

South Georgia State College



Student Handbook

Updated October 21, 2016

South Georgia State College

Student Handbook

VISION

South Georgia State College will be a student-centered institution that produces life-long learners well equipped to succeed in a diverse global society.

MISSION

South Georgia State College, a state college of the University System of Georgia, is a multi-campus, student-centered institution offering high-quality associate and select baccalaureate degree programs. The institution provides innovative teaching and learning experiences, a rich array of student activities and athletic programs, access to unique ecological sites, and residential options to create a diverse, globally-focused, and supportive learning environment.

Current Mission was approved by the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia May 8, 2012.

ACCREDITATIONS

South Georgia State College is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to award the associate and baccalaureate degree. Contact the Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097 or call 404-679-4500 for questions about the accreditation of South Georgia State College.

SCHOOL OF NURSING

South Georgia State College's Associate Degree Nursing Program is fully approved by the Georgia Board of Nursing (237 Coliseum Drive; Macon, GA 31217-3858). South Georgia State College's School of Nursing ASN program is accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN). The RN-BSN program is accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN). The RN-BSN program is currently in accreditation candidacy by the ACEN for the RN-BSN program. 3343 Peachtree Road NE, Suite 850, Atlanta, GA; Phone: 404-975-5000

ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

This is the official student handbook of South Georgia State College. This on-line publication is your resource for student and academic support services, and college policies and procedures.

It is your responsibility to become aware of the handbook content. By enrolling at this institution, you agree to comply with all rules and regulations.

Some academic policies have been printed in this handbook. Students should consult the College Catalog <http://www.sgsc.edu/academics/college-catalog.cms> for questions concerning academic policies and regulations.

The College reserves the right to alter or change the regulations and policies stated in this handbook through clearly defined channels.

This handbook is prepared for the convenience of students, faculty and staff at SGSC and is not to be construed as an official publication of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia. In case of any divergence from or conflict with the Bylaws and Policies of the Board of Regents, the official Bylaws and Policies of the Board of Regents shall prevail.

This handbook is for informational purposes only.

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

The primary source of information about academic rules and requirements for graduation is the SGSC Catalog. You may access through the following link:

http://www.sgsc.edu/skins/userfiles/files/Academic%20Information%20Regulations%20and%20Rules_UL_9_2015.pdf

Refer to that resource and confer regularly with your advisor. Each student is responsible for complying with the academic regulations stated in the catalog.

APPEAL OF A GRADE

Students who think that they have been graded unfairly must appeal the grade at issue in writing within 30 days after the last day of the final examination period for the semester in which the grade was assigned. (The written appeal follows step 1 below and must be addressed to the Chair/Dean of the Division or School, signed by the student, and delivered or postmarked within the 30-day limit.) Because the appeal of a grade is an in-house procedure, and not a court of law, no legal counsel or any other person may be present other than the persons specifically mentioned in each step below. Exceptions to this may be granted by the Vice President for Academic Affairs only for the following reasons: (1) a student with disabilities

requiring extraordinary assistance; or (2) a student whose first language is not English and whose English is not sufficiently fluent so as to allow him/her to represent himself/herself adequately. In these cases, the appointment will be left to the discretion of the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

The steps in the process are as follows:

1. The student will discuss the grade with the instructor involved*. This meeting should occur within three weeks of the last day of the final examination period for the semester in which the grade was assigned. The majority of grade disputes are resolved at this step.

2. In the rare cases that the disputes are not resolved in step 1, the student must file a written appeal to the Division Chair or Dean of the School within 30 days after the last day of the final examination period for the semester in which the grade was assigned. Within two weeks of receipt of the written appeal, the Division Chair or the Dean of the School will meet with the student and the instructor in an attempt to resolve the difficulty. A memorandum of records will be prepared that will include the substance of the conversation during the meeting.

3. If the difficulty remains unresolved, a divisional review board will be appointed by the Division Chair or the Dean of the School to hear the student's appeal. The review board will meet to hear the appeal no later than two weeks after step two above.

(1) There will be three members of this board, to be chaired by the Division Chair or the Dean of the School.

(2) The instructor involved will not be a member of this board.

(3) In small divisions, the membership of the board may come from outside the division.

(4) If the charge of unfair grading is made against a Division Chair or the Dean of the School, the review board will be appointed by the Vice President for Academic Affairs, who will serve as its chair.

(5) The review board shall hear statements from both the student and the instructor involved and will examine documents that are pertinent to the matter under review.**

(6) A record will be kept of the review board's proceedings.

(7) The findings of the review board will be reported to the Vice President for Academic Affairs, along with a recommendation. The decision of the Vice President for Academic Affairs shall be submitted to the student in writing within seven days.

4. If satisfaction is not achieved with the decision of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the student may appeal the ruling to the President in writing within seven days of receipt of the decision of the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

5. The decision of the President regarding grades is final.

*In the unlikely event that the student cannot locate the instructor, the student will submit a written appeal directly to the Division Chair Dean. The Division Chair or Dean will make a reasonable attempt to locate the instructor. If the instructor is not available, the Division Chair or the Dean will send reliable notice to the instructor (e.g., via certified mail) notifying the instructor that the appeal will proceed on a specified date no sooner than ten days from the sending of the notification. On the specified date, the Division Chair or the Dean of the School will meet with the student as specified in Step 2, with or without the instructor present.

**If the instructor cannot be present before the review board, the student will present his or her case to the review board, and the board will make a recommendation to the VPAA

TRANSCRIPTS

South Georgia State College will release an official transcript upon written request from the student to the Registrar's Office. All transcript requests must include the student's signature and should contain the student's social security number (or student ID), most recent dates of attendance, other names used while in attendance, and the name and address of the party to receive the transcript. There is a 24-hour processing time for all transcripts requested to be picked up. Transcripts requested to be mailed or faxed will be processed within 1-2 business days. South Georgia State College reserves the right to withhold copies of educational records of students who fail to meet their financial obligations to the College. To request a transcript, come by the Registrar's Office, or complete the [online form](#) and return the completed (signed) form to the Registrar's Office.

INTELLECTUAL DIVERSITY AND ACADEMIC FREEDOM

The University System of Georgia and South Georgia State College subscribe to the American Council on Education's statement of Academic Rights and Responsibilities. This statement includes important provisions about intellectual diversity and academic freedom. In addition to links on the SGSC website, copies of this statement are available in the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Office of the Vice President for Student Success. Failure on the part of faculty and staff to honor the commitment to intellectual diversity and academic freedom is a legitimate reason for a student to file a grievance. These excerpts from the American Council on Education's statement of Academic Rights and Responsibilities offer specific expectations of classroom behavior for faculty and students:

Colleges and universities should welcome intellectual pluralism and the free exchange of ideas. Such a commitment will inevitably encourage debate over complex and difficult issues about

which individuals will disagree. Such discussions should be held in an environment characterized by openness, tolerance and civility.

Academic decisions including grades should be based solely on considerations that are intellectually relevant to the subject matter under consideration. Neither students nor faculty should be disadvantaged or evaluated on the basis of their political opinions.

Any member of the campus community who believes he or she has been treated unfairly on academic matters must have access to a clear institutional process by which his or her grievance can be addressed.

The validity of academic ideas, theories, arguments and views should be measured against the intellectual standards of relevant academic and professional disciplines. Application of these intellectual standards does not mean that all ideas have equal merit. The responsibility to judge the merits of competing academic ideas rests with colleges and universities and is determined by reference to the standards of the academic profession as established by the community of scholars at each institution.

ENTRY PROGRAMS AT AMERICUS AND VALDOSTA

South Georgia State College administers Entry Programs on the campuses of Georgia Southwestern State University in Americus and Valdosta State University in Valdosta. Students enrolled in these programs apply to and, upon admission, are South Georgia State College students. Enrollment, advisement, fees, records, financial aid, and related matters are administered through South Georgia State College. SGSC students on these campuses pay tuition and related fees to SGSC and fees required by the host institutions that permit access to facilities and services and participation in most extracurricular activities. Entry Program students are subject to the code of conduct of the host campus. More information regarding the Entry Programs at GSW and VSU is available on the SGSC website: <http://www.sgsc.edu/academics/ep.cms>.

FINANCIAL AID AND SCHOLARSHIPS

APPLYING FOR FEDERAL AID

Students interested in receiving assistance from any of the federal assistance programs must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). In addition, students must complete the SGSC Institutional Data Sheet for Financial Aid.

ELIGIBILITY AND DISBURSEMENT OF AID

To receive aid, a student must be in compliance with all applicable federal, state, and institutional policies and regulations, including Satisfactory Academic Progress. Before aid is disbursed, student eligibility is reviewed. A student must be eligible at the time of disbursement. The Financial Aid Office reserves the right to adjust or cancel an award package at any time because of changes in eligibility or changes in program funding, or if such changes are necessary to meet federal, state, or institutional policies and regulations.

USING FINANCIAL AID TO PAY FEES

Any excess financial aid remaining on a student's account after all fees for tuition, fees, books, etc. are paid will be paid to the student approximately three weeks after the term begins.

WITHDRAWING FROM SCHOOL AND REPAYMENT OF FINANCIAL AID

A student who begins enrollment, receives financial aid to pay fees, and subsequently withdraws from all classes may be required to repay at least a portion of the aid received. Any student considering withdrawing from all classes is advised to consult with the Office of Financial Aid to determine if a repayment will be required.

AUDITS AND INSTITUTIONAL CREDIT HOURS

Students should be aware that audited hours will not count toward enrollment hours for financial aid purposes for either federal or state aid, including awards from the HOPE Program. Institutional Credits, with the exception of Learning Support English, Math, and Reading, will not count toward enrollment hours for federal aid.

APPLYING FOR THE HOPE SCHOLARSHIP

Students interested in applying for the HOPE Scholarship may complete either the FAFSA or the GSFAPPS Application. The FAFSA Application should be completed electronically at www.fafsa.ed.gov each year. The GSFAPPS Application can be found at: www.gacollege411.org.

Students completing the GSFAPPS Application will be considered for the HOPE Scholarship only; federal or other state aid will not be considered. In addition, all students applying for HOPE must also complete the SGSC Institutional Data Sheet for Financial Aid.

APPLICATION DEADLINE FOR HOPE AND OTHER STATE AID PROGRAMS

To receive awards listed below for a particular term, students must apply no later than the last day of that term or the day the student withdraws, whichever is first. The programs affected include:

HOPE Scholarship
Law Enforcement Personnel Dependents Grant
HOPE Grant
Public Safety Memorial Grant
ACCEL
Helping Educate Reservist Offspring Grant (HERO)

GPA CHECKPOINTS FOR HOPE SCHOLARSHIP

All HOPE Scholarship recipients will have a grade point average review at the end of every spring term, at which time a minimum 3.0 GPA is required for continued eligibility. This requirement also applies to freshmen-level students. The only exception to the spring checkpoint is for first-year students who do not enroll full-time at least one term during the award year. A student meeting this exception will have a grade point average review at the end of the third term of enrollment. In addition to the spring checkpoint, all HOPE Scholarship recipients will have a grade point average review at the 30th, 60th, and 90th attempted hours, at which time a minimum 3.0 GPA is required for continued eligibility.

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR FINANCIAL AID

To receive aid from the student aid programs a student must have financial need (except for some loan programs); have a high school diploma or a GED certificate; be enrolled as a regular student working toward a degree in an eligible program; be a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen; have a valid Social Security Number; be making satisfactory academic progress; sign a statement on the FAFSA certifying that he/she is not in default on a federal student loan and that he/she does not owe money back on a federal student grant; and register with Selective Service, if required.

JOB PLACEMENT

South Georgia State College offers part-time employment for currently enrolled students through the Federal College Work Study Program. Federal College Work Study is a need-based program. To apply for a work study position, you must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as well as any other required documents pertaining to the federal application process. Please see the Office of Financial Aid for more information or call 912-260-4282.

VETERANS AFFAIRS

The Department of Veterans Affairs offers a wide range of educational benefits to eligible recipients. For more information about these benefits, detailed eligibility criteria and general background material on VA programs, please visit the Department of Veterans Affairs website

www.gibill.va.gov or the VA Certifying Official's office located in Engram Hall. The VA Certifying Official verifies enrollment status and program compliance, and the Veterans Administration administers the benefits.

FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIPS

South Georgia State College (SGSC) is supported by two 501(c)(3) non-profit Foundations. Through the receipt of tax-deductible gifts, the Foundations enhance the quality of programs for SGSC by funding scholarships, new academic initiatives, faculty/staff development, athletic programs and other college priorities.

The SGSC Office of External Affairs serves as the liaison between the college and the Foundations and assists with the awarding of annual scholarships. For further details on the Foundations or other Foundation-sponsored programs, please contact the Office of External Affairs via email at externalaffairs@sgsc.edu or by phone at 912-260-4274 (Douglas campus) or 912-449-7510 (Waycross campus).

CAMPUS LIFE

ORIENTATION

The best way for new students to learn about South Georgia State College is to participate in the New Student Orientation program. Student Orientation and Registration (SOAR) and Online Orientation are two orientation programs available to SGSC students. Participants are given information about student activities, campus facilities, student services, and general college policies. In addition, they meet with advisors to schedule their first term's enrollment.

RESIDENCE LIFE

The *Residence Hall Handbook* supplements information in the *South Georgia State College Catalog* and the *SGSC Student Handbook* to help make the most of your college experience. For more information, visit <http://www.sgsc.edu/skins/userfiles/files/residencehallhandbook.cms>

FOOD SERVICES

South Georgia State College has an agreement with ABL to provide food services on the SGSC-Douglas campus, and Light Vending provides services for our vending machines. ABL works with groups planning events that feature food and beverages. Residential students are required to participate in a meal plan each term. Commuting students may purchase a commuter meal plan, with cash or by creating a food services account balance which is recorded on the ID card. The ID card is classified as a financial transaction card and is governed by Georgia law (see South Georgia State College Public Safety Information bulletin) and College regulations.

Amounts can be added to the ID card's DBA Flex account using the Blackboard reverse ATM in the Clower Center, and the ID card may be used in the food services areas in the Dining Hall, the Tiger Depot and the Clower Center. Food services accounts are issued in conjunction with the SGSC ID, which is validated by the Cashier's Office. Food services hours are posted in the Dining Hall. For assistance or more information, please contact the Cashier's Office at 912-260-4239 or ABL, located in the SGSC Dining Hall, at 912-720-4825, abl.management@sgsc.edu.

HIGHER ONE CARD

South Georgia State College now issues all refunds to students through Higher One Inc., a financial services company focused solely on higher education. Instead of receiving a standard check through the mail (which may take a week or longer), SGSC students will receive an Easy Refund card, which looks like a standard debit card. The Easy Refund card will give students more choices on how to receive their financial aid or other school refunds. Through the Easy Refund method, students will gain fast access to their funds, possibly the same day SGC releases them. All students must go to the College website, www.sgsc.edu, and click on the Higher One link to confirm or update their current mailing address. Once the Easy Refund card arrives in the mail, it must be activated immediately, even if the student receiving the card does not expect a refund. It may be necessary to drop a class, a class may be cancelled, or students may receive scholarship or other assistance that they did not anticipate. Activation will expedite these future transactions. To learn more, visit www.easyrefundcard.com.

IDENTIFICATION CARDS

Upon enrollment each student on campus is issued an SGSC ID card. Douglas campus student may obtain ID cards from the Office of Admissions located in Engram Hall. Waycross campus students may obtain ID cards from the Enrollment Services office located in the Dye Building. This ID card serves several important functions. It gives students access to materials in the library and serves as validation for printing from computer workstations. The card also provides access to the Douglas campus Wellness Center and other facilities and events on campus. In addition, it is used as a food services card and key access for the residence hall. Students are required to surrender the ID card to public safety staff or other campus officials upon request. Loss of the card should be reported immediately to the Cashier's Office. If a card is lost, a \$10 replacement fee is assessed. It is a violation of the Code of Conduct (see Table of Contents) to loan a card to someone else or to use anyone else's card. Unauthorized use of cards violates state financial transaction laws.

VEHICLE REGISTRATION

The staff members of SGSC's Campus Police Department are responsible for vehicle registration. Douglas campus students may register their vehicles at the Campus Police Office in Tiger I during the enrollment and registration process. Waycross Students may register their vehicles at the Cashier's window located in the Administration building. In order to receive a decal, you will need to present current vehicle registration, a valid driver's license, and a current class schedule. For more information about campus parking and vehicle registration, call 912-260-4401.

STUDENT EMAIL

Students will be assigned an e-mail account. This account will be used by instructors and the SGSC administration to inform students of important events. Students are expected to log into this account on a regular basis. SGSC email is an official medium of communication by the College. Failure to acknowledge or respond to an official notification via SGSC email will not prohibit the College from proceeding with appropriate actions. Account information may be obtained by logging into Self Service Banner. Submit a Tiger Trouble ticket if unable to access the student e-mail account.

LIBRARY SERVICES

The William S. Smith Library and the Waycross campus Library, are the learning resources centers for South Georgia State College campuses, blending traditional and electronic library resources and services to support the educational programs of the College. The Library plays a crucial role in the student's college life whether it is used for research class work, independent study, or personal enjoyment. The Library's website at <http://www.sgsc.edu/current-students/douglas-campus-library.cms> provides 24/7 access to its resources and services. First among these resources is the online GILFind@SGC catalog (<http://gilfind.sgsc.edu/>), from which students can retrieve materials in print, media, and electronic formats, including direct links to over 35,000 e-Books and e-Videos. SGSC Students also have access to the University System of Georgia Universal Catalog (<http://gilfinduc.usg.edu/>) to search for materials not owned by the South Georgia State College libraries but held in other USG libraries. Through a process called GIL Express Request, SGSC students may self-request delivery of circulating books from any USG Library to SGSC's Smith Library or the Waycross campus Library. This process is in addition to the traditional library-mediated Interlibrary Loan service. Another gateway to library resources is through GALILEO. GALILEO is a thousands of periodicals and scholarly journals (over 2000 titles full-text), encyclopedias, audio files, images, videos, business directories, and government publications. Remote access to GALILEO, at <http://www.galileo.usg.edu/scholar/sga/subjects/>, is available to SGSC students with a password obtained through the MY GIL ACCOUNT feature in

the online GILFind catalog at <http://gilfind.sgc.edu/vufind/MyResearch/Home>. Students also have access to one-on-one bibliographic instruction, information literacy instruction, and research assistance upon request. The library's website and its *GUIDE To Resources* (printed brochure and on website) provides more detailed information about resources, services, and policies of the Library. Comfortable accommodations are provided for use of the facility and physical collections with seating for collaborative and individual learning, study carrels, study tables, and small group study rooms. Networked computer workstations are located throughout the facility. A microform reader-printer and photocopier equipment are also available. Hours will vary during exams, semester breaks, holidays, and the summer terms. Changes in scheduled library hours are posted at the Library and on the Library's website. The SGSC ID Card, which serves as the student's library card, is required to check out materials from the South Georgia State College libraries and other USG libraries. The ID Card barcode is the identification number for the "MY GIL ACCOUNT" through which students access SGSC's current GALILEO password, renew library materials, and request materials from the Universal Catalog for GIL Express delivery. The SGSC ID Card is also required for printing from any computer workstation located in South Georgia State College libraries and in the other campus computer labs. A Student ID Card will be validated with an initial credit of \$10 each semester.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT CENTER

Eligibility

Free peer tutoring is available to SGSC students currently enrolled in the course for which tutoring is requested.

Location/Signing In and Out

Students visiting the Academic Support Center must sign in and sign out on the attendance computer every time they receive tutoring or utilize the center's resources. Please ask the Desk Assistant or an available staff member if assistance is needed.

Tutor.Com

Through a partnership with Tutor.com, Academic Support will offer free, 24/7 online tutoring that connects students one-to-one with a tutor the minute assistance is needed. The tutoring service can be accessed from any internet-enabled computer or mobile device when you sign into your [GeorgiaView](#) (previously Desire2Learn) student account. Hours of Operation

The Academic Support Center attempts to provide hours of operation that work around our students' academic schedules. For more information, visit <http://www.sgsc.edu/current-students/academic-support-center.cms>

COUNSELING CENTER

South Georgia State College's Counseling Program is designed to help students excel toward their academic goals by providing short-term counseling services for personal problems, stress, adjustment to college, depression, and time management. Off campus referrals will be made for those students with needs outside of the realm of what short-term counseling can provide. Students may self-refer by completing a Counselor Referral form on the SGSC website (<http://www.sgsc.edu/current-students/counselingservicesinformation.cms>) or from the Counselor's Office. Students in need of counseling services may contact SGSC's Counselor, Dr. Joseph Holloway, 912-260-4438, joseph.holloway@sgsc.edu.

DISABILITY SERVICES

All students with a documented disability or students that suspect they have a disability are strongly encouraged to register with the Disability Services Office at the time of making application. Students must self-identify in order to pursue academic accommodations. System accommodations require approval from the Regents Center for Learning Disorders. Upon approval, students are responsible for requesting the Disability Services Coordinator's assistance in working with the faculty to devise reasonable classroom accommodations based on the recommendations from RCLD. Students with questions and/or needs relating to disability services may contact: Disability Services Coordinator, 912-260-4435, annette.nation@sgsc.edu. For more information, visit: <http://www.sgsc.edu/current-students/disabilityservices.cms>.

CAMPUS BOOKSTORE

Students may visit the Campus Bookstore to get their textbooks and other instructional supplies. This store also offers an assortment of caps, t-shirts, sweatshirts, and general school supplies.

CAMPUS ALERT SYSTEM

Blackboard Connect® communication has been selected to deliver time-sensitive notifications to students and staff. This service provides campus leaders and security professionals the ability to reach students and staff members with information and updates during unforeseen events or emergencies, within minutes, through phone calls, e-mails and/or text messages, whether they are in their dorms, sitting in front of their computers, or on their way to class. Notifying students immediately is crucial in time-sensitive situations, such as a severe storm or campus closure. It is important for students to enter their contact information into the Blackboard

Connect database. The more methods SGSC has to contact individuals, the better the odds are of spreading timely information and updates and keeping everyone safe. Contact information included in the Blackboard Connect service will only be used for campus notifications and will not be made available to any other service. To sign up for Blackboard Connect, visit <http://www.sgsc.edu/departments/emergency%20notification%20systems.cms>.

STUDENT HEALTH INSURANCE AND HEALTH FEE

All students are encouraged to carry health and accident insurance. International students are required to secure insurance through the University System of Georgia's Student Health Insurance Program, or show proof of comparable coverage. For more information, visit the SGSC link at <https://www.uhcsr.com/sgsc>. Also, campus residents are assessed a \$35 health fee each term.

STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

The South Georgia State College Student Government Association establishes and maintains communication between students and the College's administration and faculty. It cultivates and preserves the ideals of responsible citizenship on campus and helps to create an atmosphere of learning. Each student is encouraged to address requests, questions, complaints, or suggestions to Student Government representatives, appropriate faculty members, or administrators. All officially enrolled South Georgia State College students may attend Student Government Association meetings. The SGA is also the student organization on campus which helps to plan student activity programming. (Please see Appendix A for the South Georgia State College Student Government Association Constitution.)

STUDENT CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS

SGSC's student clubs and organizations exist to assist students in their personal and professional development. These groups have been recognized by the Office of Campus Life at SGSC and are eligible for funding through the Student Fees Committee. Additional organizations may be created to reflect students' emerging interests.

ACADEMIC QUIZ BOWL TEAM: SGSC's Academic Quiz Bowl team competes with other academic quiz teams throughout the region and nationally.

ART CLUB: Dedicated to supporting students who are interested in the visual arts. Activities include regular meetings to discuss individual works of students and faculty and displaying these works around campus. Various art styles are created and discussed in a festive and communal environment.

BAPTIST COLLEGIATE MINISTRY: This group (formerly called the BSU) promotes Christian fellowship, growth, and service.

BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CHRIST: Students of Christian faith meet and fellowship together.

CULTURAL EXCHANGE CLUB: This group is comprised of students from diverse cultural, geographic, and linguistic backgrounds working together to foster diversity throughout the surrounding region. The club is a platform for sharing friendship and knowledge among individuals from all countries looking toward increasing awareness and sensitivity. CEC promotes a global perspective and advocates the need to break down barriers that hinder cross-cultural interaction and growth.

ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS CLUB: This group promotes the study and preservation of the natural environment and the conservation of natural resources.

GAY-STRAIGHT ALLIANCE: This club promotes unity and offers a safe and non-judgmental environment for all students, faculty, and staff to gather, regardless of gender or sexual orientation.

GEORGIA ASSOCIATION OF NURSING STUDENTS (GANS): GANS is an organization dedicated to advancing the nursing profession and its contributions to society. It is also designed to emphasize the importance of a student's becoming a member of a professional nursing organization upon graduation.

SATILLA COLLEGIATE MARKSMANSHIP CLUB: Organization promotes marksmanship as a personal discipline, including physical and mental conditioning.

MESA CLUB: This organization promotes Mathematics, Engineering, and Science Achievement.

OUTDOOR ADVENTURE CLUB: Students take various trips allowing them to explore areas of interest in southeast Georgia.

PALMETTO Annual Staff: This group produces the college annual.

PEGASUS: Pegasus is South Georgia State College's literary magazine.

PEP CLUB: This organization promotes school spirit at campus wide events and athletic functions.

PHI THETA KAPPA: This international honor society for students in two-year colleges is composed of students who have achieved high academic standing and who are committed to advancing the ideals of scholarship, leadership, fellowship, and service.

PINC: This student organization broadens student's creative horizons through designing crafts ranging from jewelry, clothing and other accessories for charity.

PSYCHOLOGY CLUB: This club is open to students interested in developing a richer experience of the world of psychology through meetings, readings, social events, films, and invited speakers. Club members will explore careers in the field, college transfer options, and emerging areas of research. An additional group,

PSI CHI: This is an honors group for those interested in psychology.

RESIDENCE PROGRAMMING BOARD: This organization promotes student activities and the quality of the campus residential experience.

SAAB (STUDENT AFRICAN AMERICAN BROTHERHOOD)/B2B: This organization was organized to provide educational and cultural activities for its members and others which include, but is not limited to, providing tutorial assistance, monitoring career planning and counseling, sponsoring cultural and social activities, promoting personal development opportunities and other student development initiatives.

SGSC BOOK CLUB: This organization focuses on expanding students' literary interests and knowledge by providing a venue for group book discussions and other activities in an open-minded, stimulating environment.

SGSC DANCE CLUB: This organization is open to students who are interested in teaching and learn new dance moves.

SGSC DEBATE SOCIETY: This organization fosters the essential democratic values of free and open discussion through debates concerning local, national, and international current events and other subjects of interest to club members.

SGSC DEMOCRATS: This organization is open to students who are interested in advancing the interests of the Democratic Party.

SGSC REPUBLICANS: This organization is open to students who are interested in advancing the interests of the Republican Party.

SOUTH GEORGIAN: The South Georgian is the College's student newspaper.

SPAGE: The Student Professional Association of Georgia Educators (SPAGE) was organized by the PAGE Foundation in 1987. Its members are college students who are in teacher preparation programs throughout the state.

STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION: This organization is the voice for South Georgia State College students. SGA provides a standing means of communication among students, faculty and staff.

STUDENT ORGANIZATION FOR MULTICULTURAL UNITY: SOMU, founded in 1972, is an organization designed to promote fellowship among students through academic and social activities. This organization provides avenues for students to contribute to the College and community. SOMU strives to help its members become socially responsible, build character and develop leadership skills.

SOUTH GEORGIA STATE COLLEGE THEATRE CLUB: This club is designed for students interested in all aspects of theater production and performance.

Funds are allocated each year for the development of new student clubs and organizations. Suggestions for additional organizations are welcome.

PROCEDURE FOR STUDENT ORGANIZATION RECOGNITION

An organization seeking recognition must submit the following information:

1. Name of proposed organization.
2. Purpose (including explanation of why the organization is desirable on campus)
3. Qualifications of membership
4. Fees, dues and other consideration for membership
5. Time and manner of elections
6. Signatures of at least ten (10) students interested in membership.
7. Faculty or staff advisor
8. Explanation of any extra campus affiliation
9. Time and location of meetings
10. Name(s) of student(s) who will serve as spokesperson(s) for the organization during recognition procedures.

PROCEDURE FOR FORMING A NEW STUDENT ORGANIZATION

Clubs and organizations on the South Georgia State College campus reflect the student body's varied interests. The College views participation in extracurricular activities as an important component of overall educational growth and development. Students desiring to form a new club/organization are to take the following steps:

Discuss plans with Director of Campus Life in order to clarify the procedure. Obtain necessary forms from the Office of Campus Life.

Secure at least ten (10) currently enrolled South Georgia State College students interested in becoming active organization members.

Appoint a temporary chairperson and secretary to conduct and record proceedings of initial meetings.

Write and ratify a tentative constitution. Guidelines are available in the Campus Life Office.

Select a faculty or staff advisor. The advisor must be a full-time college employee unless approved by the Director of Campus Life.

Submit a tentative constitution and Application for New Student Organizations to the Campus Life Office. The Coordinator of Student Engagement will review the constitution. If there is doubt, the Coordinator of Student Engagement will forward the document to Director of Campus Life. The Director of Campus Life will contact the ad hoc Constitution Review Committee and arrange a meeting between the committee and temporary club chairperson. The Constitution Review Committee shall consist of the Director of Campus Life as chairperson, the President of the Student Government Association and two members of the faculty as appointed by the college President from a list of five names submitted by the Director of Campus Life. A presentation of oral and documentary evidence may be requested. A recording and transcript of the hearing shall be made and preserved for use in appeals and reviews. Recognition shall be granted only to those organizations whose purpose and proposed activities are clearly related to the educational goals and mission of the college. Recognition shall be denied if the evidence presented shows that the proposed organization has substantial likelihood of interfering with any of the following: The regular and orderly operation of the college. The requirements of appropriate discipline within the campus activities. The academic pursuits of teaching, learning, and other campus activities. The laws of public policies of the State of Georgia and the United States. The statutes and regulations of the college and policies of the Board of Regents. If the Director of Campus or the committee disapproves recognition, the organization may appeal the decision to the Vice President of Student Success, who shall review the same and affirm, reverse, or modify the decision. Should the Director of Campus Life or the Constitution Review Committee not approve the constitution due to irregularities, it will be sent back to the organization's temporary chairperson for further work.

GOOD STANDING

For an organization to remain in good standing it may not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, mental status, or physical disability in the administration and operation of all its activities/programs and must adhere to the following:

A. The secretary must keep minutes of each meeting and distribute a copy to the advisor. It is also encouraged, but not required, to distribute the minutes to the organizational membership and to the Office of Campus Life.

B. The treasurer of the organization is responsible for keeping accurate records of all receipts and expenditures. The organization must adhere to the proper college fiscal procedures.

C. Organization activities must be cleared and approved by the Office of Campus Life and the Office of Advancement. Forms should be submitted at least five working days prior to the scheduled event. Events must be approved before promotion.

D. Organization presidents/advisors must both complete and sign the Fall Report Form and End of the Year Report Form required by the Office of Campus Life. These must be completed by the deadlines established in order to assure consideration for activity monies.

Student organizations in good standing with the college have the following rights:

A. To use the phrase —South Georgia State College when referring to its chapter or club.

B. To use college facilities and equipment subject to the Board of Regents' Policies and to college regulations governing the use of facilities and equipment and to reasonable scheduling and clearance of particular facilities.

C. To be eligible to receive student activity monies subject to the Board of Regents' policies and to College regulations governing allocations of student activity fees.

CLUB INFORMATION REQUIRED BY STUDENT LIFE

Clubs must submit a list of officers to the Office of Campus Life within seven (7) days after each election. A copy of the student organization and bylaws and all subsequent amendments thereto must be kept on file in the Office.

Advisors and presidents must submit a Fall Semester Report and End of the Year Report at the appropriate times if they want to be considered for student activity fee allocation. Other forms required by college policy and procedure (Scheduling Facilities Form, Request for Absence, Vehicle Usage Form, Requisition Form, Request for Fund Raising Form) must be routed through the Office. Advisors may pick up blank copies of the forms at the Office of Campus Life.

ELIGIBILITY FOR MEMBERSHIP/OFFICER STATUS

Active membership in student organizations shall be confined to regularly enrolled students enrolled in three or more term hours. A student must maintain a 2.00 cumulative grade point

average or higher to be eligible to serve as an officer of a student organization (although some clubs and organizations may have higher standards).

FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

Use of allocated student activity monies must conform to the purposes and practices approved by South Georgia State College. Organizations shall carry on business transactions and contractual relations with punctual and timely discharge of valid obligations and prudent use of funds. All organization monies will be placed on deposit in the Office of the Vice President of Business Affairs.

FUNDRAISING FOR STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Student groups may supplement monies received through student activities fees with approved fundraisers. All student fundraising activities on campus, must be approved in advance by the Vice President for Student Success and the Vice President for Fiscal Affairs. The Vice President for Student Success determines if the fundraising function is in accord with the approved activities of the organization and the College. The Vice President for Fiscal Affairs will ensure that the fundraising function does not present unfair competition to the College Bookstore, Food Services, or local businesses. All money raised by clubs or organizations must be accounted for and expended in the same manner as other student activities money. Forms for fundraising requests may be obtained online, through club advisors or from the Director of Student Life. Please contact the Cashier's Office about setting up an account to deposit the funds raised.

PROCEDURES FOR SCHEDULING CAMPUS ACTIVITIES

Any student organization planning a campus activity, meeting, rehearsal, or performance will observe the following procedures:

- A. Approval for the activity must be obtained from the organization's advisor and the Office of Campus Life. No event is to be scheduled during final exams.
- B. Campus facilities, including space needed for meetings, must be reserved through the External Affairs (912-260-4269). If refreshments are required, contact ABL Management at 912-720-4825.
- C. Events should be scheduled at least two weeks in advance.
- D. Chaperones and security must be provided for each activity, with a two-week prior notice. College rules/regulations governing students, staff, and guests are applicable to all activities.

E. After-hours access to campus buildings for meetings, rehearsals, and other events requires the presence of an advisor or another faculty or staff member.

F. The sponsoring organization and the individuals in attendance will be held accountable for the conduct of all those attending the event. Failure to follow the above procedures can result in postponement or cancellation of the event. Any activity which, in the judgment of the advisor and/or administration, does not adhere to South Georgia College standards is subject to immediate termination.

DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENT ACTIVITY FUNDS

Student activity funds will be distributed on the basis of how directly the activity or organization benefits the student body as a whole, the number of students participating in an activity/organization, and the availability of funds. Funds will not be allocated for scholarships or non-student groups or individuals except when paid for a service.

Organizations requesting funds must be officially recognized by the College and be in good standing. The clubs must have completed the required up-date forms throughout the year and the Request for Student Activity Funds Form by the designated date during spring term.

The Vice President of Student Support will then review the requests. The Vice President of Student Support will bring the requests to the Student Activity Fee Budget Committee (SAFBC). According to University System of Georgia policy, at least 50% of the membership of the SAFBC will consist of currently enrolled students. The SAFBC will review all requests for student activity fee funds and make funding recommendations to the President's Cabinet for review and approval.

After approval, the student activity budget will then be sent to the Board of Regents' for final approval. Any organization's student activity allotment may be revised any time throughout the year depending upon campus enrollment or other extenuating circumstances.

CAMPUS DISPLAYS

Displays, including but not limited to posters, notices, or banners, which litter the campus or damage the property of the College or of other persons, that are obscene, or which materially interfere with the regular and orderly operation of the College, are prohibited.

POSTING POLICY

All publicity and promotional material for on and off-campus events and activities, including but not limited to: posters, notices, and banners must be approved by the Director of Campus Life. Publicity also must carry the Office of Campus Life approval stamp before being posted. All

publicity and promotional material must carry the name of the sponsoring organization or individual responsible for the event or activity. Signs and flyers should not contain lewd or offensive words, symbols, or pictures.

All approved materials must be posted in approved locations only. These approved locations include designated bulletin boards and/or tack strips, and campus kiosks. No signs or flyers are to be posted on the building exterior. Signs and flyers should not impair the safety of traffic or pedestrians.

The use of chalk to promote or publicize an event must be approved by the Director of Student Life. If approved, designated locations will be assigned.

All material should be submitted in a size no larger than 11 x 17 . In certain situations, exceptions will be made to this regulation. Approval to post items larger than 11 x 17 should be obtained before said items are created or printed.

Materials should be removed immediately after the advertised event has occurred.

Any material posted in unapproved locations, not bearing the Office of Campus Life stamp or otherwise not in compliance with these regulations will be removed. South Georgia State College's input as to the relocation and timing of posting advertisements may be required in certain circumstances. SGSC reserves the right to remove, or to request the removal of, any signs/posters/advertisements and the student organization/individual may be restricted from further postings.

PROPERTY DAMAGE

Unauthorized or malicious damage to the property of the College or other persons or entities resulting from organization activities is prohibited and the student organization shall be responsible for all damages.

DISORDERLY CONDUCT

Organization or club activities which encourage or precipitate riots or other disturbances which materially interfere with the regular and orderly operation of the College are prohibited.

LAW VIOLATIONS

No organization shall commit, encourage, condone, or contribute to violations of College statutes and regulations, the policies of the Board of Regents, or laws of Georgia or the United States. The possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages or illegal substances on college property or at events sponsored or supervised by the College (including off-campus College student organization functions) is prohibited.

PARADES, STUDENT RALLIES, AND GATHERINGS

Parades, student rallies, and other gatherings must be limited to the specific times and areas designated by College officials and published notices for such activities. Outside parades, student rallies, and other gatherings which interfere with pedestrians or vehicular traffic on campus must be cleared with the Vice President of Student Support before they may be undertaken, as well as with the proper civil authorities if held off campus. Use of facilities, equipment, and other College property shall be subject to reasonable scheduling of the College to promote fair sharing of their use.

REVIEW AND ENFORCEMENT OF REGULATIONS

The Director of Campus Life shall periodically review the activities of all student organizations to determine if they are acting in compliance with college regulations. Charges of violations of college regulations may be brought up against any recognized organization and shall be heard by the Director of Campus Life or at his/her discretion, by the ad hoc Constitution Review Committee. The Director of Campus Life or the Committee may request the presentation of oral and documentary evidence at the hearing prepared.

The Director of Campus Life or the Committee may recommend to the President anyone or any combination of the following penalties upon an organization after consideration of the evidence presented at the hearing:

1. Restriction of all or any privileges enjoyed as a recognized student organization.
2. Monetary fines, withholding or withdrawal of allocated student activity monies.
3. Restitution for damages.
4. Probation of recognized status.
5. Suspension of recognized status.
6. Withdrawal of recognized status.

The President will then approve or disapprove the recommendation. Any organization may appeal the imposition of any penalty to the President of the College, who shall review the action and affirm, reverse, or modify the same. The appeal and review shall be in such form as the President may require. The President may use the services of an existing or ad hoc committee in deciding the issues involved. The President's decision may result in, but is not limited to, the following:

Probation - Notice to the organization that any further major irregularities may result in suspension or withdrawal. The probationary period is for one full year from time of notice; or

Suspension - Forced withdrawal from the College for a specified period, though not less than for one semester. The organization is not eligible for any rights given for recognized status during time of suspension; or

Withdrawal - Forced closing of the club/organization.

Final Review Powers of the College President

Upon notice, the President of the College may review the recognition of any student organization or any decision on disciplinary charges against any student organization and make whatever final disposition of the matter he/she deems necessary for the best interests of the College.

STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Student organization publications shall not contain material which is obscene or defamatory (defined by the Code of Georgia, section 26-2101) or which may create substantial likelihood of material interference with the regular and orderly operation of the College. Student organization publications shall abide by the guidelines and policies established by the Student Services Committee.

Student publications will take various forms and be initiated based upon student interest. These publications may include, but are not limited to a college newspaper, an annual, and a literary magazine. Such publications' advisors are appointed by the President of the College upon recommendation by Director of Campus Life. Student editors or other principal staff members will be appointed by the President of the College upon recommendation of the advisor and Director of Campus Life.

Financed in part by the student activity fee, these publications will serve the following roles:

1. Serve as an information exchange instrument for members of the college community.
2. Provide students an opportunity to express their opinions on matters of importance to them.
3. Serve to supplement other public relations activities of the College through their distribution in high schools, offices, or other community outlets.
4. Provide a means of recognizing the literary talents of students and faculty.
6. Provide an opportunity for students interested in journalism to gain practical experience in the field.

Student publications shall not contain material which is obscene or defamatory (defined by the Code of Georgia #26-2101), or which may create a substantial likelihood of material interference with the regular and orderly operation of the College. No student publication or

portion thereof shall be printed without the assistance of the publication's faculty advisor, who may request the assistance of the Student Services Committee in rendering a decision.

An individual may appeal the decision of the faculty advisor to the President of the College, who shall review the action and affirm, reverse, or modify the same. The President may utilize the services of the Student Services Committee or an ad hoc committee and make whatever final disposition of the matter she/he deems necessary for the best interests of the College.

Presently the only active student publications are the South Georgian, the campus student newspaper and Pegasus, the campus literary magazine. Persons interested in writing copy, doing photography, or drawing cartoons should contact the advisor or the Office of Campus Life. All students, alumni, faculty, and staff are encouraged to read and contribute information to the South Georgia and Pegasus.

INTRAMURALS

Team sports vary from term to term. Offerings include volleyball, flag football, basketball and softball. Students will utilize IMLeagues for intramural registration. Students are not allowed to solicit sponsorship for intramural activities off campus. For additional information concerning intramural rules, please contact the Campus Life Student Engagement staff on the Douglas Campus, 260-4417 or Waycross Campus, 449-7599.

ATHLETICS

South Georgia State College is an active participant in intercollegiate sports and a member of the Georgia and National Junior College Athletic Associations. All South Georgia State College regular season athletic events are free to currently enrolled SGSC students. Please contact the Athletic Department for more information and a copy of the Student Athlete Handbook. Phone number 912-260-4217

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Student activity programs have been developed to provide co-curricular training in leadership and development of special skills, and to provide social and cultural activities for the college. The programs are currently financed through an activity fee paid each term by students taking four or more hours on campus.

SOCIAL FUNCTIONS

Social functions, such as dances, are coordinated through the Student Government Association, but any club or organization may sponsor any such activity. Coordination of the activity must be made through the Office of Campus Life.

In order to continue to provide positive experiences for students involved in extra- and co-curricular activities, the South Georgia State College Office of Campus Life has officially implemented the following procedures related to events sponsored by recognized student organizations. Please be assured that this policy is not designed to decrease social activity of SGSC students but rather, to better manage the activity and to ensure the safety and security of all participants attending events at the College.

Procedure

Recognized student organizations wishing to sponsor parties on campus must abide by the following guidelines:

- 1) A “party” will be defined as a social function that occurs on campus beyond regular business hours or which invitations are issued to individuals beyond the regular student membership of the organization.
- 2) The advisor(s) of the recognized student organization must agree that the proposed activity meets the mission of the organization and of the College.
- 3) The advisor(s) will agree to be present for the duration of the event.
- 4) The population targeted to attend the event should include only current SGSC students, faculty, and staff and their guests.
- 5) All participants must show valid student I.D. cards in order to be admitted to the event, in addition to any price of admission.
- 6) Students are allowed one (1) guest and must accept responsibility for the behavior of their guest.
- 7) Individuals not sponsored by a student will not be admitted to the event.
- 8) All participants must sign-in and acknowledge sponsorship of their guest(s). The advisor should retain the Sign-In Sheet, forwarding a copy of said sheet to the Director of Campus Life.
- 9) If necessary, the Office of Campus Life will work with Campus Police to secure the services of additional security officers.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Several times each term special events or activities are scheduled by the SGA & Office of Campus Life. These activities may include concerts, trips, multicultural activities, speakers, films, club days, food specials, or recreational activities. Activities are offered at times where both residential and commuter students have opportunities for participation.

CAMPUS RECREATION

The Student Government Association sponsors events throughout the term for student co-curricular enjoyment. These activities utilize student activity fees and are often free to the student. Events include such activities as concerts, trips, family activities, and intramurals. The

College swimming pool is used both for recreation and physical education programs for regularly enrolled students. Specific rules governing conduct at the swimming pool and a swimming schedule are posted in the vicinity of the pool. Contact the Athletic Department at 912-260-4216 for more information on reserving the facility. Tennis courts are located on the east side of campus, and students may play golf on the community golf course at a discounted rate.

STATEMENT OF STUDENTS' RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The College seeks to create an orderly climate that promotes academic integrity, intellectual freedom, and individual thought and expression consistent with the rights of others. It is the obligation of the College to promote an educational environment by protecting the rights of all members of the college community and by prohibiting acts which interfere with the rights of others. Membership in the college community confers certain rights and imposes certain responsibilities. Students are expected to understand and exercise their rights, meet their responsibilities, and respect the rights of others. The College is expected to enforce these responsibilities and to afford these rights to students. The College will help students create a climate that promotes their development while not denying this opportunity to others. Upon their request, students have the right through their Student Government Association to be heard in matters that affect their rights and responsibilities. Students have the right to take stands on issues, to examine and discuss questions of interest, and to support legal causes by orderly means which do not disrupt college operations or interfere with the rights of others. Student publications and communications enjoy the rights inherent in the concept of freedom of expression. Individual students and organizations have the right to publish and distribute material on the campus provided that the materials are identified by the name of the student or organization. All publications shall be subject to the canons of responsible journalism, including the avoidance of defamation, indecency, obscenity, undocumented allegations, and harassment. All student organizations registered with the Office of Campus Life may meet on college premises if they make reservations in accordance with the established rules and regulations for room and space reservation. Students and/or student groups may not make reservations in their names for outside groups or organizations to use college space. Only student organizations registered with the Office of Campus Life have the right to invite persons of their choosing as speakers on college premises. The President of the College or the authorized representative may cancel a speaker's reservation where there is a clear and present danger to the orderly operation of the College. Such cancellation shall be communicated to the sponsoring organization at the earliest opportunity. Students shall have the right to have their academic and disciplinary records kept confidential subject to existing law. Students have the right to due process when accused of any violations of college regulations or rules of conduct. This right shall include the following:

- right to a notice in writing of charges.
- right to admit the alleged violation, waive a hearing, and accept the College's action.
- right to admit the alleged violation but request a hearing.
- right to deny the alleged violation and request a hearing.
- right to a fair hearing.
- right to appear in person at a hearing or not to appear .
- right to call witnesses and present evidence on their behalf.
- right upon request to a list of witnesses who will appear against them.
- right to confront and cross-examine witnesses and/or accusers who are present.
- right to request a copy of any available records or tape recording of a hearing if the offenses involve possible suspension or expulsion.
- right to appeal beyond the point of origin to the administrative officer, the Discipline Committee, then to the President of the College.

South Georgia State College

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Revised and posted July 1, 2016

INTRODUCTION

South Georgia State College has established standards of conduct that are compatible with the academic mission of the institution. An educational approach to infractions of the student code of conduct is employed whenever possible.

Laws, statutes, and regulations at the national, state, and local levels grant public institutions the authority to establish standards reasonably relevant to the lawful missions, processes, and functions of the institution. Such standards are not intended to prohibit the exercise of a right guaranteed by the Constitution or a law of the United States to a member of the academic community.

Standards may apply to student behavior on and off the campus when relevant to any lawful mission, process, or function of the institution. The institution may prohibit any action or omission, which impairs, interferes with, or obstructs the missions, processes, and functions of the institution.

Institutional standards may require scholastic attainments higher than the average of the population and may require superior ethical and moral behavior. In establishing standards of behavior, institutions are not limited to the standards or the forms of criminal laws. ["General Order on Judicial Standards of Procedure and Substance in Review of Student Discipline in Tax-Supported Institutions of Higher Education," 45 F.R.D. 133/145 (W.D. Mo.1968)].

The acceptance of these responsibilities is a prerequisite for enrollment at South Georgia State College. It is the responsibility of each student to know and understand the expectations and the established rules of conduct. Lack of awareness is not recognized as a legitimate reason for failure to comply. Consequently, the College publishes this *Student Code of Conduct* in the *Student Handbook* and informs students of institutional

procedures governing student misconduct complaints and investigations as part of new student orientation
(Board of Regents *Policy Manual*, hereafter referred to as BoR, 4.6.5).

Violators may be accountable to both civil and criminal authorities and to the College for acts of misconduct, which constitute violations of this Code. The Code is not intended to replace federal, state, or local legal activities. The College will decide whether to proceed with action before, during, after, or simultaneously with a legal proceeding. Determinations made or sanctions imposed under this Code shall not be subject to change because criminal charges arising out of the same facts giving rise to violation of College rules were dismissed, reduced, or resolved in favor of or against the criminal law defendant. An action involving the student in a legal proceeding does not free the student of responsibility from participation in a College proceeding. Sanctions may be imposed for acts of misconduct that occur on College property or at any College-sponsored activity. As further prescribed in these rules, off-campus conduct may be subject to student conduct adjudication.

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

South Georgia State College, an institution of the University System of Georgia (USG), expects students to adhere to USG policies and other South Georgia State College policies as outlined in the Student Handbook. All South Georgia State College regulations must be compliant with the policies of the Board of Regents.

The Student Code of Conduct consists of Part I: Definitions, Part II: Responsibilities and Part III: Student Conduct Procedures and Student Rights. **The Student Code of Conduct applies to student behavior excluding sexual misconduct and academic dishonesty, each of which is covered in separate South Georgia State College policies (BoR 4.6.5).**

PART I: DEFINITIONS

1. The term “College” means “South Georgia State College” and “the institution.”
2. The term “student” includes all persons taking courses at the College, either full-time or part-time, pursuing undergraduate, graduate, or professional studies. Persons who withdraw after allegedly violating the Student Code of Conduct, who are not officially enrolled for a particular term but who have a continuing relationship with the College or who have been notified of their acceptance for admission are considered “students” as are persons who are living in College residence halls. This Student Code of Conduct does apply at all locations of the College.
3. The term “faculty member” means any person hired by the College to conduct classroom or teaching activities or who is otherwise considered by the College to be a member of its faculty.
4. The term “College official” includes any person employed by the College, performing assigned administrative or professional responsibilities.
5. The term “member of the College community” includes any person who is a student, faculty member, College official, or any other person employed by the College. A person’s status in a particular situation shall be determined by the Dean of Students (Chief Student Conduct Officer).
6. The term “College premises” includes all land, buildings, facilities, and other property in the possession of or owned, used or controlled by the College (including adjacent streets and sidewalks).
7. The term “Recognized Student Organization” or “RSO” means any number of persons who have complied with the formal requirements for the College’s recognized student organizations process.
8. The term “Student Conduct Board” means any person or persons authorized by the College President to determine whether a student has or has not violated the Student Code of Conduct and to recommend

sanctions that may be imposed when a violation has been committed. Student Conduct Board panels of three (3) persons may be comprised of faculty, staff, and student members.

9. The term "Appeals Board" means any person or persons authorized by the College President to consider an appeal from a Student Conduct Board's determination as to whether a student has violated the *Student Code of Conduct* or from the sanctions imposed by the Student Conduct Officer.
10. The term "Dean of Students" means a College official who is Chief Student Conduct Officer authorized by the President to administer the Student Code of Conduct and to impose sanctions upon any student(s) found to have violated the Student Code of Conduct. The President may authorize the Dean of Students to serve simultaneously as the Chief Student Conduct Officer and the sole member or one of the members of the Student Conduct Board. The President authorizes the Dean of Students or the Vice President for Student Success to impose sanctions in all cases. The College President may authorize someone other than the Dean of Students to serve as Conduct Officer as necessary.
11. **The term "investigator" means the person designated by the Dean of Students to collect, review, document, and report the facts resulting from the thorough investigation of alleged student misconduct. The investigator may also be required to testify at the student conduct hearing but shall otherwise have no part in the hearing process and shall not attempt to influence the proceedings outside of providing testimony. The investigator shall not be a member or chairperson of the Student Conduct Board or an Appeals Board (BoR 4.6.5.2).**
12. The term "shall" is used in the imperative sense.
13. The term "may" is used in the permissive sense.
14. The term "policy" means the written regulations of the College as found in, but not limited to, the *Student Code of Conduct*, *Residence Life Handbook*, *Student Handbook*, the College web page and computer use policy, and College Catalog.
15. The term "Complainant" means any person who submits a charge alleging that a student violated this Student Code of Conduct. When a student believes that he/she has been a victim of another student's misconduct, the student who believes he/she has been a victim will have the same rights under this Student Code of Conduct as are provided to the Complainant, even if another member of the College community submitted the charge itself.
16. The term "accused student" means a student against whom there is a written complaint alleging violation of the student code of conduct. An "accused student" is not a "charged student."
17. The term "charged student" means a student accused in writing of a student conduct violation against whom there is sufficient evidence of violation of the *Student Code of Conduct* to bring formal charges that may result in a sanction or sanctions.
18. The term "Clery Act" means the federal statute requiring all colleges and universities participating in federal financial aid programs to keep and report information about crime on and near their campuses in order to notify campus communities of crimes representing a potential threat to the safety of students or employees.
19. The term "Board of Regents" (BoR) means the State of Georgia governing and management authority of the University System of Georgia, of which South Georgia State College is a member institution.

PART II: RESPONSIBILITIES

The primary expectations of all South Georgia State College students are integrity and civility. Each student should approach his/her academic endeavors, relationships and personal responsibilities with a strong commitment to personal integrity and interpersonal civility. These responsibilities apply to students individually, as well as collectively to members of recognized student organizations. These responsibilities are as follows:

1. Individuals will respect and foster the academic climate for other members of the College community.

Examples of prohibited behavior include but are not limited to: harassing a member of the College's faculty; disrupting teaching or research; creating excessive noise that disrupts classes, studying, or College activities; other

activities that seriously disrupt learning. **Academic dishonesty issues are addressed in the College's separate Academic Dishonesty Policy.**

2. Individuals will protect and support the personal safety of all members of the College community.

Examples of prohibited behavior include but are not limited to: stalking (persistent unwelcome contact or observation); threatening with a weapon; fighting; battery; physical violence; unsolicited physical contact with another person; endangering the health or safety of another person; actions taken with disregard for the harm that may ensue. South Georgia State College observes a strict policy with regard to acts of physical violence. Any person perpetrating an act of physical violence is automatically subject to the severest penalty provided in the "Student Conduct Sanctions" section of this Code. **Personal safety issues related to sexual misconduct are addressed in the College's separate Sexual Misconduct Policy.**

3. Individuals will respect other members of the College community.

Examples of prohibited behavior include but are not limited to: disruptive noise; terroristic threats; verbal or written intimidation; verbal or written harassment; e-mail or telephone harassment; harassment based on group membership; falsely accusing another; verbal abuse – beyond a reasonable statement of opinion -- that may cause humiliation or stress to another; hazing (defined as mandating undesirable activities, a pattern of banter/ridicule/criticism and/or the use of humiliation, as a form of initiation); calumny (making false statements with the intent to harm another); slander; any unauthorized use of electronic or other devices to make an audio or video record of any person while on College premises without his or her prior knowledge, or without his or her effective consent when such a recording is likely to cause injury or distress. This includes, but is not limited to, surreptitiously taking pictures of another person in a gym, locker room, or restroom; actions that unduly interfere with another student's right to learn and participate.

4. Individuals will show regard for the property of the College, its community members, and visitors to the campus.

Examples of prohibited behavior include but are not limited to: vandalism, theft; destruction of property; acting fraudulently to obtain goods, services, or funds from College departments, student organizations, or individuals; using one's leadership position for personal gain; misuse and/or wrongful use of College facilities, equipment; failure to comply with policies regarding timely return of materials or equipment checked out or on loan to the student; wrongful sale or use of another's property; knowingly possessing or using stolen property; failure to report knowledge of an infraction; unauthorized possession or duplication of a College key(s) or key card(s); providing a key or key card to another person without proper authorization; not reporting a crime committed on campus.

5. Individuals will respect the integrity of the College's academic and administrative records.

Examples of prohibited behavior include but are not limited to acting alone or with others to: misrepresent academic status, performance, awards, or graduation material; omit material from or manipulate records; falsify a signature; falsify, alter, steal, or destroy College documents; alter, forge, or misuse College academic records; obtain grades, course access, awards, or endorsements dishonestly; commit computer fraud (**academic integrity is addressed in the separate academic dishonesty policy**).

6. Individuals will contribute to a safe environment within the College community.

Examples of prohibited behavior include but are not limited to: possession of weapons, incendiary devices, or explosives; possession of articles or substances that are used as weapons or simulated weapons unless prior authorization is received from the Chief of Police; misuse of College keys or keycards; willful failure to identify or false identification of oneself or one's guest(s); failure to assume responsibility for the actions of one's guest(s); misuse or damage of firefighting, safety, or other emergency equipment; interference in the provision of emergency services; failure to comply with appropriate requests from Campus Police, College Security or College staff members; intoxication that disrupts other individuals or the College's activities/administrative responsibilities; failure to comply with restriction from areas on campus. Students may not participate in any activity that could cause harm to themselves or others.

7. Individuals will adhere to federal, state, local, State College Board, and College law/regulations that govern individual actions and relationships among community members.

Examples of prohibited behavior include but are not limited to: sexual assault; physical assault; unauthorized possession of alcohol; possession, sale, or distribution of illegal substances; violation of College or department regulations, i.e. Drug-Free Campus policy; Residence Life Handbook; parking regulations; violation of College e-mail or computer usage policy; violation of any College or Board of Regents' policy; violations of laws.

8. Individuals will assist the College in fulfilling its administrative responsibilities.

Examples of prohibited behavior include but are not limited to: retaliation towards an individual for involvement in a College activity; disruption of programmatic, administrative, or public service activities of the College; harassment of College staff (including student staff); submission of a false or purposely incomplete statement/report; misuse, alteration, or transference to another person of the Student Identification Card; failure to appear, in response to a proper summons, when requested to do so by a College official; disruption of student conduct procedures and activities; dishonesty as part of a College hearing; misuse of one's position within the College; failure to comply with sanctions from a student conduct adjudication and/or hearing.

PART III: STUDENT CONDUCT PROCEDURES AND STUDENT RIGHTS

The purpose of this policy is to establish student conduct procedures to guide the fair and uniform enforcement of the Responsibilities listed in Part II. These procedures are applicable to any student or student organization when charged with a violation of the Responsibilities. These procedures allow for fact finding and decision making in the context of an educational community and encourage students to accept responsibility for their own actions. The intent is to provide adequate procedural safeguards to protect the rights of the individual student and the legitimate interests of the College.

JURISDICTION

All students are members of the College community. **South Georgia State College takes necessary and appropriate action to protect the safety and well-being of its community. Accordingly, student conduct is addressed when such acts occur on institution property or at institution-sponsored or affiliated events, or otherwise violate the institution's student conduct policies at non-institution-sponsored events. 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 (BoR 4.6.5.2).** Students, faculty, staff and individuals not associated with the College may submit complaints regarding alleged violations that may have occurred on campus or off campus for review and action by the College. All complaints of alleged violation of the Student Code of Conduct shall be made

in writing to the Dean of Students or submitted electronically through the College's Maxient incident report system.

The College may initiate judicial proceedings for off-campus incidents when:

1. Hazing is involved. Hazing is defined as an act which endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a person, subjects a person to public humiliation or ridicule, or which destroys or removes public or private property for the purpose of initiation, admission into, affiliation with, or as a condition for continued membership; or
2. The violation is committed while participating in a College-sanctioned or sponsored activity; or
3. The victim of the violation is a member of the College community; or
4. The violation constitutes a felony under state or federal law; or
5. The violation adversely affects the educational, research, or service function of the College.

FAILURE TO COMPLY

Failure to comply/respond as directed by the Student Conduct Board, the Dean of Students, or the Vice President for Student Success on any matter including, but not limited to, a request to meet concerning an issue or a notice concerning or alleging a violation of the Student Code of Conduct may result in the immediate placement of a hold on the involved student's records **but will not result in automatic findings or sanction(s) against the student.**

After the conclusion of a student conduct hearing or administrative resolution, failure to comply with sanctions imposed by the Student Conduct Board, the Dean of Students, or the Vice President for Student Success will be a further violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION (Mediation)

Unfortunately, formal grievance and appeals procedures usually require a great deal of time and energy, may result in high levels of frustration, and produce a less than satisfactory outcome for either or both parties. If a hearing must be conducted, both parties must spend time preparing their statements, presenting witnesses and other data, and relying on another person or committee of persons to decide the outcome. At the end of the process one party "wins" and the other party "loses." This almost always further erodes the relationship between the parties. In addition, records of the proceedings are prepared and kept on file, limiting the confidentiality of the nature of the dispute. Therefore, prior to filing a formal grievance or appeal, persons with a complaint may consider using the College's Alternative Dispute Resolution Program. Alternative Dispute Resolution, commonly referred to as ADR, involves using one or more dispute resolution processes as an alternative to traditional grievance and appeals procedures.

Alternative methods of dispute resolution may include one or more of the following:

1. Frank and open discussion between parties to dispel any miscommunication that may have occurred;
2. Determining the issues to be resolved and negotiating with each other to reach an acceptable conclusion;
3. Participating in a mediation session with a trained objective third party.

Mediation is a voluntary process in which an impartial third party facilitates communication and negotiation between the disputing parties in order to reach a mutually acceptable agreement. The mediator does not maintain a record of the session – the only written document is the negotiated agreement that is given to both parties. Mediation is not appropriate for cases of academic misconduct.

INITIATION OF COMPLAINT OF ALLEGED VIOLATIONS

Reports of Student Misconduct (BoR 4.6.5.1)

Complaints addressed to the Dean of Students should include as much information as possible—such as: (1) the type of misconduct alleged; (2) the name and contact information of both the complainant and the accused student; (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. The Student Conduct Officer shall assure that all appropriate information is secured.

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 Clery Act shall be assessed in compliance with federal law.

When appropriate, complainants may file a law enforcement report along with an institutional report. Whatever the nature of the complaint, the complainant has the following expectations:

1. **Confidentiality:** When a complainant or alleged victim requests that his or her identity be withheld or the allegation(s) not be investigated, the College shall consider whether or not such request(s) can be honored while still providing a safe and nondiscriminatory environment for the institution. The requesting party shall be informed that the institution generally cannot guarantee confidentiality. Further, honoring the request may limit the institution's ability to respond fully to the incident and may limit the institution's ability to discipline the charged student.
2. **Retaliation:** Anyone who, in good faith, reports what she or he believes to be student misconduct, participates or cooperates in, or is otherwise associated with any investigation, shall not be subject to retaliation. Anyone who believes he or she has been the target of retaliation for reporting, participating or cooperating in, or otherwise being associated with an investigation should immediately contact the Dean of Students or the Vice President for Student Success. Any person found to have engaged in retaliation in violation of the student conduct policy shall be subject to College disciplinary action.
3. **False Complaints:** Individuals who intentionally give false statements to an institution official, or who submit false complaints or accusations, including during a hearing, in violation of policy shall be subject to disciplinary action.
4. **Amnesty:** Individuals should be encouraged to come forward and to report student misconduct notwithstanding their choice to consume alcohol or to use drugs. Information reported in good faith by an individual during an investigation concerning use of drugs or alcohol will not be used against that individual in a disciplinary proceeding and will not be voluntarily reported to law enforcement; however, individuals may be provided with resources on drug and alcohol counseling and/or education, as appropriate.

Not all matters covered under this policy will necessarily involve alleged victims; however, where they are involved, it should be noted that a complainant will not always be the alleged victim but instead may be a third-

party witness. The institution may also respond to issues raised by third-party complaints (such as referrals by police) or discovered by staff or through its own investigations.

COMPLAINT REPORTING AND INITIAL RESPONSE PROCEDURES

1. Complaints of alleged violations shall be submitted in writing to the Dean of Students or electronically through the College's Maxient incident reporting system.

2. Complaints must be submitted within fifteen (15) College business days after detection of an alleged violation unless special conditions for delay can be documented.

3. **Complaints addressed to the Dean of Students should include as much information as possible—such as: (1) the type of misconduct alleged; (2) the name and contact information of the both complainant and the accused student; (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. The Student Conduct Officer shall assure that all appropriate information is secured (BoR 4.6.5.1).**

4. When the alleged misconduct is related to discrimination or harassment, the Dean of Students will consult with the Affirmative Action Officer to determine whether an affirmative action investigation is warranted.

5. **The Dean of Students shall make an initial determination as to whether there is sufficient basis to believe that a violation of the Code of Conduct may have occurred. If the reported conduct does not violate College policies, including the *Student Code of Conduct*, the complaint shall be dismissed. Otherwise, the Dean of Students shall ensure that a prompt, fair, thorough, and impartial investigation and review are conducted into each complaint to determine whether charges should be brought against the student (BoR 4.6.5.2).**

6. Prior to and finally including a formal charge or dismissal of a charge of student misconduct, the following procedures shall be followed:

- a. **The accused student 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. Where applicable, a copy shall also be provided to the alleged victim via the same means.**
- b. **Upon receipt of the written notice, the accused student shall be given at least three (3) business days to respond in writing. In that response, the accused student shall have the right to admit or to deny the allegations, and to set forth a defense with facts, witnesses, and to admit or to deny the allegations, and to set forth a defense with facts, witnesses, and documents—whether written or electronic—in support. A non-response will be considered a general denial of the alleged misconduct.**
- c. **Based on this response, the investigation shall consist of interviews of the accused student, the alleged victim (where applicable) and witnesses, and the collection and review of documents or other physical or electronic information, as well as other steps as appropriate. The investigator will retain written notes and/or obtain written or recorded statements from each interview. The investigator shall also keep a record of any proffered witnesses not interviewed, along with a brief, written explanation.**
- d. **The investigation shall be summarized in writing in an initial investigation report and provided to the accused student and the alleged victim (where applicable) in person or via email. This summary 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.

- e. To the extent the accused student is ultimately charged with a violation, he or she shall also have the opportunity to respond in writing. The charged student's written response to the charge(s) shall be due no earlier than three (3) business days following the date of the initial investigation report. The charged student's written response should outline his or her plea in response to the charge(s), and where applicable, his or her defense(s), and the facts, witnesses, and documents—whether written or electronic—in support. A nonresponse to the charge(s) by the charged student will be interpreted as a denial of the charge(s).
- f. The investigator shall conduct further investigation and update the investigative report as warranted by the charged student's response.
- g. The final investigative report should be provided to the student misconduct panel or hearing officer for consideration in adjudicating the charges brought against the charged student. A copy shall also be provided to the charged student and alleged victim (where applicable) before any hearing. The investigator may testify as a witness regarding the investigation and findings, but shall otherwise have no part in the hearing process and shall not attempt to otherwise influence the proceedings outside of providing testimony during the hearing (BoR 4.6.5.2).

7. Unrelated charges and cases shall be investigated separately, unless the charged student consents to having them aggregated (BoR 4.6.5.2).

8. The Dean of Students may arrange a Preliminary Conference with the student accused of violating the *Student Code of Conduct* to review the procedures in items 1 – 7 above.

PROCEDURES FOR ADJUDICATING CASES INVOLVING RECOGNIZED STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS (RSOs)

Should a complaint be filed against an RSO, the Dean of Students will conduct an investigation and hearing, and the Vice President for Student Success may impose the following sanctions, if necessary:

1. Cancellation of recognized status,
2. Imposition of monetary fines, withholding or withdrawal of allocated COA funds and or Dues Account funds,
3. Imposition of restitution for damages,
4. Removal of any of the RSO's officers or members from the RSO or its activities,
5. Restriction of any of the privileges or rights enjoyed by the RSO.

An RSO may appeal any finding and/or sanction imposed provided relevant grounds for appeal are cited. Written notification of the decision to appeal and the grounds for appeal must be received by the Dean of Students within two (2) College business days after the original decision is communicated to the RSO. The appeal will be a review of the record only. The Dean of Students will be responsible for notifying the RSO of the outcome of the appeal within two (2) College business days of the conclusion of the appeal proceedings. This is the final appeal at the institutional level.

The right of provisional organizations to operate may be revoked upon an adverse finding by the Dean of Students, in conjunction with the Director of Campus Life. In cases of revocation of provisional status, there is no institutional appeal of the decision.

DUE PROCESS AND STUDENT RIGHTS (BoR 4.6.5.2)

When a student is charged with violating the rules and regulations of the College, disposition of the case will be according to the Constitutional requirements of due process. These rights include entitlement to:

1. A written notice of the complaint/allegations, pending investigation, possible charges, possible sanctions, and available support services. The notice shall also include the identity of any investigator(s) involved. Notice shall be provided via College email to the address on file. Where applicable, a copy shall also be provided to any alleged victim via the same means.

2. A prompt, thorough, and impartial investigation of the complaint.

3. A fair and impartial hearing.

4. Being informed of the nature of the evidence against him/her and names of witnesses scheduled to appear.

5. Present evidence and witnesses in his/her behalf.

6. Be accompanied at a hearing by an advisor (including an attorney) of the student's own choosing and at the student's own expense for the express purpose of providing advice and counsel. The advisor may advise his or her advisee in any manner, including providing questions, suggestions, and guidance on responses to any questions of the advisee, but shall not participate directly. If requested, a maximum of two (2) family members of both the charged student and the victim(s) shall be allowed to attend a hearing but shall not participate directly. Advisors may be present during meetings and proceedings during the investigatory and/or resolution process at which his/her advisee is present.

The complainant may also be accompanied by an advisor (including an attorney) acting in the same capacity as described in #6 above.

7 Be present at the hearing during the presentation of any evidence or material on which a decision will be made. If the student fails to attend the hearing, the hearing will be held in the student's absence.

8. Remain silent and refrain from answering questions without inference of guilt.

9. Submit questions for witnesses to the Dean of Students, who, in cases involving adjudication by the Student Conduct Board hearing panel serves as Chairperson of the panel. The Chairperson will determine if the charged student's questions are appropriate and if the charged student's questions will be posed verbally or in writing.

10. An audio recording of the hearing made by the Chairperson of the hearing panel. The deliberation/sanctioning phase of the proceeding will not be taped. The charged student will be provided, upon request, a copy of the hearing recording. Written transcripts of the hearing will not be available.

11. A decision based solely on a preponderance of the evidence presented.

12. A written notice of the results of the hearing and an explanation of the decision and sanction assessment. If a student is found not to be in violation of the charge(s), all related documents and records will be destroyed.

13. Appeal the finding and/or sanction. See the section on appeals below.

WHEN POTENTIAL SANCTIONS INVOLVE SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION: ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES TO PROTECT STUDENT RIGHTS (BoR 4.6.5.2)

When 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 shall provide these additional, minimum safeguards:

1. The charged student 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. Where applicable, a copy shall also be provided to the alleged victim via the same means.
2. Upon receipt of the written notice, the charged student shall be given at least three (3) College business days to respond in writing. In that response, the charged student shall have the right to admit or to deny the allegations, and to set forth a defense with facts, witnesses, and to admit or to deny the allegations, and to set forth a defense with facts, witnesses, and documents—whether written or electronic—in support. A non-response will be considered a general denial of the alleged misconduct.
3. Based on this response, the investigation shall consist of interviews of the charged student, the alleged victim (where applicable) and witnesses, and the collection and review of documents or other physical or electronic information, as well as other steps as appropriate. The investigator will retain written notes and/or obtain written or recorded statements from each interview. The investigator shall also keep a record of any proffered witnesses not interviewed, along with a brief, written explanation.
4. The investigation shall be summarized in writing in an initial investigation report and provided to the charged student and the alleged victim (where applicable) in person or via email. This summary 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.
5. To the extent the charged student is ultimately charged with a violation, he or she shall also have the opportunity to respond in writing. The charged student’s written response to the charge(s) shall be due no earlier than three (3) business days following the date of the initial investigation report. The charged student’s written response should outline his or her plea in response to the charge(s), and where applicable, his or her defense(s), and the facts, witnesses, and documents—whether written or electronic—in support. A nonresponse to the charge(s) by the charged student will be interpreted as a denial of the charge(s).
6. The investigator shall conduct further investigation and update the investigative report as warranted by the charged student’s response.
7. The final investigative report should be provided to the student misconduct panel or hearing officer for consideration in adjudicating the charges brought against the charged student. A copy shall also be provided to the charged student and alleged victim (where applicable) before any hearing. The investigator may testify as a witness regarding the investigation and findings, but shall otherwise have no part in the hearing process and shall not attempt to otherwise influence the proceedings outside of providing testimony during the hearing.

ADJUDICATION OPTIONS

The Dean of Students will present the student charged with violation(s) of the Student Code of Conduct with a written document describing the charges filed against him/her. The student will respond in one of the following ways to each charge:

1. Admission of responsibility for the violation(s) and waive the right to a hearing and an appeal. The Dean of Students will determine appropriate sanction(s).
2. **Denial of responsibility for the charge(s) and request for a Student Conduct Board hearing or administrative hearing for resolution/adjudication of the charge(s).**

METHODS OF ADJUDICATION (BoR 4.6.5.2)

1. **Administrative Hearing for Behavioral Misconduct:** The Dean of Students will serve as the hearing officer for all behavioral misconduct cases in which the possible sanctions of suspension or expulsion are not involved and for cases involving suspension or expulsion when the charged student does not request a hearing by a panel of the Student Conduct Board in a timely manner.
2. **A panel of the Student Conduct Board:** Members of the Board will serve as a panel for resolving Student Code of Conduct involving students. Each panel may be composed of three voting members drawn from faculty, staff, and students. The Dean of Students serves as non-voting Chairperson of the hearing panel.

The Student Conduct Board and appellate board members shall be provided training on responsibilities and procedures. **Such training shall not be the responsibility of the institution's individual(s) tasked with investigating allegations of student misconduct.**

ABSENCE OF ACCUSED OR LACK OF COOPERATION

If the charged student is absent from the College community while a student conduct case is pending or declines to participate in the student conduct process, the student is not absolved of responsibility.

Students who have been properly notified of a scheduled hearing, and who fail to appear at the hearing after proper notice has been given, will have their cases adjudicated in absentia at the scheduled hearing time and will be bound by the findings.

NOTIFICATION

In all cases relative to written notification of students, such notification will be considered complete once a message has been sent to the student's college e-mail address and mailing address contained in the Banner Student Information System.

THE HEARING PROCESS

In no case shall a hearing to resolve charge(s) of student misconduct take place before the investigative report has been finalized or before the charged student has had an opportunity to respond in writing, unless the charged student has chosen to go through an informal process or otherwise provided a written waiver of rights to these procedures. Further, unrelated charges and/or cases shall be heard separately unless the charged student voluntarily consents to the charges/cases being heard jointly.

If the charged student indicates that he or she contests the charges, and once the investigative report has been finalized and copies provided to the charged student and alleged victim (where applicable), the case shall be set for hearing, unless the charged student and alleged victim (where applicable) have chosen mediation as a

possible resolution in certain student misconduct cases where they mutually agree, except where deemed inappropriate by the Vice President for Student Success or his/her designee (BoR 4.6.5.2).

The focus of the Hearing Process in student conduct proceedings shall be determining the responsibility of those accused of violating the Student Code of Conduct. Hearings are not open to observers. **Decisions shall be based upon the preponderance of all available evidence in each case; however, any decision to suspend or to expel a student shall also be supported by substantial evidence at the hearing (BoR 4.6.5.2).**

1. If a charged student denies responsibility for alleged violation(s), he/she may request a hearing before a Student Conduct Board. The request shall be in writing and shall be made to the Dean of Students within three (3) College business days of the date on which the Dean of Students has sent notification of formal charges to the charged student via the student's College email address or within three (3) College business days of the scheduled date of a Preliminary Conference between the charged student and the Dean of Students. The hearing will be scheduled within ten (10) College business days after the charged student requests it, **and the student will be given a minimum of five (5) days' notice prior to the hearing date.** Hearings will be held during normal College business hours on the campuses or entry program sites. The charged student may request, in writing, a continuance from the Dean of Students if circumstances are such that a delay is warranted. The charged student will be notified, in writing, of the date, time, and location of the rescheduled hearing.

The Dean of Students will serve as nonvoting Chairperson of the Student Conduct Board hearing panels and will select the members of each Student Conduct Board hearing panel. All procedural questions are subject to the final decision of the Dean of Students.

2. The Complainant has the right to be informed of these hearing procedures and the right to be present throughout the presentation of witnesses and evidence. The Dean of Students will inform the Complainant of these rights prior to the hearing.

The records of the student conduct process and of the sanctions imposed, if any, shall be considered to be among the education records of both the Complainant and the charged student(s) because the educational career and chances of success in the academic community of each may be impacted.

3. The charged student will enter a plea to all charges before the hearing body.

4. The Dean of Students will remind the charged student and each witness present of the importance of providing truthful and accurate information during the hearing process. If a witness fails to tell the truth during student conduct proceedings, student conduct action may result.

5. At the hearing, the Dean of Students will present the evidence and facts of the case to the hearing body. The Dean of Students will present witnesses in support of the case against the charged student.

6. The hearing body may question all witnesses or ask for clarification from the Dean of Students or any witness.

7. The charged student shall have the right to present witnesses and evidence to the hearing officer or panel, as well as to ask questions to any witnesses. At the determination of the hearing officer or panel, this questioning may take place through the submission of written questions to the panel or hearing officer for consideration; however, the parties' advisors may still actively advise and assist in drafting those questions. The hearing officer or 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 charged student. In any event, the hearing officer or panel shall err on the side of asking all submitted questions, and must document the reason for not asking any particular questions.

8. Where the hearing officer or panel determines that a party or witness is unavailable and unable to be present due to extenuating circumstances, the hearing officer or panel may establish special procedures for providing testimony from a separate location. In doing so, the hearing officer or panel must determine 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 panel will disregard or discount the testimony.

9. Formal civil rules of evidence do not apply to the investigatory or resolution process.

10. The standard of review shall be a preponderance of the evidence; however, any decision to suspend or to expel a student must also be supported by substantial evidence at the hearing.

11. The College shall maintain documentation of the proceedings, which may include written findings of fact, transcripts, audio recordings and/or video recordings.

12. Following a hearing, both the charged student and alleged victim (where applicable) shall be provided a written decision via institution email of the outcome and any resulting sanctions. The decision should include details on how to appeal, as outlined below. Additionally, the written decision must summarize the evidence in support of the sanction. The same form will be completed, regardless of whether the student opts for a student panel or an administrative hearing (Items 7 – 12: BoR 4.6.5.2).

13. Concerns for the personal safety, well-being, and/or fears of confrontation of the Complainant, the charged student, and/or other witnesses during the hearing may be accommodated by providing separate facilities, by using a visual screen, and/or by permitting participation by telephone, videophone, closed circuit television, video conferencing, videotape, audio tape, written statement, or other means, where and as determined in the sole judgment of Dean of Students to be appropriate.

RECUSAL/CHALLENGE FOR BIAS (BoR 4.6.5.4)

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 shall be submitted within a reasonable time after the individual 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, a replacement shall be appointed.

FINDINGS OF THE HEARING BODY

After hearing both sides of the case, the hearing body will, in a closed session, deliberate and reach a decision regarding the responsibility of the charged student for violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

In cases heard by a Student Conduct Board panel, a majority vote is necessary to reach a decision regardless of the quorum.

BEHAVIORAL MISCONDUCT

- A. Upon finding a student responsible for a behavioral violation of the Student Code of Conduct, the Dean of Students will read the finding into the audio recording and will forward the finding to the Vice President for Student Success.
- B. The Vice President for Student Success will review the record of the case and any prior student conduct history of the adjudicated student and will reach a decision regarding appropriate sanctions to be imposed.
- C. The Dean of Students will read the sanction into the audio recording and will be responsible for notifying the adjudicated student of the finding and the sanction in writing within two (2) College business days (Monday-Friday) of the conclusion of the hearing.

At the request of the adjudicated student, the Dean of Students will meet with the student and provide clarification of the finding and sanction. At this time and at the student's request, information on and assistance with the appeal procedures as outlined in the Student Handbook will be provided.

The finding and sanctions are considered final unless appealed by the adjudicated student.

In cases where no decision can be reached, the Dean of Students may appoint another hearing panel or drop the charges.

SANCTIONS

In determining the severity of sanctions or corrective actions the following are 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, and the institution's interests. The student conduct panel or hearing officer will determine sanctions and issue notice of the same (BoR 4.6.5.2).

The following are student conduct sanctions that may be imposed upon the student. This list is not exhaustive and the College reserves the right to modify or enlarge the list at any time depending on the nature of the violation(s).

Upon imposition of a sanction, the student is notified by email to his/her student email account. In cases of suspension or expulsion, the parents of a minor will be notified by mail.

1. Student Conduct Warning

A Student Conduct Warning is an official written reprimand.

2. Student Conduct Probation

Student Conduct Probation is a period of time during which further violations of the rules and regulations of the College may result in suspension or expulsion. Probation may be imposed for a period of time ranging from the remainder of the semester in which the violation occurred to the remainder of the student's matriculation at the College. Restrictions may be imposed in conjunction with probation and may include:

- a. *Community Service Hours* – Students may be required to complete work at a designated location for a specified number of hours.
- b. *Educational Programs* – Students may be required to attend programs on special topics related to the offense. This does not include academic courses for credit.

c. *Restricted presence on campus* – Students may be restricted on campus except to attend classes or complete coursework.

d. *Special Projects* – Students may be required to write papers and/or present programs on topics related to the offense.

e. *Substance Abuse Assessment* – Students may be required to submit to an assessment for substance abuse. Periodic drug testing, not to exceed two random tests per semester for a minimum of three semesters, may be required.

f. *Restitution* – Students may be required to reimburse the College or other persons, groups, or organizations for damages incurred as a result of a violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

g. *Confiscation* – The College reserves the right to confiscate goods used or possessed in violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

h. *Fines* – Students may be required to pay an additional Student Conduct fine in relation to violations of alcohol and other drugs.

3. Loss of Student Office/Leadership Position

Students in elected/appointed positions may lose the position as a result of a violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

4. Forced Withdrawal

Students may be withdrawn from the academic course(s) within which the violation of the Student Code of Conduct occurred without receiving academic credit for the course(s) or refund.

5. Removal from the Residence Life Program

Students found in violation of the Student Code of Conduct may be removed from the Housing/Residence Life Program with no refund of fees. Additionally, these students will be responsible for payment of any remaining costs associated with the housing contract. Removal from the Residence Life program does not equal suspension or expulsion from the College.

6. Temporary Suspension from a Course

Students may receive a temporary suspension from a particular course, not to exceed two class meetings. Students are still responsible for any material covered during the temporary suspension.

7. Interim Suspension

Interim suspensions—that is, suspensions while the investigation and adjudication process are proceeding—shall occur only when necessary to maintain safety, and shall be limited to those situations where the charged student poses a serious and immediate danger or threat to persons or property. In making such an assessment, the institution shall consider the existence of a significant risk to the health or safety of 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 shall make all reasonable efforts to give the charged student the opportunity to be heard on whether his or her presence on campus poses a danger. If an interim suspension is issued, the terms of the suspension shall take effect immediately. When requested by the charged student, a hearing to determine whether the interim suspension should continue will be held within three (3) business days of the request (BoR 4.6.5.2). The following considerations apply to interim suspensions:

8. Suspension

A decision of suspension terminates the student's status as an enrolled student for a specific period of time and prohibits the student from attending classes. A suspended student may not participate in College sponsored activities or be present on campus without specific authorization from the Dean of Students. The Dean of Students may further impose a summary suspension in cases where a suspended student chooses to violate the terms of his/her suspension. Suspended students may not receive academic credit of any kind from another institution if earned during their period of suspension from the College. Students may not receive a refund of fees.

9. Expulsion

A decision of expulsion constitutes a permanent severance of the student's relationship with the College. An expelled student may not enter any part of the campus without specific authorization from the Dean of Students. Students shall not receive a refund of fees. Students shall receive the grade of "W" in any classes in which he or she is enrolled.

10. Revocation of Admission and/or Degree

Admission to or a degree awarded from the College may be revoked for fraud, misrepresentation, or other violation of College standards in obtaining the degree, or for other serious violations committed by a student prior to graduation.

11. Withholding Degree

The College may withhold awarding a degree otherwise earned until the completion of the process set forth in this Student Code, including the completion of all sanctions imposed, if any.

A student responsible for any type of violation of the Student Code of Conduct will not be permitted to avoid sanction by withdrawing from a class or the College.

Other than suspension, expulsion, or revocation or withholding of a degree, sanctions shall not be made part of the student's permanent academic record, but shall become part of the student's conduct record.

Students expelled or suspended for any behavioral reason will be entered into the University System of Georgia's Student Disciplinary Actions Reporting System (SDARS) and is subject to review by other institutions within the University System.

Students who are suspended or expelled from the College for any length of time should be aware of the impact this action may have on the following:

1. Tuition, Residence Hall costs and fees (suspension does not forgive financial obligations)
2. Student financial aid including HOPE scholarship and institutional scholarships

3. Athletic participation and eligibility
4. Health insurance
5. Participation in the Residence Life program
6. Meal plans
7. Use of College resources and access to College facilities/campuses
8. Immigration status for international students
9. Veterans and dependents of veterans
10. Internships, co-ops, and study abroad opportunities
11. Class withdrawal

This is not an exhaustive list.

ADMINISTRATIVE WITHDRAWALS

Students may be administratively withdrawn from classes and/or the College, after consultation with appropriate college personnel, when it is determined that because of physical, mental, emotional, or psychological health conditions, the student:

- a. poses a significant danger or threat of physical harm to the student or to the person or property of others, or
- b. the student interferes with the rights of other members of the College community or with the exercise of any proper activities or functions of the College or its personnel, or
- c. the student is unable to meet institutional requirements for continued enrollment as defined in this Student Code of Conduct or other publications of the College.

Students may make a request in writing for an appropriate hearing prior to the final decision concerning continued enrollment.

APPEAL PROCEDURES NOT INVOLVING SUSPENSION/EXPULSION (BoR 4.6.5.3)

Steps for filing and resolving an appeal in cases not involving suspension/expulsion are outlined below:

The charged student shall have the right to appeal the outcome on any of the following grounds: (1) to consider new information, sufficient to alter the decision, or other relevant facts not brought out in the original hearing, because such information was not known or knowable to the person appealing during the time of the hearing; (2) to allege a procedural error within the hearing process that may have substantially impacted the fairness of the hearing, including but not limited to whether any hearing questions were improperly excluded or whether the decision was tainted by bias; or (3) to allege that the finding was inconsistent with the weight of the information. Appeals may be made by the charged student for the above reasons in any case where sanctions are issued.

Written notification of the decision to appeal and the grounds for the appeal must be received by the Dean of Students (as designee of the Vice President for Student Success) within five (5) College business days after the original decision is communicated to the charged student. The appeal shall be a review of the record only, and no new meeting with the charged student or any alleged victim will be held. The Dean of Students will convene an Appeals Board comprised of Student Conduct Board members who were not involved in the original hearing. Appeal proceedings shall begin within five (5) College business days of the Dean of Students' receipt of the written notification from the student. The Appeals Board may affirm the original finding and sanction; affirm the

original finding but issue a new sanction of lesser severity; correct a procedural or factual defect; or reverse or dismiss the case if there was a procedural or factual defect that cannot be remedied otherwise. The Dean of Students will be responsible for notifying the adjudicated student of the outcome of the appeal within two (2) College business days of the conclusion of the appeal proceedings. This is the final appeal at the institutional level.

APPEAL PROCEDURES FOR SUSPENSION/EXPULSION (BoR 4.6.5.3)

When the sanction imposed includes a suspension or expulsion (even for one held in abeyance), the following procedures shall be provided to the student. The alleged offender shall have the right to appeal the outcome on any of the following grounds: (1) to consider new information, sufficient to alter the decision, or other relevant facts not brought out in the original hearing, because such information was not known or knowable to the person appealing during the time of the hearing; (2) to allege a procedural error within the hearing process that may have substantially impacted the fairness of the hearing, including but not limited to whether any hearing questions were improperly excluded or whether the decision was tainted by bias; or (3) to allege that the finding was inconsistent with the weight of the information. Appeals may be made by the alleged offender for the above reasons in any case where sanctions are issued—even those in which such sanctions are held “in abeyance,” such as probationary suspension or expulsion (BoR 4.6.5.3)

Steps for filing an appeal in cases involving suspension/expulsion are outlined below:

- 1. Students who are appealing suspension or expulsion and feel that further action is warranted following a decision may appeal to the Vice President for Student Success of the College. The appeal must be submitted to the Dean of Students in writing within five (5) College business days after the finding and sanction are communicated in writing to the adjudicated student. The Dean of Students is responsible for submitting the student’s written appeal, along with other appropriate documentation to the Vice President for Student Success. At the discretion of the Dean of Students, an extension of no more than one College business day may be granted after notification of suspension or expulsion has been communicated to the student. Students appealing decisions involving suspension or expulsion may have their movements on campus restricted to academic endeavors or other restrictions deemed appropriate during the period of appeal. Otherwise, no sanction will be enforced until a final decision is reached.**
- 2. The appeal shall be a review of the record only, and no new meeting with the charged student or any alleged victim will be held. The Dean of Students will convene an Appeals Board comprised of Student Conduct Board members who were not involved in the original hearing. Based on the findings of the Appeals Board, the Vice President for Student Success, or his/her designee, may affirm the original finding and sanction; affirm the original finding but issue a new sanction of lesser severity; remand the case back to the decision-maker to correct a procedural or factual defect; or reverse or dismiss the case if there was a procedural or factual defect that cannot be remedied by remand. The Vice President or his/her designee shall then issue a decision in writing to the charged student within a reasonable time period.**
- 3. The decision of the Vice president for Student Success or his/her designee may be appealed in writing within five (5) business days (as determined by the date of the decision letter) to the President of the institution solely on the four grounds set forth above.**

4. The President may affirm the original finding and sanction; affirm the original finding but issue a new sanction of greater or lesser severity, remand the case back to the decision maker to correct a procedural or factual defect; or reverse or dismiss the case if there was a procedural or factual defect that cannot be remedied by remand. The President's decision shall be issued in writing to the charged student within a reasonable time period. The President's decision shall be final decision of the institution.

5. Should the charged student wish to appeal the President's decision, he or she may appeal to the Board of Regents in accordance with the Board of Regents Policy 8.6.

6. The President may, at his or her discretion, review any student conduct case and take such action, as he or she deems appropriate.

REGENTS' APPEAL

Any student aggrieved by a final decision of the Vice President for Student Success or the College President may apply to the Board of Regents, without prejudice to his or her position, for a review of the decision, as provided in the Policies of the Board. Visit the Bylaws of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia at: <http://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section8/C2363> .

RECORDS MANAGEMENT

Student conduct records, except those pertaining to suspension or expulsion, will be maintained for a minimum of five years after the student's date of graduation or last date of attendance. Records involving suspension or expulsion will be retained permanently.

INTERPRETATION AND REVISION

Any question of interpretation or application of the Student Code shall be referred to the Dean of Students or his or her designee for final determination, unless otherwise determined by the President.

The *Student Code of Conduct* shall be reviewed at least every 3 years under the direction of the Vice President for Student Success. Any revisions shall be subject to the approval of the President.

This Student Code of Conduct was adapted with the permission of Edward N. Stoner II and John Wesley Lowery from "A Twenty First Century Model Student Conduct Code," as well as from The University System of Georgia Board of Regents Policy Manual, 4.6.5 - 4.6.5.4.

Revised July 1, 2016, per USG

COLLEGE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

STUDENT USE OF TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES POLICIES

SGSC Acceptable Use Policy- http://www.sgsc.edu/skins/userfiles/files/appropriate_use_policy.pdf

NOTICE TO STUDENTS REGARDING FERPA

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT OF 1974

South Georgia State College informs students of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. This act, as amended, stipulates that any student, regardless of age, who is or has been in attendance at an institution of postsecondary education, has the right to inspect and review his or her educational records within a reasonable period of time (not to exceed 45 days) after making a request for such review. In addition, this act was designed to protect the privacy of educational records and to provide guidelines for the correction of inaccurate or misleading data through informal and formal hearings. Students also have the right to file complaints with The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Office (FERPA) concerning alleged failures by the institution to comply with the act. South Georgia State College is in full compliance with the provisions of that legislation.

DIRECTORY INFORMATION

Although student records are considered confidential under this act, an exception is provided for directory information. Directory information, which may be released to the public at large, includes the following:

- Student name.
- City/county of residence.
- Dates of attendance.
- Grade level.
- Most recent previous school attended.
- Field of study.
- Degrees and Awards/Honors received.
- Participation in officially recognized sports and activities.
- Weight and height of athletes.
- Date and place of birth.

Further FERPA information is available through the Registrar's Office in Engram Hall and at this Department of Education website: <http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>.

DISCLOSURE OF EDUCATION RECORDS

South Georgia State College will disclose information from a student's record only with the written consent of the student, except:

- To College officials who have a legitimate educational interest in the educational records. A College official is a) A person employed by the College in an administrative, supervisory, academic, research, or support staff position; b) the Chancellor of the University System of Georgia and his staff; or c) a person employed by or under contract to South Georgia State College to perform a special task, such as an attorney or auditor. A College official has a legitimate educational interest if the official is a) performing a task that is specified in his or her position description or by contract agreement; b) performing a task related to a student's education; c) performing a task related to the discipline of a student; d) providing a service or benefit relating to the student or the student's family, such as health care, counseling, job placement, or financial aid.
- To certain officials of the U.S. Department of Education, the Comptroller General, and state and local education authorities, in connection with certain state or federally supported education programs.
- To comply with student's application for or receipt of financial aid, as necessary to determine the eligibility, amount, or conditions of the financial aid, or to enforce the terms and conditions of the aid.
- To comply with state law requiring disclosure that was adopted before November 19, 1974.
- To organizations conducting certain studies on behalf of SGSC.
- To accrediting organizations to carry out their functions.
- To parents of an eligible student who claim the student as a dependent for income tax purposes.
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena.
- To appropriate parties during a health or safety emergency.

CORRECTION OF EDUCATION RECORDS

Students have the right to ask to have records corrected that they believe are inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of their privacy rights. The procedures for the correction of education records are as follows:

- A student must ask the appropriate record custodian to amend a record. In doing so, the student should identify in writing the part of the record to be changed and specify what is inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of his or her privacy or other rights.
- South Georgia State College may comply with the request or decide based on the evidence not to comply. If it decides not to comply, South Georgia State College will notify the student of the decision and advise the student of the right to a hearing to

challenge the information believed inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student's rights.

- Upon written request, South Georgia State College will arrange for a hearing and notify the student, in reasonable advance, of the date, place, and time of the hearing.
- The hearing will be conducted by a hearing officer who is a disinterested party; however, the hearing officer may be an official of the College. The student shall be afforded a full and fair opportunity to present evidence relevant to the issues raised in the original request to amend the student's education records. The student may be assisted by one or more individuals, including an attorney.
- South Georgia State College will prepare a written decision based solely on the evidence presented and the reasons for the decision.
- If South Georgia State College decides that the challenged information is not inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student's rights, it will notify the student of the right to place in the record a statement commenting on the with the decision.
- The statement will be maintained as part of the student's education records as long as the contested portion is maintained. If South Georgia discloses the contested portion of the record, it must also disclose the statement.
- If South Georgia State College decides that the information is inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student's right of privacy, it will amend the record and notify the student, in writing, that the record has been amended.

PROCEDURE FOR WRITTEN STUDENT COMPLAINTS

Within the framework of Student Rights and Responsibilities, South Georgia State College students are encouraged to communicate responsibly on matters of concern. The policies and procedures for written student complaints may be found at this link: <http://www.sgsc.edu/current-students/student-handbook.cms>. Students may submit a written complaint utilizing the online portal found at this link: <http://www.sgsc.edu/current-students/complaint-non-academic.cms>

ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION

SGSC subscribes to the University System of Georgia's initiative on Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR). Also known as "mediation," ADR aims to resolve disputes between two persons without a formal grievance procedure or legal action. The goal of such a resolution is to satisfy the needs of both parties in a non-threatening manner in an atmosphere where both sides are expressed and possible solutions to the dispute are developed by the disputants themselves. To arrive at a win-win solution that will satisfy both parties, a certified mediator

facilitates the expressions of concern, identifies issues for negotiation, and helps the parties work toward an agreement that can satisfy their needs. This process works very well for most disputes that do not involve criminal activity or academic grades. Further, the positions of the disputants are of minimal concern. Therefore, disputes between student and faculty member, faculty and staff, student and student, and faculty/staff and administration can be reasonably settled through mediation. For information on Alternative Dispute Resolution (mediation), please contact Academic Affairs at 912-260-4201. Refer to this Handbook for the grade appeal process.

STATEMENT ON EQUAL EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

South Georgia State College, in compliance with federal law, implements affirmative action/equal opportunity to all employees, students and applicants for employment, admissions, financial aid, and education services without regard to race, color, gender, sexual orientation, religion, creed, national origin, age, veteran status or disability. This policy is consistent with the requirements and objectives of Executive Order 11246, as amended, Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Act of 1974, as amended (#38 USC 2012), Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and their implementing regulations.

SEXUAL Misconduct Policy

Consistent with federal law and University System of Georgia policy, sexual misconduct of employees or students in the University System is prohibited and shall subject the offender to dismissal or other sanctions. Copies of the Sexual Harassment Policy are available online, http://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section4/C327/#p4.1.7_sexual_misconduct_policy

STUDENT EQUITY CONCERNS

All student grievances concerning discrimination based on race, color, gender, sexual orientation, religion, creed, national origin, age, veteran status or disability shall be directed to the Affirmative Action Officer of the College, who is the Director of Human Resources.

Affirmative Action Officer, South Georgia State College
100 W. College Park Drive, Douglas, Georgia 31533-5098
912-260-4377

Upon receipt of a grievance, the Affirmative Action Officer will discuss the grievance with the aggrieved party. Following this conference, the Affirmative Action Officer, aggrieved party and the respondent to the grievance will meet in an effort to negotiate an agreement between the two parties. Should this negotiation fail, the President of the College will appoint an ad hoc committee comprised of three faculty members and two students to investigate the situation and recommend a resolution of the grievance to the President. The decision of the President is

final insofar as the institution is concerned. Appeals beyond the local institution may be filed according to the Board of Regents' Policy Manual. The Vice President for Student Success will provide complete information concerning appeals beyond the local institution.

ALCOHOL AND DRUG PREVENTION PROGRAM

South Georgia State College's alcohol and drug prevention program is designed to promote personal health and success in college. The College conducts a biennial review to ensure compliance with the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act. For more information, see www.edc.org/hec/dfsca. Consistent with federal and state laws, South Georgia State College is a drug-free workplace. Students receive alcohol and drug information through campus publications and during college orientation programs and campus activities. Related issues are actively explored through courses including health, psychology, sociology, nursing, and criminal justice. Alcohol and drug counseling referrals are offered through the Office of Student Success. Information regarding local, state, or federal laws related to alcohol and drug violations and penalties is published in the South Georgia State College Public Safety Information booklet. This booklet contains Student's Right to Know/Annual Security Report. Printed copies are available in Shannon Hall, and the booklet is online at:

http://www.sgc.edu/president/departments/public_safety/pdf/PublicSafetySecurityReport.pdf

DISABILITY SERVICES GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Students who feel that a decision by an Office of Disability Services (ODS) staff member or faculty member does not fully comply with federal disability legislation should follow the appropriate procedure as outlined below:

Students should first meet with the ODS Coordinator and attempt to resolve the problem informally. It is anticipated that most questions will be resolved in this way. However, situations unresolved at the ODS Coordinator's level may be appealed to the Director of Student Life (DSL). The Coordinator of the ODS will assist the student in making an appointment with the (DSL) and will forward materials relevant to the complaint to the DSL. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the DSL, the DSL will assist the student in appealing to the Dean of Students (DOS). The DOS will meet with the student in an attempt to resolve the complaint. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the DOS, the DOS will assist the student in appealing to the Vice President of Student Success (VPSS). The VPSS will meet with the student in an attempt to resolve the complaint. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the VPSS, the VPSS will assist the student in appealing to the Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA) and will forward all relevant materials to the VPAA with copies to the ADA Compliance Officer. The VPAA will meet with the student and attempt to resolve the appeal. If the VPAA

and the student are not successful, the student will be referred to the ADA Compliance Office, the President and ultimately to the Board of Regents.

RISK MANAGEMENT/ASSUMPTION OF RISK

Students should actively seek information about any risks involved in all of the student activities and college-related events on campus and off campus. Students must sign a release form stating that they are aware of the risks involved and that they carry sufficient insurance for their protection. Waiver and Release forms are available on the website or in the Office of Campus Life.

STUDENT VOTING PRIVILEGES

Students are encouraged to vote in all federal, state, and local elections. Consistent with University System policy, a student whose class schedule will otherwise prevent him or her from voting will be permitted an excused absence for the interval reasonably required for voting. It is noted that opportunities for early voting will reduce much of the need for such absences.

FREE SPEECH AREA - A free speech area has been designated by the College to maximize the opportunity for free discussion and expression while minimizing the potential for disruption of classroom and College activities, and interference with the ability of students to obtain an education. Information about and permission to schedule use of the Free Speech Area, located in the green space by the cafeteria but can be relocated to meet the needs of the College, may be obtained through the Office of Campus Life in Powell Hall. Requesting individuals or organizations must complete a request form prior to the proposed event, which is available on the SGSC Campus Life website.

CAMPUS SOLICITATION

If a non-profit organization receives permission to contact students, space will be provided in designated areas. Outside organizations, including religious, political, and civic organizations are welcome within these restrictions. Such solicitations must be approved by the Vice President for Student Success. Individuals or off-campus organizations may not solicit students in the residence halls, classrooms, or library.

CAMPUS VISITORS

The South Georgia State College campus, buildings, and facilities are designated for the use of the students, faculty, and staff of the College. Guests of students, faculty, and staff are welcome on the campus and are subject to all campus regulations while visiting the College. Loiterers or visitors whose conduct is in any way detrimental to the safety of students, faculty,

and staff and/or operation of the College shall be asked to leave. Also, individuals who refuse to identify themselves to a College faculty or staff member, including public safety officers, shall be asked to leave the campus. Persons who refuse to respond to this request and/or who return to the campus after having been instructed to leave shall be in violation of state law and shall be subject to arrest.

CHILDREN ON CAMPUS

Children of currently-enrolled students are allowed on campus only with the direct supervision of that parent. Children will not be allowed to roam the campus or be left unattended by their parent(s) at any time in any location.

Students who are parents of unattended children found on campus will be removed from their class to take possession of the children, and may be asked to remove the children from campus if other arrangements cannot be made.

Children may not be present in an academic class or lab. Children are to follow the same rules of reasonable behavior that apply to South Georgia State College students, and faculty and staff members may request that a child be removed from campus at any time if the child's presence disrupts the learning environment of other students.

SMOKING POLICY –

The University System of Georgia Board of Regents approved March 19, 2014 to make all institutions owned by USG tobacco free. South Georgia State College effectively became a tobacco free campus on August 1, 2014.

The policy applies to all locations as well as employees, students, contractors, subcontractors, and visitors. Plus, all events hosted by SGSC, or on one of our locations, shall be tobacco and smoke free, according to the policy. It is also applicable 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

More information on the USG adopted policy is available at this link: [http://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section9/policy/C503/#p9.1.7 tobacco and smoke free campus policy](http://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section9/policy/C503/#p9.1.7_tobacco_and_smoke_free_campus_policy).

Appendix A

South Georgia State College Student Government Association Constitution

Preamble

We, the students of South Georgia State College, desiring a democratic, efficient, and responsible Student Government; uphold the belief in the dignity and worth of each individual; working to cultivate and preserve the ideals of responsible citizenship among the student body; desires of the student body by providing the students with every opportunity to have a beneficial college experience; and operating with the administration and faculty in working for the betterment of this College, do hereby establish this Constitution.

Article I – STUDENT BODY MEMBERSHIP

Section 1: Composition

The student body shall be composed of students officially enrolled in South Georgia State College and paying South Georgia State College student activity fees.

Section 2: Privileges

Any of the above recognized students shall be entitled to vote in student elections and make nominations for said election on the campus in which they take a majority of their credit hours. Only students officially enrolled in South Georgia State College may run for office.

Section 3: Name of Organization

The elected officers and representatives of the student body shall be known as the South Georgia State College Student Government Association, hereafter referred to as the SGA.

Article II - AUTHORITIES AND POWERS

Section 1: Authority

Paragraph A: The SGA, chosen through popular elections by the student body of South Georgia State College, shall serve as the official agent of the student body of South Georgia State College; shall protect students' rights; shall serve as a liaison between students, administrators, and organized governing bodies of the University; shall foster an environment of civic responsibility; and shall advocate on behalf of the students' academic, social, and cultural welfare.

Paragraph B: It is established under the authority of the Statutes of South Georgia State College. The duties and functions of this organization are such as are herein conferred upon it.

Section 2: Function

Paragraph A: The SGA shall work subject to the policies and purposes of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, of South Georgia State College, and of the student body whom they represent.

Paragraph B: The SGA shall recommend to the Student Services Committee recognition of student clubs and organizations.

Paragraph C: The SGA shall establish rules regulating the SGA elections and recommend these rules to the Student Services Committee

Paragraph D: The SGA shall make recommendations to the Student Services Committee concerning any considered changes in college rules governing student conduct.

Paragraph E: The SGA shall be the sole authority authorized to make recommendations concerning allocation of Student Activity monies to the Student Services Committee.

Paragraph F: The Vice President of Student Success or designee of the Vice President of Student Success shall assist the SGA in planning and undertaking all activities involving the expenditure of Student Activity monies.

Paragraph G: The SGA shall solicit, receive, and discuss matters of interest and concern to the students, either as individuals or as organizations, and will present the interest and concerns as policy proposals to the appropriate South Georgia State College Administrative office, and/or to the President of South Georgia State College.

Paragraph H: The SGA may require financial reports from organizations receiving appropriations from Student Activity monies and shall monitor the expenditure of all Student Activity monies.

Section 3: Administrative Structure

Paragraph A: The placement of the SGA in the administrative structure of South Georgia State College shall be as follows:

President
Vice President of Student Success
Student Services Committee
Student Body (SGA)

Paragraph B: The SGA Advisor shall be appointed by the President of South Georgia State College after consultation with the SGA.

Section 4: Ultimate Authority

The President of South Georgia State College shall have ultimate authority in decisions made by the SGA.

Article III – ORGANIZATION

Section 1: Multi-Campus Structure

Chapters of the Student Government Association must exist on the Douglas and Waycross campuses of the College, and may be formed on other campuses if events warrant. Each Chapter will have parallel committees structures and membership. Each chapter may pursue separate activities and initiatives, but attention is always to be paid to opportunities for collaboration, co-sponsorship, and teamwork.

Section 2: Membership

The SGA shall be composed of five (5) officers (President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Parliamentarian), and a minimum of five (5) representatives and a maximum of twenty (20) representatives on each campus. One representative must represent the residential community on the campus. In order to allow for adequate student representation in the SGA, as the size of the student body increases, there shall be one representative for each two hundred fifty (250) students. The number of representatives to be elected each year will be based on the official fall student body count for the College.

Article IV - QUALIFICATIONS

Section 1: Qualifications for President, Vice President, Parliamentarian, Secretary, and Treasurer of SGA

Paragraph A: To be eligible for President, Vice President, Parliamentarian, Secretary, or Treasurer of the SGA, a candidate must have a cumulative academic average of 2.5 for work attempted while at South Georgia State College and must maintain a cumulative average of 2.25 during his/her tenure of office.

Paragraph B: The candidate must have accumulated at least 12 academic hours at South Georgia State College by the time he/she takes office and have been enrolled for at least one semester.

Paragraph C: The candidate must be currently enrolled at South Georgia State College during the semester in which the election is held and must have been enrolled at South Georgia State College the preceding semester.

Paragraph D: The candidate must have a minimum of six (6) semester credit hours each semester at South Georgia State College throughout the term of office with the exception of the summer and/or graduation semester. Faculty, staff, and administrative staff are not eligible for membership of SGA.

Paragraph E: The candidate must have at least one faculty or staff recommendation.

Paragraph F: The candidate must not be on or have been on conduct probation, academic probation, or special action as specified by the judicial system. Appeal of this qualification can be granted by the Dean of students.

Paragraph G: The candidate must have attended at least four meetings or twenty-five percent (whichever is less).

Section 2: Qualifications for Representative of the SGA

Paragraph A: A candidate must be enrolled at South Georgia State College during the semester in which the election is held.

Paragraph B: To be eligible as a representative of the SGA, a candidate must have a cumulative academic average of 2.00 and must maintain that average during his/her tenure of office. Appeal of this qualification can be granted by the Dean of students.

Paragraph C: Each candidate must be enrolled in at least six (6) hours per semester, with the exemption of summer and/or graduation semester.

Paragraph D: The candidate must have at least one faculty or staff recommendation.

Paragraph E: The candidate must not be on or have been on conduct probation, academic probation, or special action as specified by the judicial system. Appeal of this qualification can be granted by the Dean of students.

Section 3: Term of Office

The term of each officer and each representative elected Spring semester shall begin on the last SGA meeting of Spring semester, at which time the terms of the preceding officers and representatives will expire. All newly elected officers and representatives elect shall serve ex-officio on the SGA from the point that the election is certified until the final day of the semester.

Section 4: Assumption of Office

All newly elected officers and representatives elect shall serve ex-officio on the SGA from the point that the election is certified until the final day of the semester. The first scheduled

meeting following elections shall be a joint meeting of the Current officers and representatives and newly elected officers and representatives. At the conclusion of this joint meeting, newly elected senators and officers will be sworn into their new office upon taking an Oath of Office, administered by The Vice President of Student Success or designee of the Vice President of Student Success the Oath is as follows:

I, _____, do solemnly swear to persevere in my duties as a representative for the students of South Georgia State College, to work for a better student government and to maintain the dignity of the office during my term. I do solemnly swear to execute my office faithfully and honestly and to respect and preserve the Constitution on which our Student Government is founded.

Section 5: Removal from Office

Paragraph A: Any officer or representative of the SGA may be removed from office through impeachment and trial. Impeachment shall only occur by a two thirds majority vote of the officers and representatives of the SGA on charges of malfeasance (bad conduct, dereliction of duties, corruption, etc.), misfeasance (breach of policy, improper performance, injurious exercise of authority, etc.), and/or nonfeasance (disregard and/or failure of duty, inattention, etc.) of office. Any SGA Officer or SGA Representative may bring these charges. The President of South Georgia State College and the accused shall be given a minimum of five working days notice of the date of the impeachment meeting and the impeachment accusations. The President of South Georgia State College, or his/her designee, and the accused shall be given the opportunity to be present during the impeachment meeting. If impeached, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial by the South Georgia State College Dispute Resolution Committee. The Chairperson of the Dispute Resolution Committee shall preside over the trial. The President of South Georgia State College shall appoint nine South Georgia State College students to serve on the Committee during the trial. The nine students, two faculty, and one staff on the Committee shall serve as the Jury. The accused shall be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him/her; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his/her favor, and to have Assistance of Counsel for his/her defense if the accused so chooses. If the accused is convicted of the charges by 9 of 12 members in a secret ballot vote of the Dispute Resolution Committee's jury, he/she shall retain the right to appeal the decision in writing through judicial appeal, within five (5) working days, to the President of South Georgia State College. If the President upholds jury's decision, the accused shall retain the Right to appeal the final decision, within twenty (20) working days, to the Board of Regents as a right of judicial appeal. If the Board of Regents upholds the President's decision, the student shall be removed from office and forfeit all salary and benefits. If no appeal is made by the accused to the President of South Georgia State College within five (5) working days of the jury's decision, the student shall be removed from the office.

Paragraph B: If any SGA Officer or SGA Representative loses his/her required grade-point average, while in office, he/she shall have one semester to raise his/her grades before he/she

must forfeit his/her position. The student shall retain the right of judicial appeal as in paragraph A.

Paragraph C: An elected or appointed official who wishes to resign shall submit a resignation in writing to the Vice President, who shall inform the SGA at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

Paragraph D: All students who qualify as candidates for representative may apply for a vacant seat. The SGA President will fill vacancies by appointment. Appointees must meet the qualifications set forth for the respective office by the Constitution and must be approved by at least 51% of the officers and representatives of the SGA.

Paragraph E: The President of SGA may not be the president of any other student club.

Paragraph F: If it so happens that a vacancy occurs within the entire student government, the advisor may select students to represent the SGA as interim for given year until the next election.

Article V - DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Section 1 - The President of the SGA shall:

- Assist in the planning and implementation of the SGA leadership retreat.
- Represent the student body in student affairs and in student relations with various constituencies of the College.
- Attend SGA meetings and SGA retreat
- Chair all meetings of the SGA.
- Represent South Georgia State College on the University System's Student Advisory Council (SAC).
- Appoint and remove committee members from any committee with two-thirds approval of the officers and representatives of the SGA.
- Fill vacancies by appointment for any unfilled or unexpired terms of officers or representatives. Appointees must meet the qualifications set forth for the respective office by the Constitution and must be approved by at least 25% of the officers and representatives of the SGA.
- Vote only in case of a tie in SGA proceedings.
- Work with the Vice President of Student Success or designee of the Vice President of Student Success to coordinate SGA-sponsored activities and to assist with other campus-wide activities involving students.
- Serve as an ex officio member of all SGA committees.
- May serve on the South Georgia State College Student Services Committee in accordance to South Georgia State College Statutes.
- Be present during the counting of ballots for representatives.
- Serve as the student representative to the South Georgia State College Foundation Board of Trustees.

- Create, with SGA approval, ad hoc committees to address issues inappropriate for the student government to act as a whole.
- Is encouraged to attend and represent the SGA at conferences, conventions and faculty or alumni meetings.

Section 2: The Vice President shall:

- Assume the duties and powers of the President in the absence of the President or upon the request of the President.
- Attend SGA meetings and SGA retreat.
- Assume the office of President in the event the office should become vacant.
- Serve as a member of a South Georgia State College committee as assigned by the SGA President.
- Coordinate the responsibilities of all SGA committees including appointing the chairperson of each committee and overseeing the functions of all said committees.
- Undertake responsibilities and duties as may be assigned by the SGA President.
- May serve on the South Georgia State College Student Services Committee in accordance to South Georgia State College Statutes.
- Be present during the counting of ballots for representatives.
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Section 3: The Parliamentarian shall:

- Keep parliamentary order at all SGA meetings according to Robert's Rules of Order.
- Attend SGA meetings and SGA retreat.
- Be chairperson of publicity for all SGA and other student activity functions.
- Undertake responsibilities and duties as may be assigned by the SGA President.
- May serve on the South Georgia State College Student Services Committee in accordance to South Georgia State College Statutes.
- Be present during the counting of ballots for representatives.
- Ensure members of SGA are upholding Constitutional requirements.

Section 4: The Secretary shall:

- Attend SGA meetings and SGA retreat.
- Record the minutes of all SGA meetings and provide copies to members, the SGA Advisor, and the Vice President of Student Services or designee of the Vice President of Student Success five working days before the next regularly scheduled meeting.
- Handle all correspondence for the SGA.
- Perform such other duties as may be assigned by the SGA President.
- May serve on the South Georgia State College Student Services Committee in accordance to South Georgia State College Statutes.
- Be present during the counting of ballots for representatives.
- Distribute the minutes as designated by SGA President.

Section 5: The Treasurer shall:

- Attend SGA meetings and SGA retreat.
- May have access to all financial books and records concerning student activities monies and budgets.
- Submit monthly financial statement of the SGA budget to the SGA.
- May serve on the South Georgia State College Student Services Committee in accordance to South Georgia State College Statutes.
- Be present during the counting of ballots for SGA representatives.
- Be knowledgeable of student fee usage policies and ensure organization is meeting the standards of Generally Accepted Accounting Practices.

Section 6: Representatives shall:

- Represent the student body in matters affecting student interest.
- Attend SGA meetings and SGA retreat.
- Serve on SGA committees.
- Assist in the promotion of SGA sponsored and other campus-wide activities.
- Perform such other duties as may be assigned by the SGA President.
- Be present during the counting of ballots (or tallying of votes) for officers.

ARTICLE VI - MEETINGS

Section 1: The SGA shall meet at least twice a month (September through April, and at least once in December and May) at an established time and place, and at such other times as deemed necessary by the President of the SGA.

Section 2: Roberts Rules of Order as revised shall be the final authority on the parliamentary procedure observed at all meetings of the SGA when not in conflict with the provisions of this Constitution.

Section 3: All officers and representatives of the SGA shall be required to attend all meetings. Any member absent for more than two regularly scheduled meetings in one semester without an excuse satisfactory to the other officers and representatives shall be subject to removal from office by impeachment and trial under the terms of Article IV, Section 5, Paragraph A and the forfeiture of any monetary compensation and benefits.

Section 4: A quorum for SGA meetings shall consist of 51% of the active officers and representatives. No official business shall be transacted without a quorum.

Section 5: All motions pertaining to regular business shall be passed by a simple majority of officers and representatives present and voting.

Section 6: The meetings of the SGA shall be open to all members of the College community. In compliance with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the College does not discriminate against a person with a disability. No student will be denied access to any program, service, or to any administrator or faculty person because of the person's physical disability.

ARTICLE VII - COMMITTEES

Section 1: The SGA shall be divided into various committees to assist in carrying out its functions. Committees to be established will be determined at the initial regular meeting of the SGA each fall. Committee membership shall be appointed by the SGA President with the approval of at least 51% of the SGA. No committee shall have more than six members. A Night Student Committee will be formed each fall.

Section 2: The President of the SGA, with the approval of the other officers and representatives, will recommend to the Vice President of Student Success or designee of the Vice President of Student Success, students to the following College standing or ad hoc committees:

- Discipline Committee (3)
- Library Committee (2)

ARTICLE VIII - ELECTIONS

Section 1: Elections for all SGA Executive Officers and SGA Representatives (President, Vice President, Parliamentarian, Treasurer, Secretary and Representatives) shall be held during the first or the second week in March. Voting shall be held consecutively on the first Tuesday and Wednesday of March or the second Tuesday and Wednesday of March if the first is unavailable. If voting is unable to be held the before mentioned specified days the SGA shall determine the best available date for voting to be held.

Section 2: During the first full week of class each Spring semester, the Vice President of Student Success or designee of the Vice President of Student Success shall announce the procedures and deadline for filing an application for office, the date of the candidates forum, the date of the election, and campaign guidelines.

Section 3: Candidates for SGA Executive Offices and SGA Representatives must file an application with the Vice President of Student Success or designee of the Vice President of Student Success by the second Thursday in February.

Section 4: The Vice President of Student Success or designee of the Vice President of Student Success shall certify that each candidate has filed a complete application and has met the criteria for eligibility. The Vice President of Student Success or designee of the Vice President of Student Success shall also notify each candidate that he or she has met the requirements, and is eligible to participate in the candidates' forum and to begin campaign activities.

Section 5: A candidates' forum shall be held on the third Thursday in February. Each candidate for officer or representative who has been certified by the Vice President of Student Success or designee of the Vice President of Student Success shall be allowed four (4) minutes to address the student body

Section 6: Campaign spending shall be limited to no more than \$100.00. Candidates must submit a list of expenditures to the Vice President of Student Success or designee of the Vice President of Student Success at the completion of the election. The candidate will be responsible for all expenses incurred during the election.

Section 7: Campaigning may begin the day after applications are due to the Vice President of Student Success or designee of the Vice President of Student Success. All publicity must be posted according to campus policy. No campaigning may be done within fifty feet of a public polling area. A candidate is responsible for any and all literature on his or her behalf. A candidate may not put his or her literature over, remove, nor deface another candidate. All publicity must be removed within twenty-four hours after the closing of the polls.

Section 8: Elections shall be conducted by the Vice President of Student Success or designee of the Vice President of Student Success and the SGA officers. No candidate for office may serve as an election official.

Section 9: The votes shall be counted by the Vice President of Student Success or designee of the Vice President of Student Success, the SGA Advisor, and the SGA officers. Each candidate may be present during the counting of ballots.

Section 10: In elections where there are only two candidates, the winning candidate shall be the one receiving the most votes. Should there be more than two candidates running for office, the winning candidate must receive a simple majority of the votes cast. Should no candidate receive a majority of the votes (or if there is a tie), a runoff election shall be scheduled, as soon as possible, between the top two candidates.

Section 11: Candidates' names will be placed on the ballot in order by date and time of submission.

Section 12: Ballots will be retained by the Vice President of Student Success or designee of the Vice President of Student Success for a minimum of one year following the election dates.

Section 13: Any candidate or member of the student body wishing to contest the election will have two working days after the official announcement of the election results to submit a letter specifying charges to the President of South Georgia State College, who shall render a decision as to the validity of the contesting action.

ARTICLE IX - AMENDMENTS

Section 1: Proposal and Ratification of Amendments

Paragraph A: An amendment to this Constitution shall first be proposed by presenting a clear statement of the amendment with signatures of fifty (50) qualified voters to the SGA Secretary. A qualified voter shall be defined as any student officially enrolled in South Georgia State College and paying South Georgia State College student activity fees or any student paying South Georgia State College student activity fees.

Paragraph B: The proposed amendment must be introduced at a regular meeting of the SGA and recommended for consideration by two-thirds vote of the officers and representatives of the SGA. If approved for consideration, copies of the proposed amendment will be posted on bulletin boards and available for student body review.

Paragraph C: The proposed amendment must receive a two-thirds majority vote of approval by the officers and representatives of the SGA in order to be submitted for ratification by the student body. Then, it must be ratified by a simple majority vote of the South Georgia State College student body. Finally, it must have the approval of the President of South Georgia State College before it will become part of this SGA Constitution.

ARTICLE X – RATIFICATION

The Constitution will become official upon a majority of the votes cast by the students of South Georgia State College and the approval of the President of South Georgia State College.

Article XI – CONSTITUTIONAL SUPREMACY

Upon ratification, this Constitution and its associated codes shall supersede all previous governing documents, which shall be deemed null and void.

Amended November 2012, Approved March 2013.