information about student and faculty activities.
5. A forum for the free exchange of opinion.

Publications Committee

It is the purpose of the Publications Committee to protect freedom of the press and, at the same time, to foster the standards of responsible journalism. It also recognizes that a university newspaper is read by an audience that extends beyond the campus. With this in mind the committee establishes the following guidelines and procedures concerning controversial matters.

1. Materials that could be classified as libelous. Libel is defined as a false and malicious defamation of another, expressed in print, writing, pictures, or signs, tending to injure the reputation of the person and exposing him to public hatred, contempt, or ridicule.
2. Obscenity and profanity in articles or advertising. Obscenity guidelines include the following:
 - a. whether the average person, applying contemporary community standards would find that the work, taken as a whole, appeals to the prurient interest,
 - b. whether the work depicts or describes, in a patently offensive way, sexual conduct, and whether the work, taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value.

This section is intended to be a summary of the detailed sections of the Publications Committee Handbook that will have precedence over this publication if there are discrepancies.

The indiscriminate publication of advertisements, such as those which undermine ethical standards, undermine academic standards, promote sexism or sexist attitudes, encourage bigotry, hate or violence, etc.

Questions:

Whenever questions arise, it is the responsibility of the editor to confer with the advisor. If the advisor is unsure about what to do, the advisor can then ask the chair of the Publications Committee to convene the full committee to make a determination. If the editor wishes to appeal the decision of the Publications Committee, such appeal should be made directly to the Grievance Hearing Panel.

Publication Editor Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the publication editor to see that the following editorial policies are adhered to:

1. Facts should be distinguished from opinion.
2. The editor should check for libelous content before publication.
3. Good faith with the reader is the foundation of all journalism worthy of the name. By every consideration of good faith a newspaper is obligated to be truthful, thorough, and accurate. Headlines should also be fully warranted by the content of the article.
4. Sound practice makes a clear distinction between news reports and expressions of opinion. News reports should be free from opinion of any kind. This rule does not apply to so-called special articles or editorials unmistakably devoted to advocacy or characterized by a signature authorizing the writer's conclusions and interpretations.
5. A newspaper should not publish opinion affecting reputation or moral character without allowing the right of swift rebuttal.
6. A newspaper should not invade a person's privacy unless there is a public right to know as opposed to mere curiosity.
7. It is the duty of a newspaper to make prompt and complete correction of serious mistakes of fact or interpretation, whatever their origin.
8. All submissions must be signed; The Saber will not publish anonymous opinion.
9. Pictures, cartoons, and other devices can be libelous and should be edited with the same discretion used for written work. The advisor and the editor must so instruct the staff that each member will recheck information, cartoons, and other materials to see that these meet legal and ethical standards. Staff members of student publications should review legal information before the beginning of each school year.
10. Faculty, students, or others may submit contributions to student publications, however, editors are not obligated to publish all materials received.
11. Materials of an official nature may be published as a service to the student body.
12. Student publications will bear a prominently displayed statement to the effect that they are student publications.

Advisor Responsibilities

Overview of Responsibilities. The advisor offers advice on the design and format of student publications, assists with business procedures, and encourages quality publications. It is never the advisor's role to proofread or censor the student newspaper.

Legal Awareness. The advisor should bring to the editor's attention the legal and moral responsibilities of any college publications and the fact that the university President may be held responsible for student publications, articles, pictures, ads.

Editor's Qualification. The advisor will ensure that all candidates meet eligibility requirements.

The Staff of Publications

The position of editor will be limited to students who have at least a 2.50 grade point average (GPA), have shown a sincere commitment to The Saber, and have demonstrated journalistic ability.

Except for the editor, all staff members, paid and unpaid, must maintain at least a 2.00 GPA. All other paid and unpaid staff members will be selected by the editor, with the advice of the advisor, on the basis of journalistic ability, interest, initiative, and contribution to the publication.

Staff can be dismissed by the editor. Staff who have been removed from their duties have the right to appeal to the Publication Committee, then to the Grievance Review Board.

The publications committee, with input from the advisor, will have the power to remove from office the editor with "just cause," as defined by the Publications Committee Handbook.

A staff member on The Saber cannot serve simultaneously as an SGA executive officer due to possible conflict of interest.

Election of Editor

The annual election of the editor will be held no later than the second Friday in April and will be supervised by the advisor.

The editor will be elected by a simple majority of staff members eligible to vote. To be eligible to vote, staff must have served since the beginning of the current semester. The current editor in chief will vote only in the case of a tie.

The newly elected editor's term will begin the day after spring graduation.

VII. Speakers on Campus

1. Any student wishing to invite a speaker to Columbus State University must do so through a recognized campus organization. Any student who does not belong to an organization can request the Student Activities Council or Student Government to sponsor the desired speaker. This is so an accountable body on campus will be responsible for the conduct of the speaker and his audience.
2. Any recognized organization may sponsor speakers of its own choosing upon the approval of the organization's advisor when the audience is limited to members of the organization, currently enrolled students, and faculty and staff. When the speaking engagement is to be open to the general public, or advertised through the public media, the sponsoring organization is to submit a request for the speaker to appear on campus to the Dean of Students who will secure the necessary approval for the desired speaker to appear.
3. The sponsoring organization is responsible for securing adequate facilities and making all necessary physical arrangements for the speaker. The university reserves the right to limit and determine the time, date, and location of any speaker's appearance on campus.
4. The University recognizes the rights of freedom of assembly and speech. At the same time, it recognizes its responsibilities for operating and maintaining an orderly educational environment. Requests for speaker approvals

will be approved routinely provided suitable physical arrangements can be made and the known presence of the speaker will not disrupt the educational process.

VIII. Demonstrations

Students or individuals may wish to show their support or call attention to issues when recognized outlets, such as campus organizations or the student newspaper, are not immediately available for such purposes. These open exchanges of information, opinions, and ideas between students are an essential element of the campus experience. The policies here are intended to protect the interests of all students as well as other members of the University community. These policies presume that students are generally free to engage in freedom of expression activities in those outdoor areas of campus that are common and accessible to all students (such as park-like areas and sidewalks). Although the campus is open to expression activities users are required to make reservations through the Office of Student Life and Engagement to prevent conflicting events from trying to use the same space.

Students engaged in freedom of expression activities, on campus may be required to relocate under the following circumstances:

1. The location selected for the activity is inadequate for the purpose for which it will be used (either too close to buildings, not big enough for the event, etc.);
2. The activity substantially interferes with either vehicular or pedestrian traffic;
3. The activity blocks the ingress or egress to buildings;
4. The space is not available due to a prior reservation;
5. The activity conflicts with a previously planned university activity;
6. The activity creates a sustained or repeated noise disturbance that substantially interferes with the normal activities of the university;
7. The activity presents an unreasonable danger to the health or safety of the applicant or other individuals;
8. The activity is prohibited by local, state, or federal law; or
9. The activity prevents fire protection, law enforcement, or emergency medical service providers from access to areas on campus.

IX. Use of Likeness for Promotional Purposes

Columbus State University reserves the right to photograph and/or videotape students, faculty, staff and guests while on university property, during university-sponsored events or during activities where they are representing the university. These images and audio may be used by Columbus State University for promotional purposes, including use in university magazines, newspapers, press releases, booklets, brochures, pamphlets, newsletters, advertisements, the university website and associated sites, and other promotional materials.

X. Distribution of Advertising Material, Propaganda, and the Like

Columbus State University does not endorse or sponsor campaigns, movements, drives, or the printed or duplicated materials used for persuading a desired opinion and/or action. The exchange, sale, giving for a consideration, bartering, or solicitation of gifts or donations is prohibited by an individual, group of individuals, company or corporation not authorized by the Vice President for Business and Finance. For additional information, please refer to the section entitled Policies listed previously in this handbook.

XI. Posting of Notices and Care of Bulletin Boards

Materials placed on campus bulletin boards or cork strips should be arranged neatly. Permission should be secured from the appropriate administrative office within the area of the building where the posting is desired. No posting should occur on glass doors in such a manner as to obscure vision. Using paint or other materials that may permanently deface a building is prohibited.

XII. Student Records Policies and Procedures

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, as amended, grants students in institutions of higher education the right of access to their education records and preservation of the privacy of these records. In compliance with this act, Columbus State University has established policies and procedures to assure students of their rights under the Act. Distance learning students have the same FERPA and confidentiality protections as all other CSU students.

Student Access to Educational Records

Any student who is or has been in attendance at Columbus State University will be allowed to inspect and review his/her education records except any items the student has waived his/her right to see, financial information submitted by parents, or information about other students when an education record contains such information. Education records do not include records of instructional, administrative, and educational personnel which are in the sole possession of the maker and are not accessible or revealed to any individual except a temporary substitute; records of the law enforcement unit, student health records, employment records, alumni records, or personal counseling records. Health records and counseling records, however, may be reviewed by physicians of the student's choosing.

Students should submit to the registrar, dean, head of the academic department, or other appropriate official, written requests that identify the record(s) they wish to inspect. The University official will make arrangements for access and notify the students of the time and place where the records may be inspected. If the records are not maintained by the University official to whom the request was submitted, that official shall advise the student of the correct official to whom the request should be addressed. The review will be granted within a reasonable period of time, not to exceed forty-five (45) days.

When the original record is shown to the student, examination will be permitted only under conditions that will prevent its alteration, mutilation, or loss, including the presence of a representative of the institution. Upon reasonable request by the student, oral explanations and interpretations of the records will be given to the student immediately. When the student desires a written explanation or interpretation, or when it is not practical or appropriate to give an oral explanation or interpretation, the student shall request the explanation or interpretation in writing. The university official will provide the student with a written response to any reasonable written inquiries.

When the education record, or a portion thereof, is not in a form that can be readily reviewed by the student (stored on microfilm, in computer files, etc.), a true copy in understandable form will be provided for the student's inspection and review.

If it is impractical for a former student to inspect and review the records personally, a properly authorized representative of the student may exercise this right on behalf of the student, upon receipt by the institution of an appropriate written, notarized authorization from the student.

Copies of Records to Students

Upon written request and payment of appropriate fees as shown below, students in good standing with the institution will be provided with copies of part or all of their education records, with the exception of transcripts received from other educational institutions and any documents the student has waived his/her right to see. Such documents may be certified as true copies of the education records but will not be embossed with the institutional seal. The name of the institution shall be shown on all copies issued.

Copies of education records may be withheld by the institution when the students are not in good standing because of such conditions as unmet financial obligations and violations of institutional regulations. Such records to be withheld may include, but are not limited to, transcripts, and certifications of student achievement and performance.

Copies of Records to Third Parties at Student's Request

Copies of records that may be released to students may be sent to third parties upon the written request of the student. Such a written request must include:

1. A specification of the records to be disclosed;
2. A party or class of parties to whom the disclosure may be made;
3. The signature of the student and date of request;
4. The date the request is delivered to the Registrar or a designated representative of the Registrar.

Cost to Student

There is no charge for official transcripts. A maximum of 10 transcripts per day may be requested.

Institutional Educational Records

The following educational records are maintained:

Type of Record	Location Responsible	University Official
1. Academic school departmental records	Academic	Dean of School
2. Admission records	University Hall	Director of Admissions
3. Conduct records (in case of disciplinary action only)	Schuster Center	Dean of Students
4. Financial aid records (only for those who apply for aid)	University Hall	Director of Financial Aid
5. Student permanent records and other Academic Related Information	University Hall	Registrar

Release of Directory Information

Directory information will be treated as public information and generally be available on all students and former students, at the discretion of the institution. Directory information includes:

The student's name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, date and place of birth, dates of attendance, enrollment status, major field of study, degrees, honors, and awards received, photograph, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, general interest items of athletic teams, and the most recent educational agency or institution attended.

Any student may refuse to permit the designation of all the categories of personally identifiable information as directory information by submitting a signed and dated Request to Withhold Student Information Form to the Registrar's Office. Students that choose to have directory information withheld will not appear in the student directory or campus publications, such as dean's list honors, etc. Selecting this option prohibits the Registrar's Office from conducting enrollment verifications of any type since the student information is then considered confidential. Students are encouraged to consult the Registrar's Office FERPA official before selecting the exclusion of directory information to fully understand the ramifications. Students should also note that once directory information is requested to be withheld, it cannot be changed until the Registrar's Office received a request in writing revoking the initial request to withhold information.

Release of Student Information to Third Parties

Disclosure of information contained in the education records of a student to individuals and organizations other than those specifically covered by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act shall be limited to items designated as directory information, except upon written, signed, and dated consent of the student.

GEORGIA OPEN RECORDS LAW: As a general rule, documents, papers and records prepared and maintained or received in the course of the operation of a public office or agency are public records within the meaning of the Open Records Law. The right to review or copy these records cannot be denied to any citizen. All records requests should be made in writing to the Director of Judicial Affairs. The director will analyze the scope of the request to determine whether the records requested, or any portion thereof, are required by law to be maintained as confidential. A copying fee of 25 cents per page may be charged. In addition, a reasonable charge may be collected for search, retrieval, and other administrative cost of complying with request for records. Arrangements for inspecting, reviewing, or copying of public records should be made by the director, who should determine an orderly and non-disruptive procedure for permitting access to the documents. Determinations to disclose records will be made on a case-by-case-basis.

Release of Student Information to Institutional Officials

Information from the education records of a student may be disclosed to University officials with a legitimate educational interest. A school official is a person employed by the University in an administrative, supervisory, academic or research, or support staff position (including law enforcement unit personnel and health staff); a person or company with whom the University has contracted such as an attorney, auditor, or collection agent; a person or a student serving on an official committee such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A University official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Release of Student Information to Other Institutions

Under FERPA regulation 99.31 (a)(2), a school district or postsecondary institution may disclose education records, without consent, to officials of another school, school system, or post secondary institution where a student "seeks or intends to enroll." The regulation clarifies that the authority to disclose or transfer education records to a student's new school does not cease automatically the moment a student has enrolled and continues to any future point in time so long as the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer. This means that a school may disclose any records or information, including health and disciplinary records, that the school could have disclosed when the student was seeking or intending to enroll in the new school.

Correction of Education Records

When a student believes that information in the student's education records is inaccurate, misleading, or violates the privacy or other rights of the student, the student may submit a written request for correction to the University official responsible for creation and maintenance of the record. Such a written request will specify the information being questioned, state the revision requested, state the reasons the student has for disagreeing with the entry in question, and will include (or have attached) any data or information the student has which shows that the record should be revised. The University official will review the request and the appropriate records, and meet with the student if appropriate. The University official will notify the student of a decision within 21 days after receipt of the written request. If the University decides not to amend the record as requested by the student, the University will notify the student of the decision and advise the student of his or her right to a hearing regarding the requests for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the student when notified of the right to a hearing.

The above procedure may be used to question the correctness of the recording of a grade but may not be used to contest the assignment of grade.

Right to File a Complaint

A student has the right to file a complaint with the university's Director of Judicial Affairs concerning alleged failure by Columbus State University to comply with the requirements of FERPA. If the complaint is not resolved by the University to the satisfaction of the student, the student may file a complaint to the Office that administers FERPA: Family Policy Compliance Office, U. S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S. W., Washington, DC 20202-4605.

XIII. Equal Opportunity Policy

It is the policy of Columbus State University to ensure fulfillment of equal opportunity for all employees, students, applicants for employment and student applicants. No person shall be excluded from participation in, denied benefits of or be subject to discrimination under any University program or activity on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, gender, disability, or age.

Any student with a complaint or concern that is related to these standards should contact the Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Office at 706-568-2005. This office is located in Richards Hall.

XIV. Academic and Non-Academic Misconduct

A. Judicial Procedures for the Student

Since educational institutions have the responsibility for protecting the educational purposes for which they exist, and for establishing safeguards to insure that those charged with violations of institutional standards on scholarship and behavior are accorded equal protection from unfair disciplinary measures, the following procedures have been established for the resolution of disciplinary problems.

When appearing before either a Hearing Officer or Judicial Body, the accused and accuser are entitled to have a Hearing Advisor present. This Advisor must be from the Columbus State University community and must be a current student or member of the faculty or staff. The Hearing Advisor does not represent the student and is only at the hearing to offer advice and to ensure that a fair hearing occurs. Students and Hearing Advisors will not be allowed to hear deliberation proceedings.

A Hearing Officer is defined as a Columbus State University faculty or staff member who is duly appointed to hear the facts of a matter, make a decision, and issue sanctions when appropriate.

Columbus State University will not tolerate academic misconduct or nonacademic misconduct. Any individual found to be in violation of the University standards, policies or procedures will be subject to the sanctions/remedies listed in Section XVI of this handbook. Reporting academic, non-academic, or concerning behavior is the responsibility of all members of the campus community. Reports may be filed with the Behavioral Assessment and Recommendation Team (BART) as described in the General Information area in this handbook or found online in CougarNet.

B. Academic Misconduct

The university recognizes honesty and integrity as central virtues of academic life and as fully necessary to its very existence. The university also recognizes and accepts that cooperation, discussion, and group studying outside of the classroom are essential elements of the academic experience, and that students may seek assistance in their studies, such as tutoring or peer review.

However, while such practices are acceptable and even encouraged, students must understand the parameters of accountability in their academic performance and need to respect the academic freedom of the faculty.

Therefore, the following regulations are published in the interest of protecting the equity and the validity of the student's grades and degrees, and in order to assist the student in developing standards and attitudes appropriate to academic life:

1. During examinations no student shall use materials not authorized by the instructor.
2. No student or other person shall obtain and furnish to any other student materials which can be shown to contain the questions or answers to any examination scheduled to be given at any date in any course offered by the university.
3. No student shall knowingly receive and use materials, which can be shown to contain the questions, or answers to any examination scheduled to be given at any date in any course offered by the university.
4. No student shall receive or give assistance in preparation of any assignment, essay, laboratory report or examination to be submitted as a requirement for any academic course in such a way that the submitted work can no longer be considered the personal effort of the student submitting the work. In the case of tutoring, peer review and similar instances of assistance, a special effort must be made to retain this distinction and the integrity of the student's personal performance.
5. In some cases, tutoring may border on academic irregularity; in the case of course requirements for a grade, it is the student's responsibility to clarify the instructor's policy. If the student is uncertain as to the direction of the instructor, it is the student's responsibility to seek clarification from the instructor.
6. Plagiarism is prohibited. Themes, essays, term papers, tests, and other requirements for a grade, must be the work of the student submitting them. When direct quotations are used, they must be indicated, and when the ideas of another are incorporated in the paper, they must be appropriately acknowledged. Term papers, reports, reviews, or other assignments may not be purchased for submission in lieu of the student's own efforts. Any person taking, or attempting to take, steal or otherwise procure in any unauthorized manner any material pertaining to the conduct of a class, including tests, examinations, laboratory equipment, roll books, etc., shall be in violation of these regulations.

C. Procedures for Alleged Academic Violations

The academic grievance procedure is primarily designed as a route to the resolution of academic or related differences concerning academic fairness, which may arise between a faculty member and a student within a particular course during a single semester/term. This procedure is not available to challenge university policy; although, an alleged improper application of policy may be considered. If there is uncertainty about the appropriate form or direction of a grievance in a particular case, the Dean of Students should be consulted.

Students are responsible for maintaining the standards of academic performance established by the faculty for each course in which they are enrolled. Faculty members are responsible for informing the students in their classes of their requirements for each course that they teach, including attendance policies and methods for course evaluation. Examination situations should be clearly defined, as well as requirements for outside projects or papers, and plagiarism should be carefully defined.

Timeliness of Grievance

Grievances should be addressed in a timely fashion. Academic grievances should be initiated within the semester/term the problem occurs or within the first ten (10) university working days of the next semester/term. The Dean of the college offering the course may consider extenuating circumstances for an exception to this time limitation. Those circumstances must be beyond the control of the student such as hospitalization or military assignment.

Informal Academic Grievances

Any student who has an academic fairness complaint with a faculty member is encouraged, but not required, to meet with the faculty and/or the faculty member's department chair seeking to resolve the problem informally at the lowest level.

Faculty have a responsibility to post and maintain regular office hours and to make special appointments to meet with students, answer questions concerning course material and attendance records, share the record of a student's grades in the course, explain how particular grades were derived, and to answer questions about examinations within a timely fashion. The faculty is the best authority to explain course requirements and to settle misunderstandings about grades.

Department chairs maintain an open door policy to talk with students. The department chair can assist the student in understanding university or system policy, can direct the student to the times a particular faculty will be available, or attend a meeting with both the student and the faculty. The chair serves as an objective third party acting as a resource to both the student and the faculty. Chairs and deans are responsible for knowing and being able to explain student and faculty rights and responsibilities, as well as, grievance and appeal procedures. The chair will also direct each party to the Student Handbook, referring the parties to the section on formal grievances and noting the filing deadline. If the deadline for filing a formal grievance is less than five (5) university working days away, the department chair may write a letter to the Dean indicating that significant progress is being made in the informal handling of the case and that the deadline for filing the formal grievance should be extended by an additional ten (10) university working days.

If the department chair is not available within three (3) university working days or if the department chair is the faculty member with whom the student has a complaint, the dean of the college may act as a facilitator as described above. There is no required meeting with the dean.

Formal Academic Grievances

If informal means fail to resolve an academic grievance, or if the student does not wish to meet informally with the faculty member, the student may file a formal, written complaint with the department chair. The complete formal appeal policy is detailed on the Academic Affairs website at [http://www.columbusstate.edu/academicaffairs](#); the following provides a brief overview of the formal academic grievance process. If the department chair is away from campus or has a conflict of interest in the case, the complaint may be filed with the dean of the college. Henceforth for the purpose of this policy, either of these administrators who receives a written complaint shall be referred to as the "Reviewer."

Due Process for formal academic grievances at Columbus State University includes: 1. written notification of charges(s); 2. the opportunity to review evidence supporting the charge(s); 3. the opportunity to present evidence in response to the charge(s); 4. the right to have an advisor from the university community present during any hearing (sometimes an attorney); and 5. unless time extensions have been granted, the right to a written decision based on the evidence within forty (20) university working days from the date of the filing of the formal grievance.

For additional information see the Dean of Students or the Director of Judicial Affairs in the Office of the Provost.

eCore Academic Appeals

If a student wants to make a grade appeal for an eCore course, the student should first contact the CSU eCore advisor, located in the Registrar's Office in Enrollment Services. The eCore advisor will provide the necessary steps for the student to submit the grade appeal.

D. Non-academic Misconduct

Students found to be in direct social contact where a violation is found to have occurred may be held responsible for the violation. This includes all areas of any apartment, vehicle, or property where the violation occurred.

1. Alcoholic Beverages

The drinking, possession, or transportation of alcoholic beverages is discouraged. The conspicuous consumption of alcoholic beverages on campus is prohibited. No policy or regulation of the University sanctions either the use of alcoholic beverages or actions in violation of state, federal, or local laws regarding their purchase or consumption. The University prohibits the serving or consumption of alcoholic beverages at on-campus student activity functions. See Columbus State University's Policy on Drugs and Alcohol.

2. Drugs and Narcotics

The possession of stimulant, depressant, narcotic, or hallucinogenic drugs and other agents having potential for mental or physical abuse, except on a legal prescription, is prohibited, as is the selling, bartering, exchanging, or giving away of such drugs to any person not intended to possess them. Students found to be in violation of this policy can expect, as a minimum, suspension from the University for the remainder of the semester.

3. Property

Malicious damage, removal, or destruction of property belonging to Columbus State University, its employees, its students, or visitors to the University is prohibited.

4. Disorderly Assembly

- a. No persons shall assemble on campus for the purpose of creating a riot or destructive or disorderly diversion which interferes with the normal educational process and operation of the University. This section shall not be construed to deny any students the right of peaceful assembly.
- b. No person or group of persons shall obstruct the free movement of other persons about the campus, interfere with the use of the University facilities, or prevent the normal operation of the University. (See the Board of Regents' Policy Statement.)
- c. The abuse or unauthorized use of sound amplification equipment indoors or outdoors is prohibited. Such authorization is obtained through the Office of the Dean of Students.

5. Disorderly Conduct

- a. Behavior that disrupts the academic pursuits, substantially injures the academic reputation, or infringes upon the privacy, rights, or privileges of other persons is prohibited.
- b. Disorderly behavior on the campus or at functions sponsored by the University or any recognized university organization is prohibited.
- c. No student shall enter or attempt to enter any dance, social, athletic, or any other University-sponsored event without proper credentials for admission.
- d. Lewd, indecent, and obscene conduct and/or expression are prohibited.
- e. No person shall interfere with, or fail to cooperate with, any properly identified University faculty or staff personnel while these persons are in the performance of their duties.
- f. No person shall threaten or attempt to threaten, any member or visitor of the University community. This includes, but is not limited to any electronic means, such as, social networking, email and texting.
- g. **The Regents' Statement** - The Board of Regents stipulates that any student, faculty member, administrator, 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 or public service activity, or any other activity authorized to be discharged or held on any campus of the University System of Georgia is considered by the board to have committed an act of gross irresponsibility and shall be subject to disciplinary procedures.

6. Sexual Misconduct

- a. All members of the Columbus State University community should refrain from any conduct that could give rise to a charge of sexual misconduct. This includes but is not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances and requests for sexual favors. Persons found in violation of this policy may be subject to suspension or expulsion from the University.
- b. No person shall commit offenses which include, but are not limited to, rape, aggravated sodomy, statutory rape, sexual battery and aggravated sexual battery as they are defined in chapter six (6) of the "Official Code of Georgia Annotated." Persons found in violation of this policy may be subject to suspension or expulsion from the University.

7. Assault

No person shall physically assault or threaten any member of or visitor to the University community. Students found to be in violation of this policy can expect, as a minimum, suspension from the University for the remainder of the semester.

8. Hazing

No person shall haze or attempt to haze any member of the University community. Students found to be in violation of this policy can expect, as a minimum, suspension from the University for the remainder of the semester. See Columbus State University's Policy on Hazing.

9. Falsification of University Records or Giving False Statements

- a. Each person must complete any University record honestly.
- b. No person shall alter, counterfeit, forge or cause to be altered, any record, form or document used by the University.
- c. No person shall fail to identify themselves or convey of false information to a college official acting in the performance of their duties.

10. Financial Responsibility to the University

Students are required to meet all financial obligations to the University promptly. A student who is delinquent in his financial obligations will be dropped from classes and shall not be allowed to register for the next term, to transfer credits to another school or to graduate from Columbus State University. Financial obligations include but are not limited to: fees, library books overdue, loans overdue, parking fines, and University equipment or keys not returned.

11. Fire Safety

- a. No person shall tamper with the fire safety equipment.
- b. No person shall set or cause to be set any unauthorized fire on university property.

12. Use of University Facilities

- a. No person shall make unauthorized entry into any University building, office, or other facility. Nor shall any person remain without authorization in any building after normal closing hours.
- b. No person shall make unauthorized use of any University facility. Upon appropriate notice by University officials, authorization for the use of University facilities may be withdrawn or otherwise restricted.
- c. Unauthorized duplication of keys to University facilities or equipment is prohibited.

13. Violations of Laws

A student is responsible for the observance of all federal, state, and local laws. Violations of federal, state, and local laws will be referred to the University Police for prosecution. The University may take disciplinary action independent of any civil/criminal actions.

14. Weapons and Firearm Policy

Except as expressly provided in O.C.G.A. 16-11-127, no person may carry or possess any weapon (including a firearm, handgun, or long gun) on the campus of Columbus State University. Students found in violation of this policy can expect, as a minimum, suspension from the University for the remainder of the semester.

15. Computer Violations

Students will adhere to the Georgia Computer Systems Protection Act and all Federal laws and regulations with respect to criminal liability and penalties for the crimes of computer theft, trespass, invasion of privacy, forgery, copyright infringements, illegal downloads, and password disclosure. In addition, using another person's account, unauthorized copying of software, and tampering with/destruction of equipment is prohibited.

Procedures for Alleged Violations of Student Non-Academic Violations.

1. The authority to act on alleged non-academic violations or infringements of student rights is vested with the Office of the Dean of Students. Violations that occur in areas designated as Residence Life may be handled as an administrative hearing through the office of the Director of Residence Life, in accordance with policy and in consultation with the Dean of Students.
2. Minimum requirements for an administrative hearing consist of the student being given notice of the alleged violation(s) and an opportunity to be heard by an appropriate Hearing Officer. However, a Hearing Officer may

determine that the student and/or the University may best be served by using the following procedure. The student may also request that these procedures be used.

Procedures for Administrative Hearing:

- a. A reasonable effort will be made to deliver a hearing notice and full disclosure of all reports and evidence to student(s) accused of violating Student Conduct Standards and Non-Academic Violations.
- b. Students will be reminded of their rights by the Hearing Officer or another University administrator before a judicial hearing begins.
- c. The Hearing Officer will remind all witnesses that lying to any University official or hearing committee member is a violation of Columbus State University policy and subject to additional penalties. Pleading no violation when a violation is found to have occurred is not considered lying.
- d. Presentation and explanation of charges by Hearing Officer or his/her designee.
- e. Response of the accused. (see note 1)
- f. Presentation of evidence against the accused.
- g. Presentation of evidence for the accused.
- h. Deliberation in executive session (verdict consideration only).
- i. If the accused is found guilty, opportunity for presentation of two character witnesses is offered. The character witnesses must be prepared to present their testimony, either written or verbal, when the hearing reaches this point. (Hearing Advisors may be a character witness).
- j. The Hearing Officer presents a history of prior disciplinary records and reviews academic records.
- k. Any student(s) who has brought charges against another student will have the right to speak to the Hearing Officer in private.
- l. Deliberation on penalty in executive session.
- m. The accused is informed of penalty and reminded of the right of appeal.
- n. Any student(s) or staff/faculty member who brought charges will be informed of the outcome of the hearing.

Notes: When a student admits to a violation of University rules, the Hearing Officer may ask if the admission is freely given. If questions or doubts arise concerning the validity of the confession, the Hearing Officer can require that witnesses be produced to establish guilt. The Hearing Officer is responsible for making certain that the accused is not using a false claim to avoid penalty.

3. After an administrative hearing, the Hearing Officer will take one of the following actions:
 - a. Assign an appropriate sanction, OR
 - b. The Director of Residence Life may refer the incident to the Dean of Students.

4. Appeals:

Appeals of a decision by the Director of Residence Life are to be forwarded to the Office of the Dean of Students. Appeals of a decision by the Dean of Students are to be forwarded to the Vice President for Student Affairs. The decision of the Vice President of Student Affairs is final. Appeals must be submitted within 10 working days of the completion of the hearing.

The University will entertain appeals from students that have been suspended, expelled, removed from housing, or removed from class or forced to withdraw from the course and/or department. Victims in a sexual misconduct case are also afforded the same appeal process. Other cases may be reviewed in regard to policy and procedural accuracy upon the request from the student.

Appeals based solely on the assertion of innocence will not be considered. Appeals of the Hearing Officer's decisions may be made under the following circumstances:

- a. A request to introduce new and compelling evidence which was not available at the time of a hearing and which could apparently result in a different final decision;
- b. The specific citation of a violation of due process as it is defined in this policy;
- c. The documentable failure of the decision to comply with specific Columbus State University or University System of Georgia policies;
- d. The documentable error of facts substantial enough to apparently result in a different final decision; or
- e. A mercy appeal requesting a less severe sanction.

NOTE: For additional information contact the Office of the Dean of Students.

XV. Sanctions/Remedies

A hearing official or judicial body may assign one or more of the following sanctions/remedies.

1. Expulsion - permanent forced withdrawal from the University.
2. Suspension - forced withdrawal from the University for a specified period of time.
3. Forced withdrawal from the course and/or department within which the offense occurred, either with or without credit for the course as may be adjudged.
4. Reprimand - an admonition which may be either verbal or written.
5. Restitution - compensation to the person or University body whose property rights have been violated by the offender.
6. An appropriate change in grade.
7. Revocation of privileges - loss of right or denial of privileges to participate in campus functions or to have access to the campus or University facilities including parking or housing. This may include revoking the charter or official recognition of an organization.
8. Probation - placing of the student or organization under restrictions for a specified period of time.
9. Referral - may include referral to agencies or individuals for specific evaluation, treatment, assistance or action.

Special Notes:

1. An Emergency Suspension may be issued when in the judgment of the Dean of Students, and after consulting with appropriate University officials, such as the Director of Student Health Services, Campus Police and/or the Director of the Counseling Center, it is determined that the continued presence of an individual poses a significant danger or threat to the themselves, others or the University. All Emergency Suspensions should be reviewed within 72 hours of the time of suspension and a recommendation for appropriate action forwarded to the Vice President of Student Affairs.
2. A person suspended or expelled is prohibited from entering the facilities or property of Columbus State University or the Columbus State Foundation except for the pursuit of due process.
3. Students who are suspended or expelled for disciplinary reasons, or those who leave the university when disciplinary action is pending will receive a WF.

XVI: Reviewing and Amending

1. The student government, the faculty by formal vote of the faculty senate, the activities committee, any group of 100 or more students by petition, or the residents of Columbus State University may propose amendments or revisions. The Columbus State University Student Handbook is a summary of policies and procedures that have been developed over time. Other policies and procedures that relate to specific operations of the University may exist and apply, but they may not have been included in this publication. As the need arises, University officials reserve the right to amend, change, delete and/or develop new policies and procedures to meet the needs of the institution. All new policies or policy changes become effective immediately upon being posted on the CSU Announcements area of CougarNet.