

**VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**STUDENT HANDBOOK**  
**2014 – 2015**

The *Virginia State University Student Handbook* is edited and published by the Department of Student Activities and the Student Handbook Committee. It serves as a general source of information for Virginia State University students. All information is subject to change without warning. The Department of Student Activities would like to thank all University officials, programs, offices, and departments that contributed to the completion of the *Virginia State University Student Handbook*

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## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

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It is with great pride that I extend greetings to each of you as you begin your journey at Virginia State University. Founded in 1882 as one of the state’s two land-grant institutions, Virginia State University remains true to its mission—to provide educational programs that challenge the intellect and to prepare students to become knowledgeable, perceptive, and humane citizens of the world.

With a cadre of dedicated faculty, staff, and administrators, this institution stands ready to assist you as you move closer to the attainment of your professional and personal goals. The time you spend actively engaged in educational pursuits will determine what opportunities you will have in years to come.

I am confident that you will accept the responsibilities associated with attending Virginia State University and that you will graduate with the resources to successfully navigate the terrain that lies ahead. I ask that you work hard, treat others with the same respect that you desire, and know that anything worth having comes with sacrifice.

With open arms we welcome you to our community of learners, where the number one priority is you—the students. To the most important people on campus, I say good luck and best wishes for a successful tenure at Virginia State University.

Keith T. Miller, Ph.D.  
President

# VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY

## MISSION

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Virginia State University, America's first fully state-supported four-year institution of higher learning for Blacks, is a comprehensive university and one of two land-grant institutions in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Its mission is to promote and sustain academic programs that integrate instruction, research, and extension/public service in a design most responsive to the needs and endeavors of individuals and groups within its scope of influence. Ultimately, the University is dedicated to the promotion of knowledgeable, perceptive, and humane citizens—secure in their self-awareness, equipped for personal fulfillment, sensitive to the needs and aspirations of others, and committed to assuming productive roles in a challenging and ever-changing global society.

## PRINCIPLES

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1. Honoring its heritage and tradition of eminent concern for the education, welfare, and progress of all people, the University welcomes and extends its resources to all who strive for academic excellence, whatever their nationality, race, ethnicity, or religious affiliation.
2. The University seeks to fulfill its mission by enrolling students with a diverse range of talents and abilities, including (a) students whose precollege records reveal high academic achievement and talent; (b) students who, through a combination of factors, have demonstrated the potential to be successful in college; and (c) students whose secondary records reveal potential but who need enhanced academic preparation.
3. The University, using available resources, offers programs that are of interest to students, meet current and changing societal needs, and fall within the scope of its mission.
4. The University's living/learning community seeks to cultivate a sense of pride and dignity within each individual and to promote an enduring search for knowledge among all students, staff, and faculty.
5. Those who matriculate (enroll in the University as candidates for a degree) are required to demonstrate a broad understanding of and competency in the arts and sciences and a commitment to intellectual development and scholarship in their fields of study.
6. Graduates of Virginia State University are prepared to enter the workforce of the twenty-first century, pursue advanced study, assume leadership roles, and be competitive in a global society.
7. The University's constituencies participate in collegial decision making.

# ACADEMIC POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND REGULATIONS

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Virginia State University features academic environments within five colleges: the College of Agriculture, the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business, the College of Engineering and Technology, the College of Natural and Health Sciences, the College of Education, the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, and the College of Graduate Studies. The University offers 55 baccalaureate and master's degree programs, 2 doctoral degree programs, and 3 certificates. Virginia State University is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The School of Business is accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business.

Graduate programs provide access for nontraditional students in the surrounding counties to continue their education toward formal degrees, for professional growth, or for self-enrichment. The emphasis is on convenience and access, with workshops, seminars, and institutes, in addition to credit courses, on campus and at off-campus sites.

## ACADEMIC HONESTY

Intellectual and scholastic freedoms are safeguarded through the application of principles of academic honesty. Violations of academic honesty represent a serious breach of the Virginia State University honor code and may be considered grounds for disciplinary action. Academic dishonesty includes (a) plagiarism—presentation of the written words of others as if they were one's own; and (b) cheating—giving, aiding, or seeking improper assistance during the process of taking a test or examination.

Penalties for academic dishonesty may be loss of credit for the work in question, loss of credit for the course, and/or suspension or expulsion from the University.

## ACADEMIC SANCTIONS

1. A new student (freshman or transfer student without an associate's degree) must earn a minimum grade point average (GPA) of 1.5 each semester during the first two regular semesters in residence. Thereafter, the student must earn at least a 2.0 semester GPA each regular semester (to avoid Academic Warning) or have a cumulative GPA of 2.0 (to avoid Probation or Suspension).

Transfer students with an associate's degree must earn a 2.0 semester GPA each regular semester (to avoid Academic Warning) or maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.0 (to avoid Probation or Suspension) to remain in good academic standing.

2. **Academic Warning** will occur when a student's semester GPA falls below the required minimum.
3. **Academic Probation** occurs when a student's semester and cumulative GPAs fall below the required minimum for two semesters.
4. **Suspension** for poor scholarship will occur when a student's semester and cumulative GPAs fall below the required minimum for three semesters. Students will not be readmitted to the University except under the following circumstances:
  - a. Students who return to the University having earned an associate's degree (college-prep track) will be readmitted under the same terms and conditions as a transfer student.
  - b. Under exceptional circumstances (such as serious and documented health or financial difficulties), a student may appeal his/her suspension to the department chair and school dean who may then, in turn, recommend readmission to the Academic Credits Committee. Such an appeal can be made only after the student has been out for the period of one year. The student must present a letter from at least one

faculty member in support of his/her appeal. If the appeal is successful, the student will be readmitted on “academic warning.”

5. If a student voluntarily withdraws from the University for a semester for any reason, that student will return with the same status with which he/she left. (That is, if the student left on Academic Warning, he/she will return on Academic Warning; if he/she left on Academic Probation, he/she will return on Academic Probation.)

**STUDENT MUST MAINTAIN EITHER THE SEMESTER OR CUMULATIVE GPA SPECIFIED BELOW:**

Completed Semesters	Semester GPA		Cumulative GPA
1	1.5		N/A
2	1.5		N/A
3+	2.0	OR	2.0

## ADVISEMENT

Upon admission to the University, first-year students will be assigned an academic advisor in the University College. Nontraditional students and students who have not declared a major field of study will also be advised through the University College. Every other student will be assigned an academic advisor from the department in which he/she is enrolled.

## CLASSROOM ATTENDANCE

Classroom attendance is expected of all students. An instructor may reduce the grade for any student who exceeds four hours of absences for a four-semester-hour course, three hours of absences for a three-semester-hour course, two hours of absences for a two-semester-hour course, and/or one hour of absences for a one-semester-hour course. Faculty members must include in the course syllabus any attendance policies that will affect grades, including those concerning tardiness and early departures from class.

## CLASSROOM CONDUCT

Each instructor is responsible for maintaining a classroom environment that facilitates effective teaching and learning. The classroom setting should equip students for the behavior expected in the professional environments in which they are preparing to work.

Disruptive and disrespectful behavior on the part of any student shall not be tolerated by the instructor. The instructor shall always be in charge of the class and has the right to determine appropriate standards of behavior in the class, as long as the requirement does not infringe upon the individual’s rights. Appropriate classroom decorum shall be described in the course syllabus.

Use of cell phones, similar communication devices, or any unauthorized electronic data storage device in learning situations, other than to receive emergency notifications, may constitute a violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

## CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Every effort should be made to conduct classes in a manner that stimulates intellectual growth and prepares students to be competitive in the global marketplace.

Within the framework of academic freedom, a faculty member has the right and responsibility to deliver instruction in a professional manner. The following guidelines must be observed:

1. Faculty members must adhere to established University policies. Any exception or change must be approved in writing by the department chair, school dean, and provost, as appropriate.
2. A well-developed course syllabus must be distributed to students by the second meeting of class.
3. A current course syllabus must be filed with the department chair and school dean by the second meeting of class.
4. All course expectations, including projects, term papers, examinations, and reports, must be indicated on the syllabus.
5. Copies of all major examinations shall be filed with the department chair at the end of the semester.
6. Examinations, essays, projects, term papers, and reports must be returned to students in a timely manner. If the instructor has a reason for retaining a student's work, the student must be given an opportunity to review the document after it has been graded.
7. A statement explaining what a student must accomplish to remove an incomplete ("I") grade shall be submitted to the department chair and student when the grade of incomplete is awarded.
8. Students' final examinations shall be retained by the instructor for 12 months. Examinations may be retained beyond this time as appropriate or necessary. If the instructor leaves the University, the examinations shall be filed with the department chair. Adjunct and part-time faculty are also expected to follow this policy.
9. Accuracy and fairness in grading students' work are required of faculty members. Every effort should be made to consider all related factors when the final grade is assigned.
10. Requests to change the grade originally assigned shall be made only in unusual circumstances. Such changes threaten the integrity of the academic process. The instructor is expected, therefore, to review course requirements and calculations carefully before submitting final grades.
11. If an instructor is more than 15 minutes late to class without prior notice, students may leave. The department chair should be notified by the students and/or the faculty member that the instructor did not meet with the class.
12. Instructors who expect to be absent from any class should obtain permission from their department chair or school dean and make arrangements for students to engage in an activity related to the class.

## **CLASS SCHEDULING**

Class schedules must be followed. Faculty members must receive approval from the department chair and the school dean prior to changing class times and locations that were designated in the printed class schedule.

Instructors should expect a minimum of two hours of study and work outside of class for each one hour of in-class instruction. Sufficient work should be assigned to be completed outside of class to maintain this minimum standard. Under no circumstances should a student be allowed to enroll in two classes that meet during the same period. Faculty availability during critical periods: It is imperative that faculty be available to students, colleagues, and administrators during critical periods in which registration, advising, examinations, and completion of degree requirements are occurring.

## COURSE SYLLABUS

Faculty members must provide students with a current course syllabus by the second meeting of class. The course syllabus must be comprehensive and shall include, but is not limited to, the following information:

1. Instructor's first and last name
2. Semester and year the course is being offered
3. Office hours when the instructor will be available to students
4. Description of course content
5. Course objectives
6. Special assignments and due dates
7. Current bibliography, as appropriate
8. Examination and special-assignment schedules
9. Classroom-decorum and attendance policies
10. Grading system and other pertinent information

## GRADES

The approved grade symbols and grade-symbol definitions are as follows:

Grade	Definition	Quality Points
A	Excellent	4
B	Good	3
C	Average	2
D	Below Average	1
F	Failure	0

The following grades are also used and have no quality-point value, thereby being neutral in GPA determination:

Grade	Definition
I	Incomplete grade: a student, otherwise passing, has for good reason failed to complete course requirements; for undergraduates, must be removed within one year or be changed to an F
P	Satisfactory completion: at the graduate level, successful completion of research and thesis
S	Satisfactory completion: at the undergraduate level, successful completion of certain experiences Satisfactory progress: at the graduate level Satisfactory progress: in research and thesis
U	Unsatisfactory performance: student has not earned credit hours for which she/he has enrolled
W	Withdrawn
R	No credit given: administrative indication; awarded to Special Services students
AU/Z	Course audit
N	Non-attendance
O	Omitted Grade: administrative indication

## **GRADE POINT AVERAGE**

The GPA is determined by dividing total quality points earned by total quality hours attempted for grades of A, B, C, D, and F. The highest grade in courses that have been repeated is used in the calculation.

## **GRADE REPORTS**

Midterm and final grade reports can be viewed by the student via the Blackboard Web for Student Module, which is accessed on the Virginia State University website at <http://www.vsu.edu/>.

## **GRADE APPEAL PROCEDURE**

Students may appeal final grades based upon documented evidence that a grade was incorrectly awarded. Grade appeals must be requested within ONE YEAR of the semester in which the grade was awarded. The appeal procedure for a student with a complaint about grading requires initial contact with the instructor involved and further contact with the instructor's department chairperson if the matter is not resolved between the instructor and student. If the matter is not resolved at the departmental level, a grade appeal should be submitted to the dean of the college in which the instructor teaches. The dean shall then forward the request to the College Grade Appeal Committee for deliberation.

College Grade Appeal Committees consisting of at least one faculty member from each department shall deliberate requests for grade appeals and recommend an action to the college dean. The dean shall review the recommendation and make a decision on the outcome of the appeal. The dean shall serve as the final arbiter on the matter. Only if circumstances warrant further deliberation should grade appeals be referred to the Academic Credits Committee.

For more information on grade appeals and other requests for exceptions to academic policies please see Appendix D.

## **REGISTRATION**

Current enrolled students are required to register for the upcoming semester. During this period students are required to see their advisors for curriculum updates. Students are required to register for sequence and number of credit hours required within the curriculum for each semester. A full-time course load for undergraduates is generally 15 semester hours; the maximum course load is 18 semester hours. Any exceptions must be approved by the department chair and the school dean.

## **RELEASE OF RECORDS**

The University reserves the right to withhold transcripts, certificates, registration materials, and any other information about a student when outstanding financial obligations have not been cleared by appropriate University officials.

# **RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

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Virginia State University fosters an atmosphere that inspires academic and moral excellence, where the rights and opinions of others are respected and a sense of integrity and fairness prevail.

Virginia State University will provide opportunities for each student to develop a sense of dignity, a positive self-concept, focused self-direction, and a functional set of skills in an effort to mold him/her into a constructive member and positive reflection of the Virginia State University community.

## **AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACCESSIBILITY POLICY**

1. The Virginia State University Board of Visitors, the administration, and the faculty are committed to a policy of equal opportunity in education and employment that prohibits unlawful discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, marital status, sex, age, disability, political affiliation, or national origin.
2. The University will provide reasonable accommodations, upon request, to otherwise-qualified disabled individuals who require such accommodations in order to perform the essential functions of their jobs, meet the academic or technical standards of University academic programs, or have an equal opportunity to participate in University programs or activities. Accommodation requests related to conditions of employment must be made directly to the Office of Human Resources. All accommodation requests must be in writing and must be consistent with the current documented needs of the individual requesting said accommodation(s).
3. Any student requiring an accommodation must request such services directly from the Office of Student Affairs or the Office of the Provost. In the event a program, class, or activity is located in an inaccessible facility, the University will take such action(s) necessary to provide reasonable accommodations to ensure accessibility. All accommodation requests must be in writing and must be consistent with the current documented needs of the individual requesting said accommodation(s). A disability will be defined according to the parameters of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended.
4. Inquiries regarding interpretation or compliance with the University's accessibility policy should be directed to the Office of Human Resources, Virginia State University, P.O. Box 9412, Virginia State University, VA 23806; telephone (804) 524-5090.

## **ASSEMBLY RIGHTS**

Freedoms of speech, expression, and assembly are fundamental rights of all persons and are central to the mission of the University.

However, these activities are subject to the well-established right of colleges and universities to regulate time, place, and manner so that the activities do not intrude upon or interfere with the academic programs and administrative process of the University. The University shall not discriminate on the basis of the political, religious, philosophical, ideological, or academic viewpoint expressed by any person.

Students must inform the Department of Student Activities and Campus Police Department of their intent to assemble. An "Application for Demonstrations and Assemblies" form must be submitted to the Department of Student Activities at least three days in advance of the demonstration.

Any unauthorized occupation of building and/or University property by a student(s) or organization shall result in immediate suspension of the student(s) and/or dismissal of and legal action against the organization.

## **Rules for Demonstrations and Assemblies**

1. Picketing is allowed so long as it is not disruptive to the educational mission of the University. Outdoor picketing must not interfere with entrances, traffic, or the normal flow of pedestrian and vehicular traffic, good order, the learning environment, and normal business activities.
2. Precise boundaries and number of persons assembling will be set by agreement between the organizers of the demonstration or assembly and those in charge of any building specifically involved.

## **DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

1. Virginia State University does not discriminate against employees, students, or applicants on the basis of race, color, sex, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion, national origin, or political affiliation. The University is subject to Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendment of 1972; Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967; the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; the Vietnam Era Veteran Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974; Federal Executive Order No. 1; Virginia Executive Order No. 1; the Virginia Human Rights Act; and any other applicable state or federal laws and executive orders prohibiting unlawful discrimination.
2. An individual wishing to file a complaint may do so verbally or in writing with the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) human resources manager located in the Office of Human Resources. Individuals wanting additional information or requiring special accommodations should call (804) 524-1007 or (804) 524-5090. Such complaints must be filed within 30 days of the date of occurrence unless the deadline is extended by the president for good cause or in the best interest of the University.

## **FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)**

### **Policy Statement Concerning the Confidentiality of Student Records**

Students attending, or who have attended, Virginia State University are afforded certain rights concerning their education records under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), as amended (20 U.S.C. 1232g), and regulations of the United States Department of Education (34 C.F.R. Part 99).

It is the policy of Virginia State University not to release education records or personally identifiable information contained therein, other than directory information, without the student's written consent. Such prohibition against release generally does not extend to record requests from other school officials at the University with a legitimate educational or administrative interest, other schools to which a student is seeking to transfer, state and federal education authorities, accrediting organizations, appropriate officials in cases involving health and safety, or organizations conducting studies on behalf of the University, or to requests pursuant to judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas. Questions concerning this policy may be referred to the Office of the University Registrar.

Directory information under this policy includes:

- student's name
- address(es)
- telephone number(s)
- electronic mail address(es)
- photographs
- date and place of birth
- major field of study
- enrollment status (whether a student is currently enrolled, and if so, full-time, half-time, etc.)

- class
- academic level
- anticipated date of graduation
- certification that the student has applied for a degree
- dates of attendance
- degree(s) earned, date degrees awarded, and level of distinction attained
- honors and awards received
- participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- weight and height of members of athletic teams

The University may disclose personally identifiable information designated as directory information from a student's records without a student's prior written consent unless the student informs University officials, including the University registrar, that specified categories of directory information are not to be released. Requests to withhold directory information from campus directories and other University publications must be submitted to the Registrar's Office no later than 5:00 PM on Friday of the second week of classes in the Fall semester.

### **Notification of Rights under FERPA for Postsecondary Institutions**

FERPA affords each student certain rights with respect to his/her education records. These rights include the following:

**The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the University receives a request for access.** The student must submit to the Office of the University Registrar a written or electronic request (electronic requests must include his/her electronic signature) that identify the record(s) he/she wishes to inspect. A University official will make arrangements for access and notify the student of the time and place the records may be inspected. If the University official to whom the request was submitted does not maintain the records, that official shall advise the student of the correct official to whom to address the request.

**The right to request the amendment of education records that the student believes is inaccurate or misleading.** The student may ask the University to amend records that he/she believes are inaccurate or misleading. The student should write to or send an electronic message with his/her electronic signature to the University official responsible for the record, clearly identify which part of the record he/she disputes, and specify what is inaccurate or misleading. If the University decides not to amend the record, the University will notify the student of the decision and advise the student of his/her right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding hearing procedures will be provided to the student when he/she is notified of the right to a hearing.

**The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.** During a regular semester of the academic year, a full-time course load for undergraduates is 15 semester hours. The maximum course load allowed for most students is 18 semester hours. For students with honor roll status, the maximum number of semester hours may be increased by 3. Students on academic sanction will be allowed no more than 15 credit hours per semester. Students must register for courses in the sequence outlined by the curriculum.

Disclosure without consent is permitted, for example, when requested by school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the University in an administrative, supervisor, academic, research, or support-staff position (including law-enforcement-unit personnel and health staff); a person or company with whom the University has contracted (such as an attorney, auditor, or collection agent); a person serving on the Board of Visitors; or a student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his/her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his/her professional responsibility.

The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Virginia State University to comply with the requirements of FERPA. Address complaints and requests for assistance to

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202-5920

## **Parental Access to Student Education Records**

Under FERPA, *student* refers to an individual who has reached the age of 18 or is attending an institution of postsecondary education. *Parent* means a parent of a student and includes a natural parent, a guardian, or an individual acting as a parent in the absence of a natural parent or guardian. At the postsecondary or collegiate level, FERPA grants parents no inherent right to inspect a student's education records. Normally, parents, as defined above, may inspect a student's education records and personally identifiable information only when one of the following conditions has been met: (1) the student has given written consent to the release of records to the parents, or (2) the parents produce sufficient documentary evidence that one or both of them declared the student as a dependent on their most recent federal income tax return as authorized by federal income tax laws. See Section 152, Title 26 of the United States Code for the definition of "dependent" for income tax purposes.

## **HAZING POLICY**

Every form of hazing and conspiracy to haze are prohibited. Commission of hazing can be considered either a misdemeanor or a felony. Participation in a hazing practice may result in both individual and organizational disciplinary action. The Code of Virginia section 18.2-56 states, "It shall be unlawful to haze so as to cause bodily injury, any student at any school, college, or university. Any person found guilty thereof shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor." If injuries would be such as to constitute a felony, punishment shall be inflicted as is otherwise provided by law for the punishment of such felony. Section 18.2-56 further states, "any person receiving bodily injury by hazing shall have a right to sue, civilly, the person or persons guilty thereof, whether adults or infants."

## **HEALTH SERVICES**

All services provided are strictly confidential, and staff members adhere to HIPPA (Health Insurance Portability Privacy Act) guidelines. A confidential medical record is maintained for each student seen by the staff. Information in the record is not released to anyone without the student's written informed consent or a court order. A completed physical examination form (less than one year old) along with a valid immunization record must be on file for all full-time students upon entering Virginia State University. Students who fail to meet this requirement will not be permitted to register for classes.

## **RESIDENT BILL OF RIGHTS**

All students will be held accountable for violations of any rules and regulations of Virginia State University policies and procedures as provided in this *Student Handbook* and the *Community Living Guide*.

### **You have the right to the following:**

1. A reasonable amount of privacy in your room.
2. Environments in which you can study, sleep, work, and conduct daily personal business without distraction.
3. Expect respect of your personal property by the University and its officials and your roommate.
4. Host guests (according to Residence Life rules and regulations) as long as they follow all rules.
5. A clean, healthy, and safe environment.
6. Environments free from fear of intimidation, physical and emotional harm, and racial and sexual harassment.

**Your responsibilities are as follows:**

1. Be accountable for your behavior and actions. Respect others' property and the property of the University.
2. Respect and preserve the rights of others and always be aware of their potential cultural differences.
3. Do your part to reinforce your security and the security of those around you.
4. Fulfill all of the provisions of your residence-hall contract.
5. Report immediately any maintenance problems occurring in your room.
6. Ask immediately for help from your residence educator or other members of the residence-hall staff if you are in need of assistance.
7. Report all violations of the rules and regulations.

(NOTE: Please refer to the *Community Living Guide* for policies and procedures governing residence halls.)

## **SCHEV STUDENT COMPLAINT PROCESS**

In accordance with section VAC 40-31-100 of the Virginia Administrative Code, the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) is responsible for investigating all written and signed student complaints against postsecondary educational institutions operating in Virginia.

In order for SCHEV to initiate an investigation, the following must be true:

- The student has exhausted all available grievance procedures established by the institution.
- The student did not receive a satisfactory resolution and is contacting SCHEV as a last resort in the grievance process.
- The student has submitted the complaint to SCHEV electronically using the "Student Complaint Form." The student's complaint must contain a detailed description of the claim, including dates, times, and full names of all involved, as well as the actions taken by both the student and the school to resolve the matter.
- The student has electronically signed the form attesting to the truth and accuracy of the complaint.
- The student recognizes that SCHEV will not investigate anonymous complaints. By signing the form, the student acknowledges that SCHEV may share the information provided with the school or other relevant organizations in order to help resolve the dispute. SCHEV does not guarantee a resolution resulting from this submission or its investigation into the allegation.

Upon receiving a student complaint, SCHEV will open an investigation if the matter being disputed falls within its jurisdiction. If preliminary findings indicate a violation of SCHEV regulations by the institution, SCHEV shall attempt to resolve the complaint through mediation. All parties will be notified in writing of the outcome of the investigation. If the complaint falls outside SCHEV's jurisdiction, it may be directed to the institution's Board of Visitors, the accrediting body, or another agency authorized to address the concerns, if appropriate.

The student may be contacted during the investigation to submit documented evidence of the allegations against the institution, which may include copies of enrollment agreements, contracts, syllabi, receipts, financial-aid notices, promissory notes, or relevant correspondence from the institution related to the complaint. Students should not submit original documents, as they may not be returned.

Students are reminded that they always have the right to seek advice from a private attorney. Students should be aware that the submission of a complaint will be recorded and may be used for statistical reporting or other purposes. Please contact SCHEV at (804) 371-2285 if you have any questions about the student complaint procedure.

## **SEXUAL-HARASSMENT/ASSAULT/RAPE POLICY**

It is the goal of Virginia State University to provide a productive and challenging environment free from sexual harassment. All members of the University community share the responsibility to ensure that individuals are provided equal access to education, employment, and service without being subjected to sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is a type of sex discrimination and is prohibited misconduct that undermines the mission of the University.

Virginia State University will not tolerate any conduct by any member of the University community that constitutes sexual harassment as outlined in Title VII of Section 703 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Virginia Human Rights Act, or other applicable state or federal laws and regulations. Upon notification of a sexual-harassment complaint, the University shall take prompt and appropriate action in response to the charge presented by the complainant. Any employee of the University being advised of a complaint of sexual harassment shall immediately refer the matter to the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) human resources manager according to the procedures specified in this policy.

Complaints under the policy must normally be filed within 30 days of the date of the alleged harassment. The University reserves the right to accept and review complaints received after more than 30 days if, upon preliminary review by the EEO manager, the president determines that there was just cause for the delay or that it is in the best interest of the University to review the matter.

The University shall provide sexual-harassment-awareness training each academic year for all faculty, administrators, and staff. Each employee of the University is responsible for documenting his/her attendance at the training by signing the sign-in roster. The Office of Human Resources shall maintain an account of attendance at the training.

Students shall be made aware of the University's prohibition of sexual harassment through the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs. Informational sessions shall be conducted once per semester.

Copies of this policy shall be distributed throughout the campus community, or made available to all members of the campus community through the Office of Human Resources, the Office of the Vice President of Student Affairs, and the Office of the Provost. Additionally, this policy shall be posted on a bulletin board in each residence hall and University building.

### **Definition of Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or other sexual conduct, or action taken in retaliation for reporting such behavior, when any of the following conditions is met:

1. Submission to such conduct is made explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or participation in a University-sponsored education program or activity.
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for decisions affecting that individual's employment, academic standing, or other benefits.
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a person's work or academic performance or creating a hostile and offensive work or learning environment.

Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Sexually suggestive conduct or remarks about clothing, the body, or sexual activities directed personally to a member of the University community
2. Suggestive whistling directed personally to another University community member
3. Sexual propositions, invitations, or other unwanted pressures for sexual contact
4. Obscene gestures directed personally at another member of the University community

5. Patting, pinching, or any other sexually suggestive touching or feeling
6. Attempted or actual kissing or fondling
7. Coerced sexual acts
8. Assault
9. Expressed or implied requests for sexual favors as a condition of employment, promotion, or favorable academic performance

## **Applications**

This policy governs the conduct of all University employees, including faculty, administrators, staff, and students, when they are on the campus of Virginia State University, on other University property, or in facilities that are owned or controlled by Virginia State University or being used for a University-related event.

## **Informal Procedures**

The Office of the Assistant to the President for Human Resources offers the options of a preliminary confidential investigation and an opportunity for an informal resolution to the complainant.

1. An individual wishing to file a complaint may do so in writing to the EEO human resources manager, whose office is located in the Office of Human Resources, in the Cameron Building. The mailing address is P.O. Box 9412, Virginia State University, VA 23806. Individuals seeking additional information or who require special accommodation should call (804) 524-1007 or (804) 524-5090. A sexual-harassment complaint shall be filed within 30 days of the date of alleged harassment unless the deadline is extended by the president or designee for good cause or because the president or designee determines that such extension serves the best interests of the University. The University shall conduct informal investigations of sexual-harassment allegations in a manner that preserves to the greatest extent possible the confidentiality of the involved parties.
2. The investigator(s) shall consider the allegations in the complaint in relationship to all of the surrounding circumstances. If the parties involved, through an informal process, can resolve the issue to their mutual satisfaction, the complaint may be considered concluded and no further steps taken. If either party is dissatisfied with the informal process, the dissatisfied party may withdraw from the process and pursue any formal procedures available to him/her.

## **Formal Procedures**

1. An individual wishing to file a formal complaint may do so in writing to the human resources manager, whose office is located in the Office of Human Resources, in the Cameron Building. The mailing address is P.O. Box 9412, Virginia State University, VA 23806. Individuals seeking additional information or who require special accommodation should call (804) 524-1007 or (804) 524-5090. Sexual-harassment complaints shall be filed within 30 days from the date of the alleged harassment or of the completion of any informal procedures, unless the deadline is extended by the president or designee for good cause. The president or designee may grant an extension if just cause serves the best interests of the University. The University shall conduct formal investigations of sexual-harassment allegations in a manner that preserves to the greatest extent possible the confidentiality of the involved parties.
2. Within five days of the filing of a written complaint, the EEO human resources manager shall evaluate the complaint to determine if further investigations are warranted. If so, the complaint may be referred to an investigative team who shall attempt to contact and, if possible, meet with the complainant, the respondent, and other individuals possessing relevant information deemed appropriate to the investigation. In some instances the statements and conduct of University employees may be legally protected by the First Amendment. If for any reason the EEO human resources manager determines that no further investigation of

a complaint is warranted, the manager shall notify the complainant and explain why no further investigation is warranted, after which the complainant shall have five days to respond.

3. The results of the investigation shall be reported to the human resources director, and an initial determination shall be made regarding (1) whether sexual harassment occurred; and (2) if such harassment occurred, what corrective action should be taken. The human resources director's determination on these issues shall be promptly reported to the provost or vice president and the assistant to the president. The investigator(s) and the EEO human resources manager shall have 120 days from receipt of the written complaint to complete the investigation and to make these determinations.
4. Upon acceptance, rejection, or modification of the human resources director's determination, the provost, vice president, or assistant to the president shall, within 15 days of receipt of findings in paragraph 3, notify the complainant and respondent of his/her decision.
5. If either the complainant or respondent is dissatisfied with the decision by the provost, vice president, or assistant to the president, either party shall have 5 days from his/her notification of the decision to appeal to the University president. Such appeal shall set forth, in writing, the grounds therefore. Upon receipt of an appeal, the president has the discretion to determine, within 10 days, whether his final decision on the matter would be aided by a hearing before him or his designees.
6. If such a hearing is deemed appropriate, it shall be scheduled within 15 days of the president's decision. Persons present at the hearing shall be the complainant, the respondent, witnesses for parties, and if any party desires, a representative to assist in the presentation of the complaint or defense. When scheduling the hearing, the parties shall state whether they intend to be represented by counsel. If counsel represents any party, the University, likewise, has the option of representation through the Office of the Attorney General. It is the responsibility of the parties to arrange for the presence of witnesses and to furnish any documentary evidence deemed relevant to the complaint or the defense. The president or his designee shall preside over the hearing, which shall not be governed by the formalities of evidence or civil proceedings. Any finding that the University's policy on the prohibition of sexual harassment has been violated shall be based on the preponderance of the evidence presented in the record as a whole.
7. The president shall render, in writing, a decision on the appeal within 15 days of the receipt of the appeal. Or, if a hearing occurs, the president shall render a decision within 15 days of the completion of the hearing, unless, for good cause, additional time is necessary to render any such decision.
8. In any case in which corrective action is determined to be appropriate, the human resources director shall coordinate with the provost, vice president, or assistant to the president to ensure that corrective actions are promptly implemented.
9. The president (or his designee) shall be the final arbiter of what personnel and/or corrective action is appropriate in response to any violation of this policy.
10. The president, at the request of a faculty member alleged to have violated this policy, may refer the matter to the Academic Appeals Committee pursuant to provisions of the *Faculty Handbook*. Additional procedures available to eligible faculty members pursuant to the *Faculty Handbook* are subject to and governed by the standards and timeframes described therein. The president shall notify the parties why additional time may be necessary.

## **STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

Virginia State University is committed and dedicated to fair and equal treatment, policies, and procedures regarding the resolution of all matters affecting its students, regardless of race, color, gender, age, disability, political affiliation, national origin, religious belief, or association. The Student Grievance Procedure applies to academic and nonacademic student complaints, disputes, or perceptions of unfair or discriminatory treatment.

Procedural due process is the means by which all matters involving students' complaints or disputes will be resolved.

It is recommended that a student initiate an academic grievance within 20 class days during the academic term of the date the incident occurred. Nonacademic grievances shall be initiated within 10 calendar days during the academic term of the date the incident occurred. Failure to adhere to established deadlines by any principal party involved in a grievance may result in immediate termination of the Student Grievance Procedure.

### **Step I (Initial)**

A student with a grievance or complaint shall discuss his/her grievance with the faculty or staff member or student whose action(s) or decision(s) he/she is contesting. The student shall submit a written statement to the defending party that clearly, precisely, and specifically describes the nature of the grievance and the relief or resolution desired. If the student is not satisfied with the resolution of his/her grievance at Step I, the student may proceed to Step II or consult with an appropriate advisor or counselor for assistance or guidance.

(NOTE: Advisors, counselors, and attorneys for either party shall neither be present nor participate in the Step I meeting. Electronic or automated taping or recording of the Step I meeting is not permitted.)

### **Step II (Intermediate)**

If no resolution was found or if the student does not agree with the outcome of Step I, the student may file a written grievance or complaint with the faculty or staff member's or student's appropriate supervisor department chair or school dean within three business days of the attempt to resolve the matter at Step I. The student's written grievance shall include the document describing the issue(s) produced for Step I. The administrative-unit supervisor shall notify each party of the date of a Step II meeting within three business days following the receipt of the written grievance. Within five business days of the notification of the parties, the administrative-unit supervisor will convene the parties in an attempt to resolve the dispute. The administrative-unit supervisor shall prepare a report on the status or disposition of the grievance and distribute the report to both parties within five business days after the meeting.

(NOTE: Advisors, counselors, and attorneys for either party shall neither be present nor participate in the Step II meeting. Electronic or automated taping or recording of the Step II meeting is not permitted.)

### **Step III (Advanced)**

If the student is not satisfied with the status or disposition at Step II, he/she may file a written appeal with the appropriate associate vice president, vice president (or his/her designee), or provost within three business days following the receipt of the disposition of the grievance at Step II. Within five business days of the receipt of the student's appeal, the vice president shall schedule a meeting with a Student Grievance Panel for all principal parties involved with the grievance. A Student Grievance Panel shall convene not later than 10 business days following the notification of all parties of the Student Grievance Panel hearing. The appropriate vice president (or his/her designee) or the provost shall prepare a report of the final disposition of the grievance and distribute copies of the report to the student and all other appropriate parties.

(NOTE: Advisors, counselors, and attorneys for both parties are permitted to be present and participate in the Step III hearing **as observers only**. Electronic or automated taping or recording shall be performed, and a copy will be available to the principal parties upon request.)

## **ACADEMIC GRIEVANCES**

Grievances against faculty may be academic or nonacademic. Academic grievances relate solely and specifically to violations of or noncompliance with policies and procedures relating to teaching, research, community service, extension/public service, grading, and grade review and noncompliance with other established academic policies and

procedures. Only a party directly affected by any of the instances enumerated above may file a grievance against a faculty member.

A nonacademic grievance is a response to an alleged violation of University policy or procedure not enumerated above, such as an allegation of sexual harassment or discrimination, fiscal or financial misconduct, or misuse or abuse of University resources. Allegations of this type shall be filed in writing with an officer in the Office of Human Resources. It shall be the sole responsibility of this officer to proceed in accordance with established policy.

The roles, duties, responsibilities, and obligations of department chairs, college deans, and the provost to manage and administer academic programs in accordance with University policies and procedures are not diminished by this section.

Students may not file a grievance under this procedure regarding general grading policies contained in course syllabi; grades given to other students; assignments given by faculty; financial-aid decisions; course-substitution or waiver decisions; teaching and instructional techniques and methods; academic policies announced by department chairs, college deans, school officials; or other policies contained in official University catalogs, handbooks, or documents.

## **ACADEMIC GRIEVANCES AGAINST FACULTY**

Any student who has an academic grievance against a faculty member may first bring the matter to the attention of his/her academic advisor or counselor. Where appropriate, the student shall be advised to seek an informal resolution with the affected faculty member through the appropriate department chair and college dean.

Failing a satisfactory informal resolution of the grievance, the advisor or counselor shall determine if the matter falls within the jurisdiction of the Academic Credits Committee. If it does, the student shall be advised to seek the help of his/her department chair in accordance with the procedures provided for in the undergraduate University Catalog, which can be found online at <http://vsu.edu/academics/academic-catalog.php>.

If the matter is not within the jurisdiction of the Academic Credits Committee, the student shall file a written statement with his/her department chair. If a department chair is the subject of the grievance, the written statement shall be filed with the dean of the appropriate school. Except as otherwise provided for, the department chair shall have original jurisdiction over academic grievances filed by students.

1. The department chair or college dean, within three teaching days, shall inform the appropriate academic official and the faculty member, in writing, of the grievance and schedule a meeting at the earliest convenience of the parties.
2. At the meeting, which is scheduled as described above, a record of the facts and contentions of the parties shall be determined and a decision reached and reported to the dean of the appropriate school. Copies of the record and decision shall be distributed to all parties involved. Based on the record, the dean shall make a judgment to affirm, modify, or reject the decision, and he/she shall communicate it to the parties.
3. Any party to the proceeding may petition the provost in writing for a review of the decision. The provost may, at his/her discretion, elect to receive the petition and affirm, modify, or reject the decision. The decision of the provost shall be final.

# **SAFETY AND SECURITY**

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## **DEPARTMENT OF POLICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY**

The Department of Police and Public Safety is charged with and dedicated to the task of protecting life and property on the campus of the University. The ultimate objective of the department is the establishment and maintenance of a campus environment that is safe, sane, secure, and conducive to high-quality endeavor. This is achieved through educational programming and the development of personal relationships that foster a positive community. The department works hand in hand with other departments and student organizations to design programs to educate students about safety and security, the Act, rape aggression defense, property-theft prevention, and workplace violence.

## **THE JEANNE CLERY DISCLOSURE OF CAMPUS SECURITY POLICY AND CAMPUS CRIME STATISTICS ACT OF 1998**

Formally known as the Campus Security Act and commonly called the Clery Act, this act requires higher-education institutions to disclose information about crime on and around their campuses and is enforced by the United States Department of Education. The law was amended in 1992 to add a requirement that schools afford the victims of sexual assault on campus certain basic rights. It was amended again in 1998 to expand the reporting requirements and to formally name the law in memory of Jeanne Clery, a Lehigh University freshman found raped and murdered in her dorm room in 1986. Subsequent amendments in 2000 and 2008 added provisions dealing with notification about registered sex offenders and with campus emergency response. The 2008 amendments also added a provision to protect crime victims, informers, and others from retaliation.

The Clery Act requires colleges and universities to publish an annual security and fire-safety report by October 1. The report must document three calendar years of select campus crime statistics, including security policies and procedures and information on the basic rights guaranteed to victims of sexual assault. The law requires schools make the report available to all current students and employees. Prospective students and employees must be notified of its existence and given a copy upon request in order to assist them in making an informed decision about whether to attend the institution. The Act further requires that institutions maintain a public crime log; disclose statistics regarding crimes that occur on campus, in unobstructed public areas immediately adjacent to or running through the campus, and at certain non-campus facilities; and issue timely warnings about certain crimes that pose a serious or ongoing threat to students and employees. Institutions of higher learning are mandated to devise an emergency response, notification, and testing policy; compile and report fire data to the federal government; and publish an annual fire-safety report. The Clery Act also reserves mandates for institutions to enact policies and procedures to handle reports of missing students.

On March 7, 2013, President Barack Obama signed a bill that reauthorized the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). Strengthening the Clery Act as part of the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act, or Campus SaVE Act VAWA addendum, the bill included amendments that afforded additional rights to victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking on university and college campuses. Every post-secondary institution participating in Title IV financial aid is required to compile statistics of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking that occur in or on property adjacent to the institution and that are reported to Campus Security Authorities. Additionally, those same institutions are required to include a statement of policy regarding prevention programs, educational programs, investigation procedures, administrative disciplinary-action and appeal procedures, possible sanctions, victim/survivor procedures, and procedures for notification.

## **SECURITY AWARENESS**

### **Operation ID**

Operation ID is a crime-prevention effort aimed at preventing theft of personal property. The Police Department provides equipment with which students can mark their personal property with some form of identifying information (e.g., name or driver's license number, or other identifying information). Such markings may deter theft or aid in police recovery efforts if theft should occur.

### **Rape Aggression Defense (R.A.D.)**

Personal defense classes are offered to all students, faculty, and staff. Instruction includes evasive and defensive techniques presented by certified instructors.

### **Adopt Hall**

Each residence hall is assigned a police officer who assists Residence Life staff in conducting safety and security programs, seminars, classes, and events for student residents.

### **Emergency Call Boxes**

The Police Department monitors and responds to calls from emergency call boxes located throughout the campus. In emergency situations, use the one-button speed dial on the highly visible white call boxes to summon police assistance.

### **Zero-Tolerance Program**

The University has zero tolerance for violence, possession of drugs or alcohol, or weapons. University policy absolutely forbids the possession of alcohol or of illegal drugs, firearms, or weapons of any kind on campus, or the possession of any such illegal items by students, staff, and faculty whether on or off campus. Weapons are defined as firearms, crafted weapons, knives, box cutters, razors, zip guns, paint ball guns, or any other item capable of shooting a projectile or inflicting a wound or cut.

### **Emergency Alert System**

The University has established an emergency-communications system to alert the entire campus of any immediate safety threat, man-made or natural. Should a threat occur, an outdoor siren will sound, and information will be broadcast via campus-wide loudspeakers, University e-mail, the campus broadcast system, and University text messages.

### **RAVE ALERT Program**

RAVE ALERTs notify students, faculty, and staff of any urgent information that the president or his/her designee deems appropriate. Once enrolled on campus, each student is provided information through his/her campus e-mail account about how to sign up for the program. When registering for RAVE ALERT, the student has the opportunity to designate the telephone numbers and e-mail addresses to which the alerts should be sent. Students are strongly encouraged to register to receive text messaging through the RAVE ALERT program.

### **Text-A-Tip**

Text-a-Tip is an Internet-based phone application that allows individuals to submit information anonymously to the University Police Department. This secure application allows the tipster and the investigator to have two-way dialogue while keeping the individual's identity completely anonymous. More information about this program is available on the Virginia State University Police Department's website.

## **Violence Prevention/Threat Assessment**

Virginia State University prohibits the use of language or behavior that threatens unlawful physical violence and has the effect of intimidating, frightening, coercing, or provoking others. Prohibited acts include threats communicated verbally or nonverbally, in writing, through gestures, or by any other means, including by electronic transmission. These include threats communicated directly to an intended victim or to or through a third party.

Persons communicating threats may be subject to disciplinary action by the institution, including criminal prosecution if the behavior constitutes a violation of Virginia law. Persons identified as engaging in threatening language or behavior may be subject to suspension or removal from the institution.

Persons who are identified as engaging in threatening language or behavior may be required, as a condition of continued enrollment, to participate in a mental-health evaluation as part of the threat-assessment process.

The Threat Assessment Team appointed by the president includes representatives from law enforcement, mental-health professions, the administration, and student counsel. Personnel from Student Affairs, Counseling Services, Residence Life, Human Resources, and/or Health Services may be assigned to the team, if deemed necessary.

*Threat Reporting:* Threats or threatening behavior may be reported directly to the Threat Assessment Team or to the nearest University faculty or staff, who will report the information to the Threat Assessment Team. Threats or threatening behaviors must be reported as soon as the threat is identified. In emergencies, call (804) 524-5411 or 911, or go to the University Police offices on Carter G. Woodson Avenue.

## **Campus Community Police Academy**

The Academy is a six-week program open to volunteers from the faculty, staff, and student body. The purpose of the Academy is to educate the Virginia State University community about the Police Department, increase the community's involvement in law-enforcement programs, and allow the community to see firsthand the department and its personnel, policies, goals, and services.

Each week, a different topic is addressed, including department policies and procedures, emergency response, drug awareness and the use of narcotic canines, police ethics, professionalism, use of force, and officer safety.

Applications to attend the Citizens Police Academy may be obtained from the Police Department offices on Carter G. Woodson Avenue.

## **Student Escort Program: Student Trojans on Patrol (S.T.O.P.)**

*Purpose:* The Virginia State University Student Escort Program, also called Student Trojans on Patrol (S.T.O.P.), facilitates the transportation, either by vehicle or on foot, of any Virginia State University student, faculty, staff, or administrator to his/her stated on-campus destination safely and responsibly. It also enhances the development of students who show initiative in a nonacademic leadership role in a major University-approved program. The program supports the mission of the University's safety programs by highlighting the partnership between the Department of Police and Public Safety and the Department of Student Activities.

*Hours of Operation:* The Escort Service operates seven days a week from 6:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m.

*Request for Service:* To request service, individuals should call (804) 524-5360, the service number at the Department of Police and Public Safety. Once the dispatcher answers, the caller must request a safety escort and provide his/her name, location, phone number, status (i.e., student, staff, faculty, or administrator), and destination.

The caller must present a valid Virginia State University Trojan Card in order to be provided this service. The escort officer reserves the right to refuse transport to any individual who fails or refuses to abide by the rules and regulations of the program. The escort officer may also refuse service to anyone who he/she reasonably believes is abusing the service. This service provides safe and secure escort to on-campus destinations; it is not intended for personal convenience or as a substitute for regular transportation methods.

## Sexual Assault and Rape

An individual accused of sexual assault can be prosecuted under Virginia criminal statutes. A student accused of sexual assault may also be disciplined under the University's student-conduct policies and regulations, even if the criminal-justice authorities choose not to prosecute. Disciplinary action could result in expulsion from the University.

Verbal misconduct of a sexual nature, without the physical contact described above, is not defined as sexual misconduct. Verbal misconduct may constitute sexual harassment, which is also prohibited under University regulations and is specifically addressed elsewhere in this *Student Handbook*.

### **If you have been sexually violated, get help as follows:**

1. Go to a safe place.
2. Contact someone who can help you: the police, a friend, a sexual-assault crisis hotline, any or all of the above. You or the person you have contacted should call 911 or the University Police (804-524-5411) if you haven't already.
3. Don't shower, bathe, drink or eat, douche, or change clothes after the assault. (These activities destroy physical evidence that may be important if you decide to prosecute the assailant.) Take a change of clothes with you.
4. Get medical attention at a hospital emergency room right away.
5. Allow the police to take you to the hospital or meet you there. A rape counselor can meet you there too.
6. Provide as much detail about the assault as possible. The memory of specific details is often fragmented immediately after an assault, but it tends to improve after sleep. Contact the police or a hearing officer to provide additional information as your memory improves. This will help in any legal action that you may decide to take.
7. Remember that you are not alone and the assault was not your fault. Seek help on campus or obtain resources off campus to aid in healing.

### **The University will respond to a sexual assault or rape as follows:**

1. The University Police will notify the vice president for Student Affairs. The vice president for Student Affairs will notify the parents if the student is not a legal adult.
2. The victim will be transported by the University Police to a medical facility.
  - The officer will advise the victim not to wash, bathe, shower, or douche.
  - The officer will provide an evidence recovery kit and make sure it arrives at the medical facility with the victim.
  - The officer will notify Chesterfield County or the Virginia State Police Bureau of Criminal Investigation and request the assistance of a crime-scene technician.
3. After the examination, counseling will be arranged either at the examining facility or with one of the local rape crisis and sexual assault and domestic violence hotlines:
  - YWCA Crisis Hotline (804-643-0888)
4. The student also has the option to receive counseling at the University. Counseling is an important step in helping someone who has been sexually assaulted regain control of his/her life. Sexual assault can be a traumatic experience that requires professional attention. Trained professionals are available on or off campus for assistance and support.

We strongly encourage students who have been sexually assaulted to report the crime immediately, whether for prosecution within Virginia State University's system, the local justice system, or both. Reporting the assault allows the victim to receive needed services and recover faster and more fully. Reporting might also prevent further assaults by the assailant. Virginia State University students who have been assaulted are encouraged to prosecute the

assailant through the court system and the University’s Student Conduct system. The Student Code of Conduct prohibits sexual misconduct. A violation of the Student Code of Conduct should be reported directly to the Student Conduct Board; students may instead inform the Residence Life staff, Campus Police, or the associate vice president for Student Affairs, who will forward the information to the Student Conduct Board. The student will be asked to describe the incident in writing to the Office of Student Conduct. The student may also relate the incident verbally, with a friend present if the student wishes. The Office of Student Conduct will initiate the administrative hearing process.

**The victim’s rights are as follows:**

1. To have a person of his/her choice accompany him/her throughout the disciplinary process (including the hearing).
2. To have the proceedings remains confidential.
3. To be present during the entire proceedings.
4. As established in the state criminal codes, not to have his/her sexual history discussed during the hearing, except as it relates to the specific incident in question.
5. To relate his/her account of the incident and describe how the crime has affected him/her.
6. To testify during a closed hearing (with the accused present).
7. To be informed immediately of the outcome of the hearing.

**Telephone Numbers and Addresses**

<b>Name of Agency/Office</b>	<b>Phone Number</b>
Virginia State University Police Department	(804) 524-5411 (Emergency) (804) 524-5360 (Non-Emergency)
Vice President for Academic Affairs	(804) 524-5779
Vice President for Student Affairs	(804) 524-5350
Director of Student Activities	(804) 524-5692
Office of Student Conduct	(804) 524-5504
Southside Regional Medical Center	(804) 765-5565 (Emergency Room)
YWCA Rape Crisis Hotline	(804) 643-0888
VSU Sexual Assault Services	(804) 524-5939
On-Call Counselor and Advocate	(804) 481-5738
VSU Health Services	(804) 524-5711
Virginia Hotline	(1-800) 838-8238
The James House	(804) 458-2704 (Office) (804) 458-2840 (Hotline)

**The Sexual Assault Response Coordinator will ensure close coordination among the University’s support services and can explain the victim’s options, identify resources, and help the victim regain control over his/her life.**

The James House offers a variety of services for survivors. They include:

- A 24-hour hotline with trained volunteers available at any time, day or night, to provide support, information, and referral
- Support groups
- Accompaniment to the hospital

The University encourages students, faculty, and staff to uphold the sexual-misconduct policy in order to promote a zero-tolerance culture and to ensure a safe environment conducive to living and learning.

# STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

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If you join a service, recreation, or academic organization, your education will be substantially enhanced. Your participation in a student organization identifies you as a mature student with energy, dedication, responsibility, and accountability. The Department of Student Activities is eager to assist you in achieving your goals and realizing your personal and professional aspirations so that you will become a successful student and contributing citizen of the global community. As a community member, you are expected to understand and follow all institutional rules and University policies as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct and in this *Student Handbook*. Engage in all that Virginia State University offers to have a rewarding experience.

## STUDENT SENATE

The Student Senate is the legislative body of the Student Government Association (SGA). Its membership includes representatives from each of the four classes; representatives from each undergraduate school; a representative from the Graduate School; and one representative each from the Social Organizations Council, the Pan-Hellenic Council, and off-campus students. The duties and responsibilities of the Student Senate are outlined in the Constitution and Bylaws of the Student Government Association.

## STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

The SGA has the following officers:

- President (Elected)
- Vice President for Academic Affairs (Elected)
- Vice President for Student Affairs (Elected)
- Vice President for Administration and Finance (Elected)
- Vice President for Graduate Affairs (Elected)
- Chief of Staff (Appointed)
- Executive Secretary (Appointed)
- Director of Marketing and Campus Relations (Appointed)
- Director of Community Relations (Appointed)
- Trojan Pride Coordinator (Appointed)
- Webmaster (Appointed)

Each spring, the sophomore, junior, and senior classes vote to elect their officers, kings, queens, and representatives.

The SGA is open to all students. Students can become involved in the SGA by election to the office of class representative or student-body president or vice president or by election to a Student Senate seat or the Leadership Council. There are also volunteer opportunities throughout the year. For information about these opportunities, visit the SGA office in Foster Hall.

## MISS VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY AND CLASS QUEENS

Miss Virginia State University serves as the University's official student hostess. She makes personal appearances on and off campus and participates in events on behalf of the University. She must be a student in good standing at the University, maintaining a 3.00 or higher grade point average during her reign. She is selected by a panel of judges each spring and serves for one year.

Miss Virginia State University's court includes first and second attendants and class queens: Miss Freshman (elected during the fall elections), and Miss Sophomore, Miss Junior, and Miss Senior (each elected during the spring elections). Miss Virginia State University's first and second attendants must maintain a 3.00 or higher grade point average, while class queens must maintain a 2.50 or higher grade point average.

### **Qualifications for Miss Virginia State University Candidates**

1. Must be a full-time Virginia State University undergraduate student in good social and academic standing with the University
2. Must have a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.00
3. Must have earned 65–85 semester hours
4. Must be no younger than 17 or older than 28
5. Must be single and must have never been married
6. Must be childless and not pregnant
7. Must be of good moral character and shall not have been convicted of any crime, excluding vehicular moving violations
8. Must participate in the Mr. and Miss Virginia State University pageant and understand that the pageant committee is the governing authority of the pageant and may disqualify any contestant who does not abide by the rules and regulations of the pageant

### **Qualifications for Candidates for Class Queens**

1. Must be a full-time Virginia State University student in good social and academic standing with the University
2. Must have a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.50\*
3. Must have earned the following semester hours:

<b>Title</b>	<b>Hours required as of the semester prior to election</b>	<b>Hours required upon beginning reign</b>
Miss Freshman	Registered for at least 12 (elected during Fall semester)	N/A*
Miss Sophomore	12–24	30
Miss Junior	39–54	60
Miss Senior	69 or more	90

\* Miss Freshman is exempt from the minimum GPA requirement.

4. Must be single and must have never been married
5. Must be childless and not pregnant
6. Must be of good moral character and shall not have been convicted of any crime, excluding vehicular moving violations

### **MR. VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY AND CLASS KINGS**

Mr. Virginia State University serves as the University's official student host and is the official escort for Miss Virginia State University. He makes personal appearances on and off campus and participates in events on behalf of the University. He must be a full-time student in good standing, maintaining a 3.00 or higher grade point average during his reign. He is selected each spring by a panel of judges and serves for one year.

Mr. Virginia State University’s Court includes first and second attendants and class kings: Mr. Freshman (elected during the fall elections), and Mr. Sophomore, Mr. Junior, and Mr. Senior (each elected during the spring elections). Mr. Virginia State University’s first and second attendants must maintain a 3.00 or higher grade point average, while class kings must maintain a 2.50 or higher grade point average.

### **Qualifications for Mr. Virginia State University Candidates**

1. Must be a full-time Virginia State University undergraduate student in good social and academic standing with the University
2. Must have a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.00
3. Must have earned at least 65–85 semester hours
4. Must be no younger than 17 or older than 28
5. Must be single and must have never been married
6. Must be childless
7. Must be of good moral character and shall not have been convicted of any crime, excluding vehicular moving violations
8. Must participate in the Mr. and Miss Virginia State University pageant and understand that the pageant committee is the governing body of the pageant and may disqualify any contestant who does not abide by the rules and regulations of the pageant

### **Qualifications for Candidates for Class Kings**

1. Must be a full-time Virginia State University student in good standing with the University socially and academically
2. Must have a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.50\*
3. Must have earned the following semester hours:

<b>Title</b>	<b>Hours required as of the semester prior to election</b>	<b>Hours required upon beginning reign</b>
Mr. Freshman	Registered for at least 12 (elected during Fall semester)	N/A*
Mr. Sophomore	12–24	30
Mr. Junior	39–54	60
Mr. Senior	69 or more	90

\* Mr. Freshman is exempt from the minimum GPA requirement.

4. Must be single and must have never been married
5. Must be childless
6. Must be of good moral character and shall not have been convicted of any crime, excluding vehicular moving violations

### **PAN-HELLENIC COUNCIL**

The Virginia State University chapter of the National Pan-Hellenic Council Inc. (NPHC) governs the nine Greek-lettered fraternities and sororities that are members of the NPHC. The NPHC serves as an umbrella organization that promotes unity among its affiliate members and monitors their activities through an internal disciplinary board.

The NPHC is involved with cultural, academic, and social spheres of campus life. The Virginia State University chapter is further involved in community activities, including literacy programs, community service, and voter registration.

Membership in the Virginia State University chapter of NPHC is limited to Greek-lettered organizations whose national headquarters are financial members of the NPHC and whose local chapters are in good standing (both financially and socially) with the University and the Virginia State University NPHC chapter.

## **RECREATION AND LEISURE PROGRAMS: INTRAMURAL SPORTS**

The Virginia State University Intramural Program provides quality intramural activities for students, faculty, and staff. The intramural sports program enhances college life by advocating teamwork and leadership development activities and promotes recreation, fitness, and wellness.

The Office of Recreation and Leisure, located in 408 Foster Hall, coordinates a variety of programs during the fall, spring, and summer semesters. The game room on the lower level of Foster Hall features a billiards/pool room, an aerobics room, a game room, and a lounge area. In the game room there are a variety of games, such as board games, card games, checkers, chess, backgammon, foosball, table tennis (ping-pong), table hockey, air hockey, and table shuffleboard. Students may also play Wii, Xbox, and PlayStation.

The Office of Recreation and Leisure coordinates open hours for swimming in Daniel Gymnasium.

Throughout the year, the Office of Recreation and Leisure organizes intramural sports and activities for the student body, including card tournaments, ping-pong tournaments, pool tournaments, flag football, powder-puff football, basketball, soccer, tennis, and many others.

## **STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS**

Student organizations provide students with opportunities to develop their intellectual, emotional, spiritual, physical, and professional abilities. These organizations are important components of the academic life of the University. To meet all the different developmental needs of students, Virginia State University offers a multitude of student groups. Every student is encouraged to join the organizations that appeal to him/her.

Research has shown that involvement in student organizations improves students' interpersonal skills and builds competence in leadership, communication, teamwork, organizing, decision making, and planning.

## **STUDENT PUBLICATIONS**

*The Virginia Statesman* is the principal on-campus student publication. The director of Student Activities controls its operation.

In addition to providing a forum for the expression of student views, *The Virginia Statesman* also serves as an extended laboratory for the Languages and Literature Department and the Mass Communications Department, affording students an opportunity to develop and use writing, critical-thinking, organizational, management, and leadership skills.

An editorial board ensures that each edition of *The Virginia Statesman* meets high standards of quality and truly represents Virginia State University and its student body. The Board includes staff, faculty, students, and alumni.

The *Trojan Yearbook* is an annual publication that provides a written and pictorial history of the year's events. The yearbook is co-edited by students under the supervision of the staff advisor from Student Activities. It is available to the student body prior to the end of the Spring semester. After students receive their copies, the book will be available to faculty, staff, alumni, and others.

## **TROJAN ACTIVITIES BOARD**

The Trojan Activities Board (TAB) assists the Department of Student Activities in identifying, planning, implementing, and evaluating cultural, social, educational, entertainment, and recreational activities for students.

### **Executive Board**

The TAB's chair, vice chair, and secretary/treasurer make up the Executive Board. The executive board supports the TAB and enforces its constitution and bylaws. The ethical leadership and high standards of the board and its individual members help create a quality learning experience for all members.

### **Program Committees**

The lifeblood of the TAB, the program committees plan and implement programs and events to meet the vast needs and expectations of the campus community. There are seven committees, each responsible for a different type of programming. Student chairs are selected to lead these committees. Each chair develops and maintains his/her designated committee during the duration of his/her term. The selection committee may also choose, with the assistance of the chair, to appoint additional committee chairs if necessary. Such flexibility allows for new ideas and approaches when necessary. The committees are as follows:

***Spirit and Tradition:*** This committee plans annual events that strengthen school spirit and educate the campus community about the history of Virginia State University. This committee works with New Student Week, Homecoming Week, and Spring Fling. It also collaborates with other campus organizations, faculty, and staff to foster University-wide spirit and traditions throughout the year.

***Talks and Lecture:*** Sometimes serious, sometimes fun, or a little bit of both! To complement the academic mission and support a marketplace of various opinions and ideas, this committee provides forums, lectures, debates, and talks on a variety of issues and topics.

***Afternoon Entertainment:*** Offering anything from home-grown fun to live performances, this committee brings life into the student union during lunchtime.

***Cultural Awareness:*** Through an array of educational and entertaining activities, this committee educates the campus community about African American culture—its history, connections, successes, and leadership—and about other cultures.

***Performing Arts:*** Local open-mic nights, poetry slams, drama, music, dance—you name it and this committee can do it! This group meets the ever-changing needs of the student body with an open, flexible series of programs for various settings.

***Special Events:*** This committee brings diverse performances to the campus community, ranging from large-scale novelty events to variety acts and representatives of other entertainment trends.

***Publicity:*** This committee creates, designs, and distributes major publicity for all events sponsored by the TAB. Support from all the other committees is required to assist this group in promotion and advertising .

## **UNIVERSITY COMMITTEES/STUDENT REPRESENTATION**

In order for students to participate actively in the decision-making process and have an opportunity to voice their perspective, students are included in the membership of all University committees and organizations on campus.

## **VARSITY ATHLETIC PROGRAM**

Full-time students will be admitted to most home athletic events with a valid Virginia State University student picture identification. At some games students will have to present a ticket issued to them prior to the game. Announcements and flyers will notify students when a ticket is required. A student interested in participating as an athletic manager, student trainer, statistician, or games-management assistant should contact the Athletic Department at (804) 524-5030 or (804) 524-5031.

Men's varsity sports include baseball, basketball, cross country, football, golf, tennis, indoor track and field, and outdoor track and field. Women's varsity sports include bowling, basketball, cross country, softball, golf, tennis, indoor track and field, and volleyball.

The Virginia State University Cheerleaders, commonly known as the "Woo Woos," are perennial Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association champions. Tryouts for students are held each spring. Interested students should contact the Athletic Department.

# **STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

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A student's conduct at Virginia State University is expected to reflect that of a person engaged in a serious endeavor—the pursuit of an academic degree. The Student Code of Conduct was designed to promote an environment in accordance with the highest standards of academic excellence, institutional integrity, and the free expression of ideas and opinions. The Student Code of Conduct contains rules and regulations governing student conduct and represents a means by which the orderly development of appropriate student conduct is assured.

## **PREAMBLE**

Students are expected to abide by all University rules, regulations, and standards, and by the laws of Chesterfield County, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the federal government. Students are expected to act responsibly and to avoid conduct detrimental to themselves, their fellow students, and the University.

It is not possible to list all acts of misconduct or disorderly conduct that can occur on campus, but students are required to exhibit the highest forms of good manners and behavior and respect for the University community and its inhabitants. Although the misconduct is not necessarily listed herein, students are held responsible for any misconduct that is adverse to good order or tends to degrade or demean disciplinary codes or procedures on campus. The following policies are intended to delineate, as completely as practicable, the University's expectation of student decorum at the University.

## **DISCIPLINARY STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES**

By authority of the Board of Visitors, the president is delegated the responsibility and authority for establishing and enforcing regulations governing student life. The president has further delegated these responsibilities and authority to the vice president for Student Affairs and the University Police chief, respectively. The regulations are designed to enable the University to protect itself and its members against the conduct of those who would impair or infringe upon the disciplinary rules and regulations of the University. The regulations and procedures contained herein were formulated through the process of shared governance. This fact in no way abrogates the authority granted by the Board of Visitors to the president and his designee(s) to determine, manage, and maintain a system of discipline and safety in the University community. The Board of Visitors and the administration may alter or modify the rules and regulations concerning student conduct and discipline at any time.

The judicial process is authorized to make a determination as to whether the student's conduct is in violation of the Student Code of Conduct. The applicable criterion of review is the preponderance of the evidence standard. Evidence is presented by the parties and/or witnesses called by the parties. Evidence presented may be in the form of, but is not limited to (a) oral or written testimony from parties or witnesses; (b) affidavits and depositions; (c) police reports and memoranda; (d) properly signed court documents; and (e) other taped or written statements.

## **VIOLATION OF PUBLIC LAWS BY STUDENTS**

The University considers students to be citizens of the community and expects them to abide by its laws. While it is not the University's desire to assume the regulatory and police functions of public government, the University is duly authorized to adjudicate cases when a student is charged with a violation of a city, county, state, or federal law that would tend to have a negative effect on the University's standing in the community. The University is neither bound to wait for civil or criminal procedures to be completed nor bound by decisions rendered by the judicial agency. A student offender may be charged by both the University and a county or state law-enforcement agency for the same offense. The University reserves the right to bring charges that it deems appropriate, and it will do so whenever the student's continued enrollment is considered a threat to persons or property and/or it adversely affects established procedures of discipline and decorum. Normally, criminal cases and parking infractions are processed through local, state, and federal courts of law; however, criminal cases may be referred to the Office of Student

Conduct for administrative action. Appeals of on-campus traffic infractions are handled through the Office of Student Conduct. The University may summarily suspend any student, pending a hearing, who has been convicted of a felony that adversely reflects upon his/her character and fitness as a member of the student body or that negatively reflects upon the University's mission.

Felony convictions of any type, including any conviction for illegal use, possession, or distribution or intent to use, possess, or distribute controlled substances (i.e., drugs), shall be cause for expulsion.

The University does not assume liability, directly or indirectly, for personal items belonging to a student. Personal items include, but are not limited to, clothing, books, musical equipment, televisions, radios, watches, rings, automobiles, or any other items that are leased or owned by the student. Students are encouraged to contract for their own insurance coverage.

The University is not a collection agency for private businesses, nor will the University assume this role, directly or indirectly. Any and all bills, cashing of checks, and contracts created or entered into are the sole responsibility of the student and the private business in question.

If a student is arrested, the University is in no way responsible for providing bond, directly or indirectly. However, all students are required to report immediately, or as soon as is practical, all infractions of public law with which they are involved or charged to the vice president for Student Affairs. Failure to do so may result in immediate suspension.

Violation of, or being formally charged with the violation of, a public law in a legal jurisdiction outside the campus of Virginia State University is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct. This does not apply to traffic infractions.

Disciplinary action may be taken when a student is on property other than the University campus where such student's conduct violates federal, state, or local laws and where such conduct materially and adversely affects the student's suitability as a member of the University's community and/or adversely affects the University's educational mission.

## **CHANNELS FOR CHARGES AGAINST A STUDENT**

Whenever, in the opinion of any member of the University community, a student's or a student organization's conduct is disorderly or disruptive, it is the responsibility of the person(s) observing the breach of conduct to report the same in writing to the vice president for Student Affairs, the University Police, or the director of Student Activities.

The Office of Student Conduct is authorized to process and facilitate adjudication of all complaints filed against students. The following procedures are to be followed:

1. The complaint shall be communicated to the Office of Judicial Affairs. The student shall be notified of the charge(s) in writing, unless a more effective form of notification is deemed appropriate. Charges may be presented in person, by placement in a student's residence-hall mailbox, by e-mail to the accused student's official University e-mail address, or by mail to the accused student's local or permanent address on file in the Office of the University Registrar. **Students are reminded that their Virginia State University e-mail is the official means of communication between the University and the student.** All students are required to maintain accurate and current local and permanent addresses with the University registrar. Following notification of charges, students are strongly encouraged to and shall be afforded the opportunity to meet with a University official who can explain the University judicial process and discuss the charge(s). Failure of the accused student to respond to the initiation of charges or schedule a preliminary meeting shall in no way prevent the University from scheduling and conducting a hearing in the absence of the accused student.

2. The Office of Judicial Affairs shall send notification to the student informing him/her of the charge(s) and requesting his/her appearance at a pre-hearing conference within three business days, except when the pre-hearing is conducted at the scene of the incident.
3. The student shall be advised of his/her rights at the pre-hearing conference.
4. The student shall be informed that the case will be heard by the Administrative Judicial Panel or an Administrator's Court as determined by the director of the Office of Student Conduct.
5. The student shall be informed that the hearing cannot occur within three business days of the pre-hearing.
6. The student shall be advised that he/she is responsible for informing his/her witnesses and/or representative about the hearing.
7. The student shall appear at his/her hearing. An audio tape shall be made of each hearing.
8. The student shall return to the Office of Student Conduct within three to four business days to receive information regarding the decision of the Administrative Judicial Panel or the Administrator's Court. Where warranted, letters will also contain the sanction. In cases that appear before the Executive Judicial Panel (EJP), a decision will be rendered within two business days.
9. If a student wishes to appeal, he/she must submit a written letter of appeal within two business days following receipt of the letter containing the findings and/or the sanction(s) for cases heard by the Administrative Judicial Panel. For cases heard by the EJP, appeals must be received within one business day. The student shall not be present when a case is reviewed on appeal unless requested by the appeal authority. A letter shall be sent to the student regarding the appealed case.

## **IMMEDIATE SUSPENSION**

Immediate suspension from the University or the suspension or limitation of privileges may be imposed by the president or the vice president for Student Affairs or his/her designee(s) pending final disposition of the student's case. Immediate suspension will be imposed for offenses that constitute a clear and present danger to the property and safety of the University and its constituents or that pose a serious detriment to the established system of discipline and decorum on the campus.

Before suspending a student and/or whenever possible, the appropriate administrator will confer with the student to hear his/her explanation, give him/her the reasons for the suspension, and advise the student of his/her rights.

If a student is suspended or dismissed from a residential facility for disciplinary or financial reasons, the University relinquishes all obligations relative to the student's room and board. The student agrees to leave the campus within 24 hours of the suspension or dismissal decision. The student further understands that he/she is responsible for his/her own transportation. The University is not liable for personal belongings left in residence facilities.

## **RIGHTS OF THE ACCUSED**

1. At least three business days prior to the hearing by the appropriate judicial court or administrator, the student is entitled to the following:
  - a. A prehearing conference
  - b. Written notification of the time and place of the hearing
  - c. A written statement of the charge(s), to enable the student to prepare a defense
  - d. The names, if known, of witnesses who may testify at the hearing
2. The student shall be entitled to appear in person and to present his/her defense to the appropriate judicial court or administrator, and may call witnesses on his/her behalf.
3. The student shall be entitled to decline to answer questions.

4. The student shall be entitled to be accompanied by a representative of his/her choice. The representative may be an attorney, a member of the faculty or staff, a fellow student, or another individual. If the student engages an attorney, written notice must be given to the director of the Office of Student Conduct at least 48 hours prior to the hearing. The representative shall be permitted to advise and otherwise counsel the accused before, during, and after the proceedings but shall not be permitted to actively and personally examine witnesses or argue the accused's case.
5. The student shall be entitled to an expeditious hearing of his/her case.
6. The student shall be notified of his/her right to appeal the decision of the Administrative Judicial Panel within 48 hours. Should the accused appeal, the findings of the Judicial Affairs Panel will remain in effect unless overruled by a higher body.
7. If a student fails to attend the scheduled hearing, he/she can be tried in absentia.
8. A student may waive his/her right to a hearing. Such a waiver must be executed by the student in writing and communicated to the Office of Student Conduct. The decision and penalty, if any, will be made and imposed by the vice president for Student Affairs or his/her designee. The waiver of a hearing also waives any right to appeal.

## **ADMINISTRATOR'S COURT**

**Composition:** The Administrator's Court consists of one staff or faculty member, designated by the vice president for Student Affairs. When selected, he/she will be notified by the vice president for Student Affairs and given sufficient data and information to adjudicate the case(s).

**Jurisdiction:** The Administrator's Court adjudicates those disciplinary cases assigned to it by the director of the Office of Student Conduct. This Court also hears cases when circumstances prevent the Office of Student Conduct from convening the requisite members of the Administrative Conduct Panel. Infractions deemed minor by the AJP may be referred by the director of the Office of Student Conduct to be adjudicated by the Administrator's Court.

**Powers:** The Administrator's Court is authorized to determine whether a violation has occurred. When a decision is reached that the student's conduct violated the Student Code of Conduct, the vice president for Student Affairs will impose the necessary disciplinary sanction. In some instances, the administrator hearing the case may be asked to recommend a penalty. The sanction to be imposed may be drawn from all sanctions applicable to student conduct.

**Appeals:** Decisions handed down by the Administrator's Court may be appealed to the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs. Students appealing a case must submit a written letter of appeal to the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs within 48 hours of the decision.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE JUDICIAL PANEL**

**Composition:** The Administrative Judicial Panel (AJP) consists of faculty and staff members appointed by the associate vice president for enrollment services or his/her designee and student members selected from the Student Government Association and the general student body. All members will serve throughout the school year.

Any three members of the panel constitute the requisite number to adjudicate a case. When the requisite number of members is not available for a hearing, the director of the Office of Student Conduct will select substitute members subject to approval by the vice president for Student Affairs. The composition of the panel may be changed as deemed necessary.

**Jurisdiction:** The AJP adjudicates cases that are assigned to it by the director of the Office of Student Conduct. Normally, cases that may result in a student's separation from the University will be heard by this body. In addition, other types of cases may be heard at the discretion of the director of the Office of Student Conduct.

**Powers:** The AJP is authorized to determine whether the Student Code of Conduct has been violated. When a student is found to be in violation of the Code, the AJP recommends the appropriate disciplinary action(s). The following penalties may be imposed: a warning, probation, community service hours, fines, forfeiture or suspension of campus privileges, demand for restitution, suspension from residence halls, permanent suspension from on-campus housing, suspension from the University, suspension held in abeyance, or expulsion. All recommended penalties are then referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Final approval of all penalties at this juncture rests with the vice president for Student Affairs.

Appeals: Decisions handed by the AJP may be appealed directly to the vice president for Student Affairs.

## **PROCEDURES FOR THE OFFICE OF STUDENT CONDUCT FORMAL HEARINGS**

The hearing will begin when the chair of the panel calls the meeting to order. The chair will state the time and date of the hearing and the applicable charge(s) against the accused. The chair will read the accused's name. The chair will read the names of the members of the panel and all persons present at the hearing, including the director of Student Conduct or his/her designee. The chair will read the name(s) of the witness(es) present to testify for the parties (the accused and the University) and the name(s) of the parties' legal counselors and/or advisors.

The chair will conduct the hearing as follows:

- a. He/she will administer the oath to all parties and witnesses ("Do you affirm that the testimony that you are about to give is the truth?").
- b. He/she will ask the accused if he/she wishes to challenge any of the members of the Office of Student Conduct.
- c. He/she will state the allegation(s) contained in the complaint, which will have been communicated to the accused at the pre-hearing conference.
- d. He/she will ask the accused whether he/she attended the pre-hearing conference.
- e. He/she will ask the accused whether he/she violated the Code and/or policies of the University.
- f. If the response is "Yes," the accused will not be required to submit additional testimony. The accused may then make a closing statement.
- g. If the response is "No," the AJP will listen to the parties' opening statements, testimony from the accused and the University, and testimony from witnesses for the accused and the University.
- h. He/she will allow the panel members, including the director of Student Conduct, to ask questions.
- i. He/she will allow the parties to make closing statements.
- j. He/she will inform the accused that a written decision regarding the charge(s) will be communicated to him/her by a specified date, and that if he/she is found to be in violation of the Code he/she has the right to appeal the decision and the penalty within two business days after receiving the written notification of the decision and the penalty. Information regarding the appeal to the Executive Committee on Discipline is obtained from the Office of Student Conduct.
- k. He/she will conclude the hearing and state that the AJP will convene without the presence of the parties and/or witnesses to deliberate the decision.
- l. He/she will dismiss the accused from the room.
- m. He/she will allow the members of the AJP to discuss the case against the accused and call for the decision. A majority of the AJP must support a decision that the Code was violated.
- n. He/she will adjourn the hearing after the AJP members render a decision.

## EXECUTIVE CONDUCT PANEL ON DISCIPLINE

If an Executive Conduct Panel (ECP) is convened, it will consist of five persons from the vice president/director/department chair level and Student Affairs personnel, one administrator appointed by the vice president for Student Affairs, and one student selected by the president of the Student Government Association. Three members constitute a quorum. When the requisite number of members is not available, the chair may select substitutes. The vice president for Student Affairs and the director of events calendar serve as ex-officio members.

**Jurisdiction:** The body convenes at the request of the president and/or vice president for Student Affairs. Its regular function is to review cases on appeal from the Administrative Judicial Panel.

**Powers:** The role of the Executive Committee in the matters of appeals shall be limited to the following:

1. Accepting or rejecting an appeal, based upon whether the student has properly and sufficiently indicated the basis for an appeal
2. Reviewing the case to determine if the student's appeal is justified and taking one of the following four actions:
  - a. Sustaining the findings and the penalty or penalties
  - b. Sustaining the findings and altering the penalty or penalties
  - c. Reversing the findings and, if necessary, imposing a penalty or penalties
  - d. Ordering a rehearing

In certain instances, this body may serve as the panel of original jurisdiction when certain complex cases are referred directly by the president or provost or any vice president. In such cases, the Executive Conduct Panel shall render decisions on the matters referred to it.

The decisions of the vice president for Student Affairs or the Executive Conduct Panel are final except in those cases resulting in suspension or expulsion. Students who have been expelled or suspended by the vice president for Student Affairs or the Executive Conduct Panel may appeal by submitting a written letter of appeal to the vice president for Student Affairs within two business days after receiving the decision. After review the vice president for Student Affairs may affirm the suspension or expulsion or impose a different penalty (more or less severe than the original penalty).

### Grounds for Appeal

A decision or judgment of a conduct court may be appealed on the following grounds:

1. Prejudicial error was committed during the hearing whereby a fair hearing was not conducted.
2. Noncumulative material and relevant evidence, new or newly discovered and which with reasonable diligence could not have been produced at the hearing, has since been produced.
3. The decision or judgment is not supported or justified by the evidence.
4. The penalty or sanction imposed was excessive.

## GRANTING OR DENYING APPEALS

A written request for an appeal must be submitted by the student to the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs within two business days after receiving the disciplinary decision. Should the deadline fall during the weekend, the next business day shall be considered the final day to submit an appeal letter. The vice president for Student Affairs and/or the Executive Judicial Panel have the right to deny an appeal if the body decides that an appeal is not warranted.

## CONTENTS OF APPEAL LETTER

Letters of appeal shall contain a statement or statements of the grounds for the appeal in order to allow a reasonable judgment to be made as to whether to grant the appeal. If an appeal is denied, an appropriate written response will be given to the person making the request.

## ACTION AND APPEALS

Once an appeal has been accepted and the court reviews the case and evidence, the court may take one of the following actions:

1. Sustain the findings and the penalty or penalties
2. Sustain the findings and alter the penalty or penalties
3. Reverse the findings and, if necessary, impose a penalty or penalties
4. Order a rehearing

## SANCTIONS

Once a finding has been made that the Code has been violated, the vice president for Student Affairs or his/her designee imposes a penalty or penalties. While he/she may receive penalty recommendations from the Administrative Conduct Panel, he/she is not bound by those recommendations.

Virginia State University has a zero-tolerance policy for drugs, weapons, and fighting. Students may be expelled for violation of said policy.

Occasionally, when warranted, expulsion may be imposed for offenses that are not explicitly stated herein as major infractions. Hence, it is not solely reserved for major infractions. Circumstances surrounding the student's conduct and/or the cumulative number of offenses committed by the student may warrant expulsion, the most severe sanction. Sanctions may include but are not limited to the following:

1. **Warning:** A letter will notify the student that the next offense of any nature shall necessitate a harsher action, up to and including expulsion from the University.
2. **Probation:** A letter will notify the student that he/she has lost designated privileges for a definite period of time, not to exceed one year. Probation may include loss of such privileges as may be consistent with the offense and is designed to promote rehabilitation of the student. A student may be placed on probation if he/she is involved in any act of misconduct.
3. **Community Service Hours:** The student will be notified by letter that he/she will be assigned to perform community service work for a specified period of time, to cover no less than two weeks and no more than three hours per day. All work assignments must be coordinated with the Coordinator of Campus and Community Outreach.
4. **Fines:** The University may impose fines in order to maintain discipline and fairness in the assignment of penalties. Failure to pay an assessed fine will result in a judicial hold being placed against the student, which, while in place, will prevent him/her from registering for classes or graduating. Where evidence exists that imposing a fine upon a student would pose a financial hardship based upon financial-aid criteria and/or other factors relative to a student's socioeconomic background, alternative sanctions may be imposed. The University reserves the right to fine a student for any violation it deems appropriate.
5. **Forfeiture or Suspension of Campus Privileges:** A student will be notified by letter that certain campus privileges have been withdrawn or suspended for a specified amount of time. The restriction involved will be clearly identified and may include suspension from all organizations (social, athletic, academic, etc.) on campus as a participating member and suspension from representing the University in any capacity.

6. **Restitution:** A letter will notify the student that he/she is required to make restitution for an injury to a person or damage or misappropriation of property. This may take the form of service, monetary reimbursement, or other compensation.
7. **Suspension from residence halls:** A letter will notify the student that he/she will not be allowed to reside in or enter any residence hall for a specified period. All residence halls and living areas will be off-limits to the student for this period.
8. **Permanent Suspension from On-Campus Housing:** The student will be notified by letter that he/she will not be allowed to live in housing on campus for the duration of his/her matriculation at the University.
9. **Suspension from the University:** A student will be terminated from the University for a specified period. During the term of the student's suspension, he/she will be forbidden to enter the facilities and environs of the University.
10. **Suspension Held in Abeyance:** The student or student organization will be informed that suspension from the University will be imposed should another violation equal to or greater than the offense in question occur.
11. **Expulsion from the University:** The student will not be eligible for readmission. The student will be forbidden to enter the facilities and environs of the University.
12. **Participation in the University's substance-abuse-prevention program:** Virginia State University offers On Campus Talking About Alcohol, a primary alcohol-abuse-prevention program for college-aged students.

## **UNIVERSITY TELECOMMUNICATIONS INFRACTIONS**

### **Fraudulent Telephone Use**

Unauthorized use of any authorization or PIN code to place long-distance calls constitutes theft of services. This is in violation of University policy and state and federal laws. Anyone violating this procedure will be subject to the following:

1. An appearance before the University's Administrative Judicial Panel.
2. Payment of charges for all calls, regardless of amount. A 10 percent fee will be applied along with an investigative fee of \$25. University residents using the Trojan Card should report any lost, stolen, or misused cards to the University Telecommunications Office immediately. Any unknown calls on an account should be reported to the University Telecommunications Office within 10 days of the billing date. After 10 days, no adjustments will be made.
3. Payment of any court costs and appearances.
4. Deactivation of University Telecommunication services.
5. University probation, suspension, or expulsion.
6. A hold on University refunds. Refunds will be applied to any outstanding University balances.

### **Fraudulent Information Technology Use**

All members of the University community are expected to use the University's electronic resources and information-technology systems in a professional manner that demonstrates respect for individuals, data confidentiality, and intellectual-property rights. All uses of electronic resources and systems must be for their intended purpose and must comply with applicable local, state, and federal laws, copyright laws, and University policies. Users of the University's electronic resources and systems also accept personal responsibility for any actions that constitute a violation of this policy or any other policy, regulation, law, or guideline as set forth by local, state, or federal law. Users should not do any of the following:

1. Install personal software on the University's computers (including laptops, personal computers, or workstations) or make or use illegal copies of copyrighted materials or software, store such copies on University systems, or transmit them over the University network
2. Download or transmit fraudulent, threatening, obscene, intimidating, defamatory, harassing, discriminatory, or otherwise unlawful messages or images
3. Send e-mail using another's identity, using an assumed name, or anonymously
4. Engage in any activity that might be purposefully harmful to systems or any information thereon, such as creating or propagating viruses, disrupting services, damaging files, or making unauthorized modification to University data

## **VIOLATIONS AND PENALTIES**

A STUDENT OFFENDER MAY BE CHARGED BY BOTH THE UNIVERSITY AND A COUNTY OR STATE LAW-ENFORCEMENT AGENCY FOR THE SAME OFFENSE.

Any student found to have committed or attempted to commit the following misconduct is subject to disciplinary sanctions including, but not limited to, warning, probation, loss of privileges, fines, demand for restitution, residence-hall suspension, residence-hall expulsion, Virginia State University suspension, and Virginia State University expulsion.

More than one of the sanctions listed above may be imposed for any single violation.

VIOLATIONS: Each student at Virginia State University is responsible for his/her conduct from the time of application through the actual awarding of a degree.

### **Section 1 – Alcoholic Beverages Policies**

Virginia State University expects all students to exhibit behavior compatible with membership in a community of scholars. Students shall conduct themselves in a civil and mature manner, respecting the rights and property of others.

- 1.01 Possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages in public (on campus) or in the residence halls is prohibited. This includes consumption in moving or parked vehicles.
- 1.02 The sale or distribution of alcoholic beverages on campus is prohibited.
- 1.03 Students are not allowed to store or display alcoholic beverage containers.
- 1.04 Students are not allowed to use alcoholic beverages to qualify for membership in any organization.
- 1.05 Public intoxication, drunkenness, or activities related to the consumption or possession of alcoholic beverages that infringe on the rights of others are prohibited.
- 1.06 Students and organizations that give, sell, or buy alcoholic beverages for students under 21 years of age shall be considered to be contributing to the delinquency of a minor.

### **Section 2 – Unauthorized Activities in and on Campus Buildings**

Virginia State University does not authorize activities that have the potential to create excessive noise, inflict damage upon University property, or cause physical injury. Students are expected to use good judgment and common sense when riding bicycles, skateboards, longboards, scooters, and rollerblades on campus.

- 2.01 Climbing, rappelling, and related activities are prohibited on campus buildings and structures.
- 2.02 Hall sports (ball playing, bicycling, rollerblading, scooter riding, and skateboarding) are not permitted in any campus-operated buildings.
- 2.03 Skateboards, scooters, and rollerblades may not be ridden in any building.

- 2.04 Use of these modes of transportation for other purposes (e.g., tricks, jumps, rail sliding, etc.) is not permitted on campus.
- 2.05 Skateboards, scooters, and rollerblades may not be ridden in campus roadways or parking lots. Bicycles may be ridden only on roadways, and riders must obey all traffic signs.

### **Section 3 – Coeducational Visitation Policy and Trespassing**

All regulations of the University and the residence halls must be followed. All students are responsible for the conduct of their guests.

- 3.01 Visitation or allowing visitation of a student of the opposite sex to a room, hallway, lobby, or stairwell is permitted at designated times.
- 3.02 Guests who remain in another student’s room while illegal visitation is occurring shall be considered a participant and in violation.
- 3.03 Students who entertain family members of the opposite sex without permission from the Area Coordinators shall be considered in violation. All guests are to be entertained in the lobby.
- 3.04 Sexual activity in the residence halls is prohibited.
- 3.05 Students will be responsible for informing their guests, whether students or nonstudents, of University policies and will be held accountable if their guests violate University policy.
- 3.06 Students shall not enter or remain in a private room, office, or restricted area that is under the control of another student, faculty member, or University official except when permitted or invited by the resident party. No unauthorized individual may enter a University building or room that has been locked or is restricted by other means.

### **Section 4 – Dining Hall Regulations**

- 4.01 The removal of trays, tableware, and food from the dining area is prohibited unless authorized.
- 4.02 Students improperly attired (e.g., lacking shirt and shoes or wearing sagging pants, pants that reveal underwear, or pajamas) will not be permitted in the dining area for health and safety reasons. Male students are required to remove their hats upon entering the building.
- 4.03 All students participating in the meal plan must present a valid Virginia State University identification card before entering the dining area.
- 4.04 Food fighting is prohibited. Any student identified as taking part will be in violation of the policy and subject to expulsion. Food fighting includes, but is not limited to, the use of food and/or food items in any manner other than consumption, (e.g., directing food or food items at another person and/or areas surrounding another person). Food fighting is viewed as a major infraction by the University.
- 4.05 All dining patrons must bus their dishes upon completion of their meal.

### **Section 5 – Disorderly Conduct**

Students whose behavior disrupts the regular or normal functions of the University, including those whose behavior breaches the peace or violates the rights of others, are guilty of disorderly conduct.

- 5.01 Students shall not intentionally provide or give false information to a faculty member or to a University staff member acting in the performance of his/her duties.
- 5.02 Students shall comply with reasonable and lawful requests or directives by residence-hall staff members or other employees acting in the performance of their official duties. This includes presenting a student-identification card or being requested to leave an area designated as off-limits.

- 5.03 Smoking, language, or any behavior deemed by the instructor to be disruptive to the learning process is prohibited in classrooms and other University buildings. This also refers to gang and drug paraphernalia. Smoking is allowed in designated areas only.
- 5.04 Students shall not throw an object or cause an object to be projected from any point on University property. Any object or substance that has the potential to deface or damage University or private property or cause personal injury or disruption is prohibited.
- 5.05 The possession or use of firearms, guns, or weapons of any kind is prohibited at all times. These prohibited items shall include, but are not limited to, firearms, crafted weapons (e.g., baseball bats or pool cues), bowie knives, switchblade knives, daggers, nunchaku, and metallic knuckles. Possession or storage of weapons by students is prohibited on any property owned or controlled by the University, including University-certified housing units.
- 5.06 Snowball throwing on campus is prohibited in all areas except Rogers Stadium.
- 5.07 Students shall not litter or throw debris on University property at any time. Citations for littering are issued by University Police officers. Unauthorized assembly, demonstrations, or acts of picketing of any kind are not permitted. All assemblies, demonstrations, and similar acts must have prior approval and be registered with the Department of Student Activities or the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs.
- 5.08 Students shall not play unreasonably loud music on the campus grounds or in the residence halls, classrooms, or buildings. According to the Chesterfield County Code, it shall be unlawful to create any unreasonably loud or disturbing noise in the county. Noise of such character, intensity, and duration as to be detrimental to the life or health of any person or to unreasonably disturb or annoy the quiet, comfort, or repose of any person is hereby prohibited.
- 5.09 Students shall not misuse, damage, or tamper with any emergency phones. Emergency phones can be used only in emergency situations to report criminal activity or to call for assistance.
- 5.10 Virginia State University values freedom of expression as a core principle of the University and recognizes that standards of dress and/or grooming are appropriate in specific circumstances. Virginia State University students are to exercise judgment in endorsing modesty, decency, and a sense of decorum so as to uphold the honor, dignity, and pride of themselves and their institution through their selected attire. Refer to Section 5.11 for state-law rulings on dress.
- 5.11 Indecent Exposure: Every person who intentionally makes an obscene display or exposure of his person, or the private parts thereof, in any public place or place where others are present or who procures another to so expose himself shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor. No person shall be deemed to be in violation of this section for breastfeeding a child in any public place or any place where others are present.

## **Section 6 – Drugs**

The University seeks to inform all students about drugs and their effects. To this end, it is the policy of this campus to provide education programs and counseling to drug users and those affected by the drug use of others so as to discourage illicit drug use, eliminate the dealing or providing of illegal drugs, and uphold the law in these matters.

Drugs include controlled substances, alcohol, and substances that may be detrimental to health even if they are not subject to state and federal laws.

Students shall not distribute, use, or possess an illegal drug as defined by the Drug Control Act of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Use or possession is prohibited in any building or on any property owned or operated by the University. This includes the use, possession, and sale of marijuana. Any infraction of this provision may subject the student to expulsion from the University.

- 6.01 Use, possession, manufacture, or distribution of illegal drugs or drug-related paraphernalia or the misuse of legal pharmaceutical drugs is prohibited.
- 6.02 Reasonable suspicion of possession or use of narcotics or drugs may subject the student to a search of his/her person or property by law enforcement.

### **Section 7 – False Alarms, Bomb Threats, Explosives, Weapons, and Misuse of Fire Extinguishers**

(ALL VIOLATIONS OF SECTION 7 MAY RESULT IN IMMEDIATE SUSPENSION FROM THE RESIDENCE HALL.)

- 7.01 Persons who knowingly initiate a false fire alarm by ringing fire bells or giving any other common or recognized fire alarm are guilty of endangering the lives of other people and may be held responsible for damage to the persons and/or equipment responding to such false alarm.
- 7.02 In accordance with the Code of Virginia, any student found guilty of sounding a false alarm or making a bomb threat shall be guilty of a Class 5 felony and subject to 10 years in prison.
- 7.03 Students shall not, without authorization, operate or tamper with any firefighting equipment, except to extinguish a fire.
- 7.04 Inappropriate or dangerous activities involving fires, open flames, candles, matches, or other flammable materials are prohibited in all residence halls and buildings owned or operated by the University.
- 7.05 The use of dangerous chemicals or explosive materials such as fireworks, firecrackers, and gunpowder is prohibited unless under the direction and supervision of a professor for learning purposes.
- 7.06 Blocking or in any way preventing the use of fire-exit doors, residence-hall room doors, and building hallways is prohibited.
- 7.07 Improper use of electrical appliances or wiring that creates a fire hazard is prohibited. Cooking appliances are not allowed in certain residence halls.
- 7.08 It is prohibited to carry or possess firearms, ammunition, gun powder, air rifles, air pistols, paintball guns, guns of any kind, knives, replicas or other weapons, dangerous chemicals, or explosive materials, except as authorized in supervised academic programs, on campus or at group-sponsored events off campus.

### **Section 8 – Fighting, Assault, Threats of Physical Abuse, and Verbal Abuse**

Virginia State University strives to provide an environment where students, faculty, and staff feel welcome, safe, and at peace.

- 8.01 Conduct that threatens or endangers the health or safety of any person within or related to the University community, including physical abuse, threats, intimidation, or harassment, is prohibited.
- 8.02 Students shall not engage in or attempt to engage in any form of violence directed toward another person or group of persons on University property.
- 8.03 Participating in on-campus or off-campus riots or disturbances with the intent to commit or incite actions that present a clear and present danger to others or that damage property is prohibited.

(NOTE: In instances where self-defense is claimed, the determination of the validity of the claim will rest solely with the appropriate judicial board.)

### **Section 9 – Forgery, Fraud, Theft, Gambling, and Misrepresentation**

Any student, who, for purposes of fraud or misrepresentation, falsifies, forges, defaces, alters, or mutilates in any manner any document or representation thereof may be subject to discipline when this action substantially affects the University community's interest. Some examples of documents covered by this regulation include identification

cards, program requests, change slips, receipts, transcripts of credits, library documents, and petitions for reclassification of residency status.

- 9.01 Students shall not engage in willful falsification of information on University records or of information given to University officials or to local government officials; the presentation of false information for the purpose of obtaining services; unauthorized presentation of oneself or one's organization as a representative of the University for the purpose of gaining or attempting to gain privilege, convenience, or goods; possession, manufacture, or distribution of false or altered instruments of identification; or initiating or causing to be initiated any false report, warning, or threat.
- 9.02 Students shall not steal or attempt to steal any money, property, or items of value belonging to the University, members of the University community, or campus visitors.
- 9.03 Students shall not illegally use or appropriate any property belonging to the University.
- 9.04 Students shall not, in any manner, defraud or fail to pay debts that are legally owed to the University or members of the University community. This subsection also includes theft, misuse, abuse, or fraudulent use of telephones or the telephone PIN numbers of other students or University officials.
- 9.05 Students shall not remove, exchange, or alter arrangements of any University property without permission from the appropriate authority.
- 9.06 Students shall not misrepresent other students.

## **Section 10 – Conduct Infractions**

- 10.01 Students shall not fail to comply with reasonable and lawful requests made by the director of Student Conduct acting in the performance of his/her official duties. Failure to comply with such requests (e.g., to attend conferences and/or prehearing conferences) may result in additional charges.
- 10.02 Students shall not fail to comply with any disciplinary sanctions imposed upon them by judicial panels or hearing officers in hearings.
- 10.03 Students shall not engage in any activity that disrupts, unfairly influences, or obstructs the judicial process of Virginia State University.
- 10.04 Giving false information to a judicial panel or hearing officer is prohibited. It is a serious offense and may lead to a charge of perjury.
- 10.05 Attempting to influence, intimidate, or threaten any witness, panel member, or other participants in a judicial proceeding is prohibited. Such action may lead to criminal charges.

## **Section 11 – Parole or Probation Status of Student**

- 11.01 Any student who is placed on probation or parole by any court must report the same in person to the director of student conduct within 10 days of the court order.

## **Section 12 – Moral Turpitude**

Sexual harassment is defined by law and includes requests for sexual favors, sexual advances, or other sexual conduct when submission is either explicitly or implicitly a condition affecting academic or employment decisions; the behavior is sufficiently severe or pervasive as to create an intimidating, hostile, or repugnant environment; or the behavior persists despite objection by the person to whom the conduct is directed. The University considers such behavior, whether physical or verbal, to be a breach of its standards of conduct. It will seek to prevent such incidents and will investigate and take corrective actions for violations of this policy.

- 12.01 Students shall not sexually harass any members of the University community or campus visitors.
- 12.02 Sexual acts between consenting or non-consenting persons on University property are forbidden at all times. University property includes buildings, grounds, and parked automobiles.

- 12.03 Students shall not rape, attempt to rape, or molest others person on or off campus. Charges will be filed through the state code.
- 12.04 Students and student organizations will not engage in sexual misconduct, which includes, but is not limited to, sexual activity forced on another person against his/her will, either by physical or psychological force; sexual harassment; obscene phone calls; and indecent exposure.

### **Section 13 – Pet Policy**

No pets other than fish and properly attended guide dogs are permitted in University buildings and on campus grounds.

- 13.01 Dogs, cats, snakes, and other animals are not permitted on campus grounds. Any animal found unattended or tied to a tree, pole, or any other object on campus is subject to being impounded by the Bureau of Animal Control. All fees and costs associated with impounding will be borne by the owner of the animal. This policy does not apply to guide dogs.

### **Section 14 – Vandalism**

Students and student organizations shall not willfully or carelessly destroy, deface, or tamper with University property or the property of others.

- 14.01 Defacing or vandalizing University property, land, buildings, or equipment is prohibited.
- 14.02 Defacing or vandalizing the property of others is prohibited.

### **Section 15 – Violations of Other University Regulations**

Violation of University regulations contained in official University publications is prohibited.

- 15.01 Violation of other regulations includes, but is not limited to, Residence Life policies, recreational sports facility policies, and University computing policies.

### **Section 16 – Hazing**

Hazing is an intentional action toward another student, on or off campus, by a student organization or any of its members, that is intended to produce humiliation, physical discomfort, bodily injury, or ridicule. Hazing under Virginia law is defined as activities for initiation or induction into an organization that include calisthenics or other strenuous physical activity; exposure to inclement weather; consumption of any food, liquid, beverage, drug, or other substance; and confinement in any room or compartment. The definition also includes spraying, painting, or pelting with any substance; burying in any substance; burning, branding, or tattooing; or any other activity that may result in physical injury or endangerment to the health or life of the individual being hazed.

- 16.01 Hazing by an individual is prohibited.
- 16.02 Hazing by an organization is prohibited.
- 16.03 Attending an event or activity where hazing is occurring is not permitted.

### **Section 17 – Improper Use of University Computers and Computer Networks or Systems**

Virginia State University students and staff should be careful about how much information they post to the personal websites, online journals, blogs, and communities (such as Facebook.com and Twitter.com) they use to communicate and network within and outside the community.

- 17.01 Students shall not abuse or misuse University computer equipment, materials, or systems or networks by: accessing, sending, or displaying obscene materials (as defined under state and federal law); engaging in abusive conduct; damaging computer equipment, networks or systems; violating copyright laws; using false and unauthorized identification or password, or trespassing into another student's work; or using

University equipment, supplies, systems or networks for any illegal activities as defined by Virginia statute or federal law.

- 17.02 The use of cell phones or audio or video recording is not permitted in classrooms without the prior approval of the instructor.
- 17.03 Any violation of the University's computer-use policy is prohibited.

## **STANDARDS FOR STUDENT-ORGANIZATION CONDUCT**

The University is committed to maintaining a safe and healthy living and learning environment for students, faculty, and staff. Student-organization behavior that is not consistent with the Student Organization Code of Conduct is addressed through an educational process designed to promote safety and good citizenship and, when necessary, impose appropriate consequences.

### **Student-Organization-Member Responsibilities**

Members of student organizations are expected to be good citizens; to engage in responsible behaviors that reflect well upon their organizations and the University; to be civil to one another and to others within the campus community; and to contribute positively to student and University life.

Virginia State University has established the following Student Organization Code of Conduct to ensure that all student-organization officers and members understand what is expected of them and accept responsibility for their own actions and the actions of their members and guests.

### **Application of This Code**

The Office of Student Conduct will exercise jurisdiction over recognized student organizations, including fraternities and sororities, and the conduct of their members. Action by the Office of Student Conduct does not preclude action by one of the Greek councils or other governing bodies.

Sanctions for the conduct listed below may be imposed on student organizations found responsible for violating the Student Organization Code of Conduct. Sanctions may include, but are not limited to, withdrawal of recognition, suspension of recognition for a specified period of time, probation (a warning that might lead to a more severe sanction), restriction of privileges, reprimand, and demand for restitution for losses caused.

Conduct that threatens the safety or security of the campus community or that substantially disrupts the functions or operation of the University is within the jurisdiction of this Code, regardless of whether it occurs on or off campus.

The Office of Student Conduct is responsible for adjudicating cases based on allegations of misconduct. Ordinarily the University will proceed only with written complaints, but it reserves the right to proceed without a written complaint. When the Department of Student Activities receives a report of a student organization's alleged misconduct, an investigation will occur. If warranted, the Department of Student Activities will send the president of the student organization and its advisor a letter to schedule an informal conference. The letter will also notify the president of the allegations. The director of student activities or his/her designee will meet with the president of the organization and its advisor to discuss the allegations. If the organization is found responsible for the alleged misconduct, the director will file a formal incident letter with the Office of Student Conduct. The Office of Student Conduct will send a letter to the president of the organization, informing him/her of the charge(s) and requesting his/her appearance at a pre-hearing conference. The student will be advised of his/her rights at the pre-hearing conference. The student then will appear at the hearing, which will be taped. It is the president's right to accept or reject any sanction imposed. If the president believes his/her due process rights have been violated or the informal sanction was too excessive, he/she may submit a written request to have the case reviewed to the vice president of Student Affairs within three days of the notice of sanctions. The vice president of Student Affairs shall review the charges and all evidence relating to them and shall have the discretion to further interview the organization's

leadership and student members. The vice president's decision shall be final. The president of the organization will be notified of the University's final decision within 10 working days.

## **Governance**

All student organizations are required to be registered with the University through the process administered by Student Activities. Registered student organizations are subject to University governance and are responsible for the conduct of their members. Governance pertains to University policies and procedures, including local, state, and federal laws, to which student organizations, including fraternities and sororities, are held responsible. Policies and procedures developed by the Greek councils are managed as outlined in their respective constitutions and do not preclude action by the Judicial Affairs Office.

## **Unacceptable Student Organization and Member Behavior**

The following defined behaviors are unacceptable and subject to disciplinary sanctions:

### **1. Aiding and Abetting**

- a. Assisting a group that has lost University recognition or facilitating the existence of a group that does not have University recognition is prohibited.
- b. Encouraging, permitting, or assisting another to do any act that could subject him/her to discipline is prohibited.
- c. Aiding and abetting another person or group in violation of a University policy or procedure or local, state, or federal law are prohibited.

### **2. Alcohol Use and Possession**

The Virginia State University Alcohol and Drug Policy prohibits the possession, use, manufacture, distribution, selling, or consumption of alcohol anywhere on campus. The policy pertains to the activities of all students on University property, at University-sponsored events, and at off-campus activities while representing the University community. Students, faculty, and staff are expected to comply with all state, federal, and local alcohol and drug-related laws. Underage drinking is strictly prohibited by Virginia State University.

### **3. Damage to Property**

Willful or careless destruction of, defacement of, or tampering with University property or the property of others is prohibited.

### **4. Unlawful Discrimination**

Discrimination on the basis of race, religion, color, ancestry, ethnicity, gender, marital status, national origin, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, special disabled veteran's status, or Vietnam-era or other covered veteran status is prohibited. The prohibition on membership policies that discriminate on the basis of gender does not apply to social fraternities or sororities or to other University living groups.

### **5. Disorderly Conduct**

- a. Behavior that disturbs the peaceful campus environment, offends public morals, or undermines public safety is prohibited.
- b. Harassment, threats, bullying, physical abuse, intimidation, and the threat of physical abuse, including bias-related incidents, are prohibited.
- c. Excessive noise that is disruptive to the campus or surrounding community is prohibited.

### **6. Drugs**

- a. The use, possession, manufacture, or distribution of illegal drugs or drug-related paraphernalia or the misuse of legal pharmaceutical drugs is prohibited.

- b. Sponsoring or hosting an activity at which the substances noted above are used is prohibited.

**7. Endangerment**

Reckless or intentional acts that endanger the welfare of group members or others or compromise the security measures of the campus are prohibited.

**8. Failure to Comply**

- a. Failure to comply with the directions of University officials acting in the performance of their official duties;
- b. Resisting or obstructing University officials acting in the performance of their official duties;
- c. Failure to follow all policies and procedures established by the University pertaining to student organizations, including fraternities and sororities, as outlined in the *Student Organization Handbook*.

**9. False Alarms and Fire Safety**

Initiating false fire alarms or tampering with fire-alarm devices or fire equipment is prohibited.

**10. Falsification of Information**

- a. Willful falsification of information on University records or of information given to University officials or to local government officials is prohibited.
- b. Willfully providing false information for the purpose of obtaining services is prohibited.
- c. Unauthorized presentation of oneself or one's organization as a representative of the University for the purpose of gaining or attempting to gain privilege, convenience, goods, or services is prohibited.
- d. Possession, manufacture, or distribution of false or altered instruments of identification is prohibited.
- e. Initiating or causing to be initiated any false report, warning, or threat is prohibited.

**11. Firearms, Fireworks, Weapons, and Explosives**

- a. Possession of firearms, ammunition, gun powder, air rifles, air pistols, paintball guns, guns of any kind, knives, replicas or other weapons, dangerous chemicals, or explosive materials, except as authorized in supervised academic programs, on campus or at group-sponsored events off campus is prohibited.
- b. Possession or use of fireworks on campus or at group-sponsored events off campus is prohibited.

**12. Guests**

Student organizations are responsible for informing their guest(s) of University policies and procedures and will be held accountable for the behavior of their guest(s).

**13. Harassment and Abusive Behavior**

Conduct that threatens or endangers the health or safety of any person within or related to the University community, including physical abuse, threats, intimidation, harassment, or sexual misconduct, is prohibited, as defined in this *Student Handbook*.

**14. Hazing**

Hazing in every form or conspiracy to haze is prohibited. Virginia State University takes a zero-tolerance approach to hazing. Commission of hazing can be considered either a misdemeanor or a felony. Participation in a hazing practice may result in both individual and organizational disciplinary action. The Code of Virginia section 18.2-56 states, "It shall be unlawful to haze so as to cause bodily injury, any student at any school, college, or university. Any person found guilty thereof shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor." If injuries would be such as to constitute a felony, punishment shall be inflicted as is otherwise provided by law for the punishment of such felony.

Section 18.2-56 further states, “any person receiving bodily injury by hazing shall have a right to sue, civilly, the person or persons guilty thereof, whether adults or infants.”

The following non-exhaustive list of activities meets this criterion, and accordingly, these activities are considered forms of hazing:

- a. Physical activities such as calisthenics, jogging, sit-ups, push-ups, or the carrying of objects such as bricks, stones, blocks, or any other item(s) which serve to create physical hardships, discomfort, and/or distress
- b. Abduction or involuntary transportation of individuals or the abandonment of individuals at off-campus locations, requiring them to find their way home
- c. Physical exposure or abuse such as nudity, paddling, pushing, shoving, hitting, punching, tackling, or throwing any substance at another person; submerging or dunking in water or other substances; marking, branding or tattooing; or any activity which has the potential for the exchange of blood or other bodily fluids
- d. Forced or required consumption of any substance, including food, drugs, alcohol, water, or any beverage, or any items individually or in combination that may or could induce vomiting, psychological abuse, and/or humiliation
- e. Requiring individuals to walk, march, or run in single file against their will
- f. Requiring individuals to dress in revealing, embarrassing, or uncomfortable clothing or any type of uniform
- g. Exposing individuals to extremely uncomfortable or dangerous environments (e.g., environments that are too loud, dark, small, hot, or cold) or blindfolding where there is a potential for danger
- h. Intense interrogation of pledges, name calling, screaming at individuals, prolonged periods of enforced silence, or the use of gags
- i. Requiring individuals to perform any act(s) which are construed to be humiliating or degrading
- j. Prohibiting individuals from talking to members of the opposite gender
- k. Peer pressure to engage in activities against the individual’s will
- l. Requiring pledges or new members to carry or wear any item(s) that set them apart from other members. (it is acceptable for new members to wear a pledge pin; however, members should also wear membership badges or pins simultaneously)
- m. Forced servitude (such as shining shoes or boots; cleaning rooms, apartments, houses, cars, or other property; washing clothes or dishes; running personal errands; or other services or duties not normally shared by initiated members) or requiring individuals to purchase items or services for other members
- n. Requiring activities that are prohibited by law or University policy or procedure, such as trespassing; stealing of any item(s), including personal effects or organizational property (banners, composites, food, paddles, etc.); stealing of any item(s) for scavenger hunts; kidnapping; or lewd, obscene, threatening, intimidating, or harassing behavior
- o. Requiring activities that interfere with academic studies, assignments, or classes, such as awakening individuals in the night for organizational activities, interfering with normal sleep or study schedules, requiring food or sleep deprivation, or assigning take-home assignments that interfere with academic work.

#### **15. Misuse of University Computer Facilities or Resources**

The following behaviors pertaining to misuse of computer facilities or resources are prohibited:

- a. Accessing, sending, or displaying offensive messages or pictures or damaging computer equipment, networks, or systems

- b. Violating copyright laws
- c. Using false and unauthorized identifications or passwords or trespassing into another student's work
- d. Using University equipment, supplies, systems, or networks for illegal activities as defined by Virginia or federal law

**16. Obstruction of University Activities**

Behavior that disrupts or interferes with normal University or University-sponsored activities is prohibited. Normal University or University-sponsored activities include, but are not limited to, study, teaching, research, and other authorized activity. They may also include authorized activities performed by officially invited speakers; University administration; public-safety officials; or fire, police, or emergency services. Such behavior includes abridgement of rights to freedom of speech and expression.

**17. New Member Intake**

Student organizations that are not in compliance with new-member-education requirements as outlined in their local and national constitutions and/or bylaws or University policy risk disciplinary procedure. Non-Greek organizations shall not engage in intake processes.

**18. Theft**

Stealing or attempting to steal any money, property, or item of value belonging to the University, a member of the University community, or a campus visitor is prohibited.

**19. Trespass**

Unlawful entry into a University facility, regardless of its location, is prohibited. The term shall also include the unlawful entry into property not owned by the organization.

**20. Use of the University Name**

Use in graphics, print, media, or advertising of the name or marks (e.g., the logo, seal, or graphics) of the University is prohibited unless specifically authorized in writing by the president of the University or his/her designated representative.

**21. Violation of Student Organization Conduct Procedures and Sanctions**

- a. Falsification, distortion, or misrepresentation of information related to a discipline matter is prohibited.
- b. Disruption or interference with the orderly progress of a student-organization discipline proceeding is prohibited.
- c. Initiation of a student-organization discipline proceeding in bad faith is prohibited.
- d. Attempting to discourage another individual from participating in the student-organization discipline matter is prohibited.
- e. Attempting to influence the impartiality of any participant in a student-organization discipline matter is prohibited.
- f. Verbal or physical harassment or intimidation of any participant in a student-organization discipline matter is prohibited.
- g. Failure to comply with the sanction(s) imposed under a student-organization discipline proceeding may result in further disciplinary action and/or additional sanction(s).

**22. Violations of Civil or Criminal Law**

Student organizations in violation of local, state, or federal law are in violation of the University Code of Conduct. University sanctions for such violations may be imposed independent of and prior to the disposition of any legal proceeding in a civil or criminal justice case.

# APPENDICES

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## APPENDIX A: INFORMATION TO KNOW

**Academic Enhancement and Support:** The University College offers one-on-one and group academic coaching; facilities with free, up-to-date technology; academic growth plans; and supplemental Math and English instruction.

**AIDS/Condoms:** Information regarding AIDS and condoms may be obtained from Health Services.

**Alcohol/Drug Concerns:** The substance-abuse-prevention program offers free, confidential counseling and a variety of educational information.

**Allergy Injections:** Allergy injections are given by appointment only, and students must provide their own allergy serum. The student's personal physician must administer the first dose of the series and send detailed instructions to the Health Center for subsequent injections. All allergy medication will stay in the clinic and students must come in to get the injection. When going home for extended periods (e.g., Christmas, spring break, and summer), students should take their medications with them.

**Athletic Academic Enhancement:** The staff of the University College works to help athletes manage their time and designates areas of the building for use during team study hours. Counselors also help to ensure that all athletes are aware of the communication they must maintain with their professors about their busy sports schedules.

**Automobile Policy—Freshmen:** The vehicle policy does not permit resident freshman to have motorized vehicles on campus.

**Campus Ministries:** The office endeavors to serve the interpersonal and personal needs of the campus community as they relate to spiritual and religious life. Students of all ethnic, cultural, racial, denominational, and faith traditions are welcome to celebrate diversity and enhancement.

**Career Services:** Career Services is committed to offering a comprehensive array of programs and services that supports and facilitates career development for students and alumni. Programs and resources are provided to assist students in developing and identifying career goals, expanding knowledge of career options, understanding effective decision making, and acquiring appropriate strategies and skills to carry out the career-development process.

**Check Cashing:** Personal checks may be cashed at the Virginia State University Credit Union or at banks located near the campus.

**Commuter Student Services:** The Department of Student Activities assists students in obtaining information about transportation services in the area and provides a commuter lounge as a comfortable place to relax before, after, and between classes. The lounge is equipped with a computer, magazines, a microwave, a refrigerator, and information about campus and community resources to support commuter students.

**Counseling Center:** The University Counseling Center provides individual, group, couples/marital, and family therapy as well as case-management, psychiatric, consultation and outreach services.

**Educational Counseling:** The educational counselors of the University College schedule classes for students as well as keep records of a student's progress through the academic year. By staying connected to students throughout their experience at Virginia State University, counselors are able to make accurate suggestions for improvement.

**Excuses:** Health services will give excuses for missed classes only to students who have been seen during their illness or upon the discretion of the clinician. Excuses will be given only for legitimate complaints, such as fever, severe pain, or infection. *Excuses will not be given during the midterm- and final-examination periods.*

**Financial Aid:** Virginia State University provides financial assistance to students in an attempt to bridge the gap between the actual cost of college and the expected contribution from a student (and/or his/her family). The four categories of financial aid are scholarships, grants, loans, and employment. Students may receive any combination of these funding types.

**Health Center:** The Health Center staff treats non-urgent conditions such as (but not limited to) colds, influenza, sore throat, urinary-tract infections, menstrual cramps, headaches, and rashes. The staff also provides sexually transmitted disease (STD) testing, gynecological exams, and contraception information. Medical emergencies (e.g., gunshots, stab wounds, miscarriages, and unconsciousness) must be resolved by the appropriate healthcare provider, such as Southside Regional Emergency Room, John Randolph Emergency Room, or Medical College of Virginia. **For all campus medical emergencies, please call 911, then immediately contact the University Police Department at (804) 524-5411.**

Service is provided to walk-in students; however, it is best when students make an appointment. Efforts will be made to schedule appointments as quickly as possible at times convenient for students. Students should call the Health Center to cancel any appointments they are unable to keep. Students must present their Virginia State University identification card or a valid registration form when requesting services. There is no charge for routine medical services; however, there is a small charge for laboratory tests, immunizations, and certain medical supplies. All fees are charged to your student account and/or billed to your private insurance carrier. ***No monies are received in the Health Center.***

**Health Education:** Health education includes topics such as stress management, weight control, STD/HIV prevention, alcohol- and drug-abuse prevention, and smoking cessation, along with other wellness issues.

**Health Insurance:** The University does not require students to have health insurance. For those students without coverage, the Health Center staff may be able to provide names of various companies that can offer student coverage. If so, this will be a private agreement between the student and the insurance company.

**Housing Contract—Cancellation:** The Residence Hall and Food Service Agreement is for a full academic year. This agreement cannot be canceled during or after the Fall semester.

**Identification Card:** The University's Trojan Card is the official identification card for Virginia State University. It is authorized for use only by the person whose name appears on the front of the card and is not transferable. It is the property of Virginia State University, and it may be revoked at any time.

**Meal Card:** The meal card (TrojanCard) may be used only by the owner. The meal card is nontransferable. All residence-hall students are required to participate in the food-service meal plan.

**Medical Necessities:** A completed physical examination form (less than one year old) along with a valid immunization record must be on file for all full-time students upon entering Virginia State University. Students who fail to meet this requirement will not be permitted to register for classes.

**Meal Plan for Off-Campus Students:** Students commuting to campus may purchase a meal plan designed for their individual needs.

**Medical Services After 5:00 P.M.:** If a **non-emergency** health need occurs after 5:00 p.m. or on a weekend, students may use Patient First Urgent Care Center, located at 1260 Temple Avenue in Colonial Heights, open from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 PM; the Family Health Clinic at the Crossings, located at 906 Crossings Boulevard, Suite C, in Hopewell, open from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 PM; or Southside Regional Medical Center, located at 200 Medical Park Boulevard in Petersburg, open 24 hours per day. Medical transport services are available through AAA Transportation Services for students without transportation. Transportation vouchers are available in each residence hall and may be obtained from the resident assistants. The voucher must be completed and given to the driver, and the trip cost will be charged to the student's account. One copy of the voucher must be sent to the Health Center. No

money is required from students at the time of service to utilize AAA Transport. *This transportation service is only for medically related conditions and is not intended for personal use.*

**Name Change:** Any student who marries during matriculation at the University and who wants a name change entered on University records must submit a written request to the Registrar's Office. A copy of the marriage certificate must accompany the request.

**National Student Exchange Program:** The National Student Exchange (NSE) program is designed to provide Virginia State University students an opportunity to attend a college or university in another state without having to pay the high cost of out-of-state tuition. Payment of tuition is made in one of two ways. Using Plan A, students pay their tuition and fees to the host institution. In Plan B, students pay their tuition and fees to Virginia State University. They do not pay room and board to Virginia State University. Room and board fees are the responsibility of the students and are paid directly to the host institution. Virginia State University only uses Plan B.

Virginia State University students who participate in the NSE program remain registered students at Virginia State University. Any financial aid that is normally available can be applied to the exchange obligation. Because NSE is an officially approved program of the University, all courses with their respective credit hours and earned grades will be recorded on the Virginia State University transcript and will be calculated into the GPA.

**Nontraditional Students:** Educational counselors work to assist students who are not of the traditional college age. The staff of the University College understands that these students often live independently and may have jobs, children, and other responsibilities that could potentially interfere with their academic success if the proper planning does not occur early on. Through appropriate counseling, students will learn techniques that will help them adjust to a college-level curriculum while simultaneously meeting the most important obligations of their daily lives.

**Overnight Guests:** Permission for relatives or friends to stay overnight in the residence halls is granted by the Office of Residence Life and the residence educator in your building. Contact these individuals for information.

**Peer Mediation:** Peer mediation at Virginia State University offers students the chance to meet with student mediators who have been trained in the mediation process. Peer mediators do not intend to impose solutions; rather, they are trained to encourage communication and help the parties examine possible solutions. Students seeking resolution of conflict through mediation or who are interested in becoming peer mediators should contact the Office of Student Conduct at (804) 524-5866.

**Posting Policy:** All posters and flyers must be submitted to the Department of Student Activities for review before they are posted. Approved posters should be placed only on bulletin boards. Posters or other displays shall not be placed on the outside of buildings or on interior walls, floors, or furniture or in windows. Posters may not be placed on trees on the campus at any time. Flyers are to be posted in Jones Dining Hall and residence halls only with prior permission from the director of food services and the individual residence educators, respectively. Flyers for on-campus activities can be posted in academic buildings with prior permission from each individual school dean's office. Students not following this policy will be subject to disciplinary action.

**Sexual Assault:** If you are sexually assaulted, contact the University Police or a campus official immediately.

**Solicitation in the Residence Halls:** Solicitation in the residence halls for the benefit of individuals is strictly prohibited. Contact the Office of Residence Life for additional information.

**Stolen Personal Property:** The University does not assume liability, directly or indirectly, for personal items belonging to a student. It is suggested that the student contract for his/her own insurance coverage.

**Substance Abuse:** Counseling Services offers treatment and/or assistance to students with substance-abuserelated problems or issues. The Virginia State University Alcohol and Drug Policy prohibits the possession, use, manufacture, distribution, sale, or consumption of alcohol and/or illicit drugs anywhere on campus. The policy pertains to the activities of all students on University property and the activities of students at University-sponsored events or at off-campus activities while representing the University community. Students, faculty, and staff are

expected to comply with all state, federal, and local alcohol- and drug-related laws. Virginia's Alcohol Beverage Control Act contains laws governing possession, use, and consumption of alcoholic beverages. It is illegal for anyone under age 21 to purchase, possess, or consume any alcoholic beverage. It is illegal for any person to sell alcoholic beverages to persons under the age of 21. It is illegal for any person to purchase or provide alcoholic beverages for another when, at the time of the purchase, the provider knows or has reason to know that the recipient is under 21 years of age. It is illegal for any underage person to use a forged or otherwise deceptive driver's license to obtain beer or any other alcoholic beverage. It is illegal to manufacture, sell, give, distribute, or use a controlled substance or illegal drug. It is illegal to possess with intent to manufacture, sell, give, or distribute a controlled substance or illegal drug. It is illegal to possess or sell drug paraphernalia.

**Technology Services:** Technology Services is committed to the delivery of reliable information-technology solutions and services to support the educational mission of Virginia State University.

**Telephone Services:** To initiate service, contact Verizon. Students may secure a personal telephone for use in their room. While the University pays for local service, students are responsible for securing a long-distance carrier.

**Transition Students:** The University College recognizes the unique needs of students who are transferring into Virginia State University and of members of military families. A staff member will work with the transfer office to guarantee that all possible transfer credits meet graduation requirements, to offer guidance in contacting appropriate financial-assistance offices on campus, and to give personal support to those whose families may be unavailable due to distance.

**Unreasonably Loud Music:** A student may receive a fine for playing unreasonably loud music on the campus grounds or in residence halls, classroom, or buildings. This includes unreasonably loud music in automobiles.

**Vehicle Regulations:** All Virginia State University students must register with the Cashier's Office any vehicle they wish to park on campus. Students will be issued one permit per registered vehicle. Freshmen are prohibited from operating a motor vehicle on campus unless an exception is authorized by the director of student conduct. Exceptions may be granted on a case-by-case basis.

**Veteran Student Advisement:** The Veteran Affairs advisor serves veterans and their dependents by keeping them abreast of their allowances, awards, rights, privileges, and responsibilities in accordance with the codes and the contract made between the University, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, and the U.S. Department of Education.

**Violation of Public Laws:** Whenever a student violates a public law outside the physical bounds of the campus, the student is to report all infractions of public law with which he/she is involved or charged to the Office of Student Affairs or the Department of Student Activities at (804) 524-5701. This does not refer to traffic infractions.

**Wellness Center:** The Wellness Center educates and enlightens students about healthy lifestyles. It provides opportunities to improve overall personal mental and physical wellness to the Virginia State University community. It provides a healthy place for students, faculty, and staff to interact and work out.

## APPENDIX B: DEFINITIONS

**Academic Grievance:** A dispute between a student and a faculty or staff member about teaching and learning activities as they relate to or affect the student in an academic environment.

**Accused Student:** A Virginia State University student charged with violating University policies and notified of a complaint filed with the Office of Student Conduct.

**Adjudication:** A hearing process that includes the evaluation of possible violations of the Virginia State University Code of Conduct. This process also includes the administration of sanctions as appropriate.

**Administrative Hearing:** A formal student hearing that is heard solely by the director of student conduct and any other designee approved by the vice president of Student Affairs in response to allegations of student misconduct. This hearing is scheduled when the Student Conduct Board is unavailable and follows all structured hearing processes.

**Allegation:** A statement asserting that a violation of University policy or the student code of conduct has taken place.

**Complaint/Charge:** A written statement submitted to the Office of Student Conduct regarding violations of University policy.

**Due Process:** Basic rights afforded to all Virginia State University students accused of violating University policies. Basic rights that constitute a fair hearing include the receipt of a hearing notice that outlines alleged violations of University policy and the right to be heard by a disciplinary hearing body.

**Formal Complaint:** A written concern or formal charge of dissatisfaction with a person, service, or process that requires clarification, investigation, and/or resolution.

**Formal Hearing:** An official student hearing that is very structured and is heard by the Student Conduct Review Board the director of student conduct. A formal hearing is called in response to allegations of student misconduct and is scheduled at the discretion of the director of student conduct. The types offered are administrative hearings and student conduct review board hearings.

**Hazing:** Hazing in every form and conspiracy to haze are prohibited. Commission of hazing can be considered either a misdemeanor or a felony. Participation in a hazing practice may result in both individual and organizational disciplinary action. The Code of Virginia section 18.2-56 states, "It shall be unlawful to haze so as to cause bodily injury, any student at any school, college, or university. Any person found guilty thereof shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor." If injuries would be such as to constitute a felony, punishment shall be inflicted as is otherwise provided by law for the punishment of such felony. Section 18.2-56 further states, "any person receiving bodily injury by hazing shall have a right to sue, civilly, the person or persons guilty thereof, whether adults or infants."

**Hold:** A restriction preventing a student from enrolling in classes and/or obtaining academic transcripts.

**Informal Hearing:** An official student hearing that is less structured than a formal hearing and is offered to those students who do not dispute allegations and are not facing suspensions from the University. An informational hearing is conducted solely by the director of student conduct when all hearing notes are approved by the director and the student prior to the imposition of a sanction.

**Integrity:** Steadfast adherence to a strict ethical code; completeness; soundness.

**Investigation:** A process of gathering and reviewing information following the receipt of a disciplinary complaint.

**Nonacademic Grievance:** A dispute between a student and a staff member, administrator, faculty member, or another Virginia State University student concerning the application of any University-wide policies or procedures or the policies or procedures of an academic or administrative unit. This may include issues related to co-curricular or extracurricular activities, student affairs, personal conduct or decorum, student governance, or other administrative decisions and/or actions perceived by the complainant to be unfair, arbitrary, and/or capricious.

**Not Responsible:** A hearing outcome in which a student is found not to be in violation of the student code of conduct.

**Representative:** An individual who may attend hearings as silent support for the accused student or witness throughout the hearing process. The representative may not directly question the accused student(s) or witness (es) or address the hearing body for any reason.

**Responsible:** A hearing outcome in which a student is found to be in violation of the student code of conduct.

**Sanction:** A developmental consequence imposed by the hearing body or the administrative hearing officer (director of student conduct) after a student is found responsible for violation(s) of Virginia State University policy.

**Sexual Misconduct:** Sexual contact without consent. Includes intentional touching of the victim or forcing of the victim to touch, directly or through clothing, another person's genitals, breasts, thighs, or buttocks; rape (sexual intercourse without consent, whether by an acquaintance or a stranger); attempted rape; sodomy (oral sex or anal intercourse) without consent; or sexual penetration with an object without consent. To constitute lack of consent, the acts must be committed by force, intimidation, or through the victim's mental incapacity or physical helplessness. Rape refers to those actions defined as (but is not limited to) the following behaviors (or any behavior that is prohibited by the Virginia Penal Code) that are committed by either an acquaintance or stranger: sexual intercourse against a person's will, accomplished by force or threats of bodily injury, and sexual intercourse when the person is incapable of giving consent or is prevented from resisting, including instances when the complainant cannot resist because of alcohol or drugs administered by or with the knowledge of the accused. Intoxication of the assailant does not diminish the assailant's responsibility for sexual assault.

**Student:** A person officially registered and enrolled at Virginia State University during any academic term in which an incident and subsequent grievance occurs.

**Unauthorized:** Not officially approved by the University.

**Violation:** An action that is inconsistent with University policies and which necessitates the imposition of a sanction or consequence.

**Witness:** An individual who may attend a hearing as support for the accused student and who provides a written and oral testimony to the Student Conduct Review Board or to the administrative hearing officer. The witness's testimony must consist of firsthand evidence. All witnesses are expected to arrive to the hearing with a written, signed, and dated statement.

## APPENDIX C: DIRECTORY INFORMATION

FOR	WEB ADDRESS	PHONE
Absences (with Academic Excuses)	Professor's Department	
Academic Advising	Academic Advisor's Department	
Account/Balance Due	<a href="http://www.vsu.edu/student-accounts">http://www.vsu.edu/student-accounts</a>	(804) 524-5506
Adding/Dropping Courses	Academic Advisor's Department	
Administration and Finance	<a href="http://www.vsu.edu/about/administrative-offices/admin-finance/index.php">http://www.vsu.edu/about/administrative-offices/admin-finance/index.php</a>	(804) 524-5995
Admissions	<a href="http://www.vsu.edu/admissions">http://www.vsu.edu/admissions</a>	(804) 524-5902
Affirmative Action	<a href="http://www.vsu.edu/faculty-and-staff/human-resources/index.php">http://www.vsu.edu/faculty-and-staff/human-resources/index.php</a>	(804) 524-5088
Automobile Registration	<a href="http://www.vsu.edu/student-accounts/cashiers-office.php">http://www.vsu.edu/student-accounts/cashiers-office.php</a>	(804) 524-5146
Band, Marching	<a href="http://www.sola.vsu.edu/files/docs/teaching-and-learning/music-instrumental.doc">http://www.sola.vsu.edu/files/docs/teaching-and-learning/music-instrumental.doc</a>	(804) 524-5311
Bookstore	<a href="http://www.vsu.edu/student-life/bookstore.php">http://www.vsu.edu/student-life/bookstore.php</a>	(804) 524-5691
Activities	<a href="http://vsu.edu/student-life/student-activities/index.php">http://vsu.edu/student-life/student-activities/index.php</a>	(804) 524-5692
Campus Organizations	<a href="http://vsu.edu/student-life/student-activities/index.php">http://vsu.edu/student-life/student-activities/index.php</a>	(804) 524-5517
Career Services	<a href="http://www.vsu.edu/career-services">http://www.vsu.edu/career-services</a>	(804) 524-5211
Cashier's Office	<a href="http://www.vsu.edu/student-accounts/cashiers-office.php">http://www.vsu.edu/student-accounts/cashiers-office.php</a>	(804) 524-5150
Choirs	<a href="http://www.sola.vsu.edu/files/docs/teaching-and-learning/music-instrumental.doc">http://www.sola.vsu.edu/files/docs/teaching-and-learning/music-instrumental.doc</a>	(804) 524-5411
Commencement	<a href="http://vsu.edu/about/leadership/office-of-the-president/index.php">http://vsu.edu/about/leadership/office-of-the-president/index.php</a>	(804) 524-5070
Housing	<a href="http://vsu.edu/student-life/residential-living/index.php">http://vsu.edu/student-life/residential-living/index.php</a>	(804) 524-5862
Counseling Services	<a href="http://www.vsu.edu/support-and-resources/counseling-center/index.php">http://www.vsu.edu/support-and-resources/counseling-center/index.php</a>	(804) 524-5675
Credit Union	<a href="http://www.vsu.edu/vsufcu.org">http://www.vsu.edu/vsufcu.org</a>	(804) 526-6708
Disabled Students	<a href="http://www.vsu.edu/support-and-resources/counseling-center/index.php">http://www.vsu.edu/support-and-resources/counseling-center/index.php</a>	(804) 524-5061
Equal Employment Opportunity	<a href="http://www.vsu.edu/faculty-and-staff/human-resources/index.php">http://www.vsu.edu/faculty-and-staff/human-resources/index.php</a>	(804) 524-5088
Financial Aid	<a href="http://www.vsu.edu/financial-aid">http://www.vsu.edu/financial-aid</a>	(804) 524-5990
Grade Appeals (Academic Credits and Policy and Petitions Committee Procedures Manual)	<a href="http://vsu.edu/faculty-and-staff/faculty/acc-policies-procedures.php">http://vsu.edu/faculty-and-staff/faculty/acc-policies-procedures.php</a>	(804) 524-5000
Health Services	<a href="http://www.vsu.edu/student-life/support-and-">http://www.vsu.edu/student-life/support-and-</a>	(804) 524-5711

Appendix C: Directory Information

	<a href="http://www.vsu.edu/resources/health-services/index.php">resources/health-services/index.php</a>	
Refunds	<a href="http://www.vsu.edu/student-accounts">http://www.vsu.edu/student-accounts</a>	(804) 524-5506
Registration	<a href="http://vsu.edu/academics/registrar/index.php">http://vsu.edu/academics/registrar/index.php</a>	(804) 524-5275
Religious Affairs	<a href="http://www.vsu.edu/student-life/student-activities/campus-ministry/index.php">http://www.vsu.edu/student-life/student-activities/campus-ministry/index.php</a>	(804) 524-5681
Residence Life	<a href="http://www.vsu.edu/student-life/residential-living-halls/index.php">http://www.vsu.edu/student-life/residential-living-halls/index.php</a>	(804) 524-5862
Room Reservations	<a href="http://www.vsu.edu/student-life/student-activities/need-meeting-space.php">http://www.vsu.edu/student-life/student-activities/need-meeting-space.php</a>	(804) 524-6794
ROTC	<a href="http://www.sola.vsu.edu/departments/military-science/trojan-warrior-battalion-rotc/index.php">http://www.sola.vsu.edu/departments/military-science/trojan-warrior-battalion-rotc/index.php</a>	(804) 524-5216
Scholarships	<a href="http://www.vsu.edu/financial-aid">http://www.vsu.edu/financial-aid</a>	(804) 524-5990
Sexual Harassment	<a href="http://www.vsu.edu/faculty-and-staff/human-resources/index.php">http://www.vsu.edu/faculty-and-staff/human-resources/index.php</a>	(804) 524-5088
Student Conduct	<a href="http://www.vsu.edu/student-life/support-and-resources/judicial-affairs/index.php">http://www.vsu.edu/student-life/support-and-resources/judicial-affairs/index.php</a>	(804) 524-5504
Student Government Association	<a href="http://www.vsu.edu/student-life/student-activities/student-government/index.php">http://www.vsu.edu/student-life/student-activities/student-government/index.php</a>	(804) 524-5154
Student Trips (Approval)	Vice President for Student Affairs	(804) 524-5350
Technology Help Desk	<a href="http://www.vsu.edu/technology-services/">http://www.vsu.edu/technology-services/</a>	(804) 524-5210
Testing Services	<a href="http://www.vsu.edu/about/administrative-offices/academic-affairs/instit-planning-effectiveness/index.php">http://www.vsu.edu/about/administrative-offices/academic-affairs/instit-planning-effectiveness/index.php</a>	(804) 524-5097
Tutoring	<a href="http://www.vsu.edu/academic/vsuniversity-college/index.php">http://www.vsu.edu/academic/vsuniversity-college/index.php</a>	(804) 524-6755
University Catalog	<a href="http://vsu.edu/academics/academic-catalog.php">http://vsu.edu/academics/academic-catalog.php</a>	
University Police	<a href="http://www.vsu.edu/police/">http://www.vsu.edu/police/</a>	(804) 524-5411
Wellness Center	<a href="http://www.vsu.edu/student-life/support-and-resources/wellness-fitness-center.php">http://www.vsu.edu/student-life/support-and-resources/wellness-fitness-center.php</a>	(804) 524-5728
Work Study	<a href="http://www.vsu.edu/financial-aid/types-of-aid/work-study.php">http://www.vsu.edu/financial-aid/types-of-aid/work-study.php</a>	(804) 524-5909
Virginia Statesman	<a href="http://www.vsu.edu/student-life/student-activities/newspaper.php">http://www.vsu.edu/student-life/student-activities/newspaper.php</a>	
Yearbook	<a href="http://www.vsu.edu/student-life/student-activities/yearbook.php">http://www.vsu.edu/student-life/student-activities/yearbook.php</a>	(804) 524-5692

## **APPENDIX D: GRADE APPEAL PROCEDURES**

College Grade Appeal Committees consisting of at least one faculty member from each department shall deliberate requests for grade appeals and recommend an action to the college dean. The dean shall review the recommendation and make a decision on the outcome of the appeal. The dean shall serve as the final arbiter on the matter. Only if circumstances warrant further deliberation should grade appeal be referred to the ACC. At the end of each semester, the dean shall submit to the Academic Credits Committee a summary report of the dispositions of grade appeals handled at the college level. The Chair of the Academic Credits Committee shall provide the Provost with a written acknowledgement of the deans' reports on grade appeals in their respective colleges.

The appeal procedure for a student with a complaint about grading requires initial contact with the instructor involved and further contact with the instructor's department chairperson if the matter is not resolved between the instructor and student. If the matter is not resolved at the departmental level, a grade appeal should be submitted to the dean of the college in which the instructor teaches. The dean shall then forward the request to the grade appeal committee for deliberation.

Normally, students may appeal final grades based upon documented evidence that a grade was incorrectly awarded. Grade appeals must be requested within ONE YEAR of the semester in which the grade was awarded. Typically, grade changes are warranted based upon the following:

- The Professor did not have information or documentation at the time the grade was awarded;
- The Professor made an error of calculation (or other error) or entry of a grade;
- A grade of "I" (incomplete) was entered and the student completed the necessary work for the course.

Grade changes involving the "N" grade should be referred to either the Academic Credits Committee or the Policies and Petitions Committee as appropriate.

The student will follow the steps below:

1. Make his/her case (with documentation 5) to the faculty member who awarded the grade. (If the faculty member is no longer employed by the University, the student may approach the Department Chairperson for the unit through which the course was offered.)
2. If the student is not satisfied with the disposition of the faculty member, he/she may repeat this process with the Department Chairperson
3. If the student remains dissatisfied, he/she may appeal to the college grade appeal committee via a letter which states the student's case with supporting documentation appended.
4. After deliberation, the college grade appeal committee makes a positive or negative recommendation to the dean.
5. Privacy concerns may limit reviewers' access to sensitive and personal documents submitted by the student.

The dean will consider the appeal, entering one of two dispositions:

- The appeal has no merit and the faculty member's grade stands as entered;
- The appeal has merit and is remanded to the department chairperson and faculty member for reconsideration. In these cases, the disposition of the faculty member is reported to the dean and if the appeal procedure for a student with a grading grievance requires the student to first contact the instructor involved. If the matter is not resolved between the instructor and student, the instructor's department chair should be contacted. If the matter is not resolved at the department level, contact should be made with the dean of the college in which the instructor teaches. If the situation is not resolved at the dean's level, the student should submit a written request, containing the signatures of the department chair and college dean, to the Academic Credits Committee.